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kentucky's substantial cattle industry has improved by leaps and bounds as a result of our agricultural development initiative. Breeding stock has never been better. Forage production and feeding programs have advanced. Handling facilities have been upgraded. New marketing strategies and opportunities have been put into place.



This industry that accounts for about a fifth of farm income in Kentucky now stands in a good position to greatly benefit from a strong market climate.

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board deserves credit for realizing early in this process that cattle represented the most logical commodity for significant economic growth on Kentucky farms. We already had (and continue to have) the largest herd east of the Mississippi River, plus abundant pastureland. All we needed were incentives and resources to spark improvement.

In the years following the 2001 inception of the Ag Development Fund hundreds of millions of dollars have been invested toward cattle and forage production. That's proved to be a wise investment.

Kentucky Farm Bureau has enthusiastically supported this approach for offsetting the decline in tobacco income. One way has been to assume a major sponsorship position for the Kentucky Beef Expo, which we feel is a valuable tool for showcasing our industry, encouraging excellence and motivating young people.

The Beef Expo, which is superbly administered by our friends from the Shows and Fairs Division of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, had its 25th rendition last month with 195 consignors from 15 states. Gross sales were \$856,545. A good number of Kentuckians enjoyed success, especially with the Angus breed, winning all the top awards.

Kentucky cattle also fetched the top prices -- \$10,700 for a Saler bull from Willis Farm of Franklin County; \$10,000 for a female Limousin from Englewood Farms of Garrard County.

State budget cuts were jeopardizing the Kentucky Beef Expo when KFB agreed to fill the void. We look at that as a sound investment, as well as a good way to underscore our commitment to this vital industry. We also initiated an annual Beef Tour several years ago to educate producers on industry trends. This event has become so popular that it quickly fills up with registrants. Registrations for the June 13-17 tour to Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois are being accepted beginning April 20.

As a cattle producer, I'm very pleased at how our industry has moved forward and enhanced its national reputation. And I'm proud at how Farm Bureau has stepped up to lend support.

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU

KFB BEEF EXPO



KFB Second Vice President Fritz Giesecke presented the John Hendricks Award to Sarah Ayer of McLean County for winning the prospect steer show for a Kentucky market-owned animal. Hendricks, KFB's First Vice President who passed away last year, spearheaded KFB's sponsorship of the Kentucky Beef Expo. A second Hendricks award went to Blake Boyd of Mays Lick for the top Kentucky heifer.

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Beef Expo was held last month at the Kentucky Exposition Center with 195 consignors from 15 states. Total gross sales were \$856,545 on 498 lots, an average of \$1,720 per head.

The Angus sale had the highest gross, \$128,425 on 58 head. That was followed by Pen Heifers, \$113,690; Simmental, \$109,050 and Hereford, \$91,375. There were 12 breed shows and sales in addition to the all breeds pen heifer event.

The top money-earner was a Saler bull consigned by Willis Farms of Frankfort, which sold for \$10,700. A Limousin heifer from Englewood Farms of Lancaster fetched \$10,000.

Other Kentucky-consigned highlights included:

- *The Supreme Champion Angus bull, consigned by James Shaw of Hodgenville, sold for \$4,700 while the heifer, from Blake Boyd of Mays Lick, went for \$3,950. Anne Patton Schubert of Taylorsville had the reserve champion bull (\$3,500) and Voyager Angus of LaRue County had the reserve heifer (\$5,000). Also, a heifer from Chuck and Toni Druin of Eminence sold for \$6,600.*

- *Kyle Skidmore of Shepherdsville had the grand champion beefalo bull (\$5,000).*

- *Premier Cattle Company of Bardstown had the champion and reserve champion female for charolais, selling for \$4,700*



Representatives from breed groups posed with KFB officials Fritz Giesecke (front row, third from left), Eddie Melton (fourth from left) and David S. Beck (back row, light blue shirt) as well as Steve Mobley (far right), who oversees the event for the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

and \$4,850, respectively. Hayden Farms of Bardstown had the reserve bull (\$1,550).

- *For Chiangus, Grand Ole Place Farms of Nicholasville had the champion bull (\$3,250) and reserve female (\$3,100).*

- *In the Hereford show, Burks Cattle Company and Thomas Farm of Park City had the champion female (\$4,400) and Thomas Farm had the reserve female (\$2,600).*

- *Besides having the top lot in Limousin, Englewood Farms of Lancaster had the reserve bull (\$5,500). HB Farms of Midway had the champion female*

(\$3,500).

- *Besides the champion bull, Willis Farm of Frankfort had the top two females, each going for \$2,000. The reserve bull came from Del-Su Farm in Somerset (\$2,700).*

- *The champion Simmental bull (\$5,300) came from Happy 6 Simmentals of Georgetown.*

KFB leaders participated in the awards programs and the organization had an exhibit in the trade show. It was the 25th rendition of the popular show administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. KFB is the primary sponsor.



We are all familiar with the saying, “preaching to the choir.” Yet, many times we fall into that old, familiar trap of talking among our farming and ranching friends, using agriculture lingo mixed with complaints about bad weather and falling prices, instead of having a real conversation with consumers in a language they understand.

But, times are changing. Consumers have not only grown more interested but have greater influence in the type of food they consume and how it is produced. Many see farmers as the bad guys because of what they read in the news and hear from anti-ag groups. We need to better counter this misinformation by having our own two-way conversation with consumers.

It's time we stop preaching to the choir and engage the congregation.

Many times we paint ourselves as downtrodden because of increased government regulations and falling commodity prices. While these are all legitimate concerns for the agriculture industry and something we should certainly talk about with each other, consumers, understandably, don't want to hear about it. They don't really care about our bottom lines — they care about theirs.

With a staggering economy, people want to know that we think about them and the food choices they are making for their families. A recent study shows that people don't care so much about our ability to grow enough food to feed the world, a message we too often rely on. Consumers care about being able to feed their families in this difficult time.

Consumers are also concerned about food safety and the environment. As farmers, we share their concerns and work hard toward conservation improvement and ensuring a safe food supply. So, let's talk about what we're doing to achieve these goals. People would rather listen to a positive message. So, let's tell consumers what we're for, instead of just what we're against.

Many times we get so caught up in our operations and day-to-day work that we don't take the opportunity to talk with consumers. They want to engage with us in a meaningful conversation about concerns and priorities that we all share as Americans. Preaching to the choir is okay once in awhile, but talking more often with the congregation will get far better results.



BOB STALLMAN

PRESIDENT

AFBF

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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CONGRESSIONAL TOUR

FISCAL CRISIS IS THE TALK OF CONGRESSIONAL TOUR

The federal deficit and some regulatory issues of concern to farmers topped the discussions at this year's Congressional Tour.

About 220 members took the opportunity to meet with the state's Congressional delegation.

Besides the legislative meetings the agenda included a series of issues briefings plus tours of national landmarks. As always, the highlight was the annual breakfast with the Kentucky delegation. This year's renewal was the first for freshman Senator Rand Paul, who expressed his respect for Kentucky's largest farm organization.

"When I think of Farm Bureau," he began, "I don't see you as a single interest group. You think about a lot of issues. I see you as a conservative group that is pro-business."

Senator Paul and most of the remainder of the Kentucky delegation focused their remarks on the nation's fiscal crisis. Senior Senator Mitch McConnell underscored the enormity and urgency of the issue, saying: "Our debt is now the size of our economy - - we can't kick the can down the road any longer."

Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers is tackling the federal budget in a big way in his role of Chairman of the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee. In his remarks he quickly noted that "we borrow 42 cents of every dollar we spend . . . most of it (borrowed) from China."

Congressman Rogers said that debt could impair the economic viability of future generations. In reference to high taxes, he said: "The taxpayers in this country deserve to have the government working for them."

With those preceding him speaking



mainly about the fiscal crisis, Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis took aim at the regulatory climate under the current administration. America, he said, is seeing “the largest stretch of the executive branch in history.”

“Regulation itself is not bad,” said Congressman Davis. “What gets me is when an agency oversteps its bounds. We need to restore accountability . . . with checks and balances.”

Fourth District Congressman Brett Guthrie concurred, calling for a “sensible” approach to environmental regulation of agriculture and other industries. Congressman Guthrie deals with those issues regularly as a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Sixth District Congressman Ben Chandler echoed what many are saying in Washington by warning that agriculture programs probably will be targeted for significant budget cuts. In a later meeting in his office with constituents, Congressman Chandler pointed out several programs which already had been slashed by budget legislation.

First District Congressman Ed Whitfield and Third District Congressman John Yarmuth had meetings which prevented them from attending the breakfast. Whitfield, however, arrived shortly after the breakfast to meet with constituents and Yarmuth met

with his constituents later in the day. Also that afternoon Senators McConnell and Rand held a question-and-answer session with the KFB group.

A briefing session involved several members of AFBF’s public affairs staff plus former KFB and AFBF staffer Rebeckah Freeman Adcock, who now handles legislative issues for CropLife America. Mrs. Adcock, who handled natural resources issues for KFB, addressed regulatory issues facing the farm chemical industry.

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck told his staff it was one of the best Congressional Tours in his more than 30 years of attending them.

“It’s gratifying to see our members’ interest in the issues and the good relationships we have with our delegation,” Beck said. “It’s what the public policy process is all about; communicating our concerns to the policy makers.”



TOP: Sixth District Congressman Ben Chandler met with constituents in his office for more than an hour. He told the group that although he agrees with many provisions of the health care reform law, he voted against it after realizing that most of his constituents opposed it.

BOTTOM: KFB President Mark Haney presented Senator Mitch McConnell with yet another “Friend of Farm Bureau” award. The Senate Minority Leader has received numerous awards over the years from both KFB and AFBF in recognition of his support on issues.

CONGRESSIONAL TOUR



ABOVE: Second District Congressman Brett Guthrie received a "Friend of Farm Bureau" award from a group that included (from left) KFB Director Pat Henderson of Breckinridge County, Chuck Crutcher of Hardin County and KFB Directors Larry Thomas of Hardin County, Fritz Giesecke of Hart County and Scott Travis of Spencer County.





ABOVE: Third District Congressman John Yarmuth played host to a group of Jefferson County FB members that included (from left) Guy Raymond, Jim Miles, Pam Miles, Barb Gagel and Jeanine Raymond.



INSET: Senators Mitch McConnell and Rand Paul held the traditional question-and-answer session with the group.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM FAR LEFT: Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis said the U.S. needs to utilize its vast energy resources. He also criticized the Obama administration for "the largest stretch of the executive branch in history."

BOTTOM CENTER: First District Congressman Ed Whitfield chats with a group that includes (from left) Chris Kummer of Simpson County, Nathan Hampton of Butler County and Frieda Heath of Graves County.



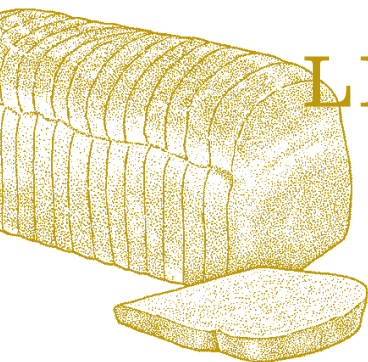
BOTTOM LEFT: Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers, the senior member of the Kentucky delegation, recounted that when he attended his first KFB Congressional Tour breakfast in 1980, "I had to speak last and when they got to me everything was said." Congressman Rogers graciously has led tours of the Capitol for many years during the visit from KFB members.



Farmers Feed the World



WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Members of the Women's Advisory Committee posed with a display for the "Farmers Feed the World" initiative to assist charities. Back row from left is Michelle Armstrong, Margaret Hensley, Cathy Pleasants, Vickie Bryant, Phyllis Amyx, Mary Jane Cannon, Frieda Heath and Carol Sullivan. Front row from left are Pam Chappell, Terry Gilbert, Bettie Wallace and Betty Farris.

As part of her work as an advocate for agricultural education, Betty Wolanyk uses the internet and other mediums to monitor who is communicating what about America's agriculture industry. What she has to report to farm interests like KFB members is startling: She's found about 100 activist groups who've attacked or criticized agriculture in some way, and have spent hundreds of millions of dollars to do so.

Ms. Wolanyk passed on this alarming situation along with suggestions for combating it during presentations at last month's KFB Women's Leadership Conference. She was among several presenters who addressed the critical issue of

effectively communicating agriculture's story. That was a central theme of the two-day conference which also included program updates, issues briefings and tours of some Louisville-area businesses of interest to the 197 in attendance.

KFB President Mark Haney also touched on the communications challenge during his welcoming address, urging the women to maintain an active role in representing farm families.

Ms. Wolanyk served as Director of Education for AFBF before becoming Chief Operating Officer of New York-based Ag Literacy Works. She travels the country speaking to groups about how they can effectively counter the attacks on agriculture, many of which surround issues like animal welfare, food safety, environmental protection

and migrant labor.

Ms. Wolanyk reminded the audience of how most people are “disconnected” with agriculture and easily influenced by misinformation campaigns based on appealing to emotions. Young people, the news media and the uneducated are especially susceptible, she said.

“There’s a great deal of misinformation out there; a lot of confusion,” she said. “We can’t change these activists - they’re set in their ways - - but we can reach the early adopters, those who haven’t yet formed an opinion.”

She gave two presentations to the KFB women, dealing with myths and misperceptions about some food safety issues, and then two workshops focusing on addressing some of the common questions about agricultural production and practices.

Communications professionals B. Todd Bright of KFB and Cyndie Sirekis of AFBF teamed up to talk about agricultural advocacy. Bright, who is KFB’s Director of Communications, addressed media relations strategies. Ms. Sirekis then talked about utilizing social media.

KFB Public Relations Director Dan Smaldone also contributed to the discussion, conducting two workshops on effective communications.

The bottom line to the communications theme was that KFB women should take advantage of their credibility and utilize all available resources to tell agriculture’s story. And they need to do so in a way that truly connects with consumers’ lives and emotions.

The conference concluded on the verge of National Agriculture Week. To note that occasion the KFB women donated food, funds and other products to the Louisville Ronald McDonald House, plus made a cash contribution to the local “Dare to Care” food bank. The donated items were displayed under a “Farmers Feed the World” banner.



AFBF’s Cyndie Sirekis spoke about utilizing social media.



197 women attended the annual conference for KFB women’s leaders.



Betty Wolanyk advised the KFB women on ways to communicate agriculture’s messages.

National Ag Week marked by local education initiative



"Seed Soil and Sun"

was donated to schools along with a teaching guide.

Dozens of county Farm Bureaus marked National Agriculture Week by introducing an award-winning children's book on agriculture to local schools. Nearly 200 copies of "Seed Soil Sun: Earth's Recipe for Food" were purchased by county leaders who donated them to elementary schools. Some went a step further and arranged to read excerpts from the book to students.

The book by Cris Peterson describes the process by which air and water combine

with seed, soil and sun to create nearly all of the food we consume. Using the corn plant as an example, the author takes the reader through the story of germination and growth of a tiny corn seed into a giant plant reaching high into the air with roots extending far into the ground. The book also discusses the make-up of soil and the creatures that live there, from microscopic one-celled bacteria to moles and earthworms.

The book can be ordered through the AFBF website, www.agfoundation.org.

In Lawrence County, Federation Secretary Sherry Compton purchased 30 books to distribute to the libraries of four elementary schools plus to winners of the county's poster and essay contest administered through the Soil Conservation District. She also purchased teacher's guides to accompany some of the books.

"I really feel this works well with the poster and essay contest and promoting (ag) education," she explained. "We also have a teacher's kit for each school."

KFB women carried the ball on this initiative, with women's committee members and/or information officers purchasing and distributing the books.

KFB noted Ag Week in other ways, as well. A news release was sent to Kentucky media outlets announcing the annual commemoration of agriculture's importance to our society, and the Communications Division helped some county leaders with op-ed pieces for their local newspapers.

The news release was full of statistics underscoring agriculture's importance to our economy and quality of life. It also featured comments from KFB President Mark Haney, who noted: "The commitment, hard work and innovation of our farmers provides us with a stable supply of high quality, affordable food."

Haney also urges Kentuckians to better educate themselves about the agriculture industry, rather than simply buying into many of the misconceptions communicated by "special interest groups with an agenda."

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DISTRICT MEETINGS

For county Farm Bureau leaders, the month of March means basketball "madness," preparations for the planting season and a district meeting with counterparts from other counties.

Eleven of these annual meetings were held last month with an evening of food, fellowship and a little Farm Bureau business. The agenda also featured a report on the state legislative session from a KFB Public Affairs staff member. With few issues resolved at the 2011 regular session, those reports were unusually brief. But as KFB Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper told the District 7 farmers who assembled in Russell Springs: "Nothing passed that hurts our pocket-books; so that's a good thing" to report from the session.

KFB President Mark Haney and his wife, Marlene, were among the 97 partici-



pants at the District 7 event. During his remarks Haney made special mention of the six agency managers and five agents who were present, saying that exemplifies the strong link between the Federation and Insurance Company.

"We very much appreciate that support," he said.

Another series of district meetings comes this summer, with a focus on policy development.

ABOVE: Food and fellowship is part of the District meeting agenda, as evidenced at the District 1 event where members from Calloway and McCracken counties socialized prior to dinner.

ABOVE LEFT: Nearly a hundred were on hand for the District 7 meeting at Russell County High School. They were treated to a barbecue dinner from Steve's Best BBQ of Albany.



NEW APD SELECTED FOR AREA NINE; MCCANTS NAMED COMMODITIES DIRECTOR

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck announced two positions with the hiring of George Hieneman as area program director for Area 9 and the selection of Jay McCants to become Director of the Commodity Division.

Hieneman's area encompasses 12 counties in eastern and northeastern Kentucky. He comes to the position after working as Security (IT) Technician/Security Officer for King's Daughters Medical Center in Ashland since 2006. He and wife Linda own and operate Flathills Farm, a beef cattle and hay operation in Greenup County.

Hieneman is a graduate of Morehead State University with a B.A. degree in Business Administration/Management.

McCants moves from director of the young farmer and leadership development programs to lead the Commodity Division's efforts to serve as KFB's liaison to the various agricultural commodity groups. He also will work closely with the organization's Advisory Committees that review policies and programs affecting the respective farm commodities. Other key functions McCants will manage include the monitoring of market activities, overseeing organizational efforts at the KFB Beef Expo, facilitating the Kentucky Country Ham Breakfast and coordinating the annual educational tours for Kentucky cattle producers and farm market operators.

McCants came to KFB 10 years ago from Georgia FB.

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YOUNG FARMERS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE

The latest survey of participants in the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers program shows an optimistic lot. Results of the 19th annual YF&R survey reveal that 87 percent of those surveyed are more optimistic about farming and ranching than they were five years ago.

This is the highest optimism level ever in AFBF's annual YF&R survey, which was initiated in 1993. Last year, 80 percent of those surveyed said they were more optimistic about farming than they were five years ago. The previous high was in 2008, when 82 percent said they were more optimistic.

"Farming and ranching is a tough but rewarding way of life. One trait all farmers and ranchers share is optimism and hope for the future, and that's what this survey shows," said Ben LaCross, YF&R chairman and a Michigan cherry, plum and apple producer. "Whether you produce tree fruit or beef cattle, you have to be an optimist to succeed in farming and ranching these days."

The 2011 survey also shows nearly 90 percent of the nation's young farmers and ranchers say they are better off than they were five years ago. Last year, 82 percent reported being better off than they were five years ago.

Nearly 94 percent considered themselves lifetime farmers, while 96 percent would like to see their children follow in their footsteps. The informal survey reveals that 87 percent believe their children will be able to follow in their footsteps.

Despite the high level of optimism, the young farm and ranch leaders express concerns. The number one concern is economic challenges, with 22 percent ranking profitability as their top concern. Government regulations were also a top concern of many of those surveyed, with 17 percent ranking that as their top concern. Nearly 10 percent ranked tax burdens as their top concern.

When asked what top three steps the federal government should take to help young farmers and ranchers, cutting government spending was the top response, with 17 percent listing that as the most important step. Thirteen percent of those surveyed said the government should provide financial help to beginning farmers, while 12 percent said reforming environmental regulations was the top step.

"Almost all young farmers and ranchers want to stay on the farm for the rest of their lives, and just about all of us would like our children and grandchildren to follow in our footsteps," LaCross explained. "However, we are still concerned that massive government debt and burdensome government regulations will make it tougher for future generations to stay on

the farm. The top priority for government policymakers is to cut spending, reduce the debt and lessen the grip of ever-burdensome regulations. This will be good for agriculture and good for America."

The survey shows that America's young farmers and ranchers are committed environmental stewards, with 72 percent saying that balancing environmental and economic concerns is important in their operations. The survey shows 58 percent use conservation tillage on their farms.

In addition, computers and the Internet are vital tools, with 92 percent surveyed reporting using a computer in their farming operation. Nearly all of those surveyed, 98 percent, have access to the Internet. High-speed Internet is used by 74 percent of those surveyed, with 24 percent relying on a satellite connection and two percent turning to dialup.

The popular social media site, Facebook, is used by 76 percent of those surveyed who use the Internet. The most popular use of the Internet in the survey is to gather news and agricultural information, with 81 percent turning to it for that use.

Finally, the survey points out that 74 percent of YF&R members consider communicating with consumers a formal part of their jobs.

"More and more young farmers and ranchers know that we must reach out to our customers, and we are using social media and other 21st century tools to tell our story and teach consumers," LaCross said. "This is a trend that has staying power."

The informal survey of young farmers and ranchers, ages 18-35, was conducted at AFBF's 2011 YF&R Leadership Conference in February.



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Sprouting forward . . .

Owens Garden Center near Somerset is expanding

By Kara Keeton

Mark Owens never imagined the long road that lay ahead for he and his family when they decided to build a new garden center on the family farm in Pulaski County.

"I would have probably been content to do minor upgrades to my existing greenhouses, but I knew with two boys showing an interest in business I had to begin looking to the future," said Mark. "Of course I never thought four years ago when I started planning for the expansion it would take this long for our dream to become a reality."

Mark began his career in agriculture almost 30 years ago when he decided to move from his home in Cincinnati to the farm.

"My parents were born and raised in Pulaski County, and when they moved to Cincinnati to work they kept the farms as an investment," he explained. "After school I decided I wanted to farm, so I came back to the family farm and began raising vegetables."

Mark was more than just a gardener. As an entrepreneurial young farmer, he looked at ways to be more efficient in his operation. He quickly decided not to go through a broker to sell his acres of vegetables and began trucking and selling his products directly to the buyer. He also saw cost savings in raising his own vegetable transplants and built his first greenhouse in 1985. Mark soon saw another

business opportunity when neighbors began asking if he had extra vegetable transplants they could purchase for their small gardens.

"First it was just neighbors coming out and purchasing vegetable transplants, but then the word spread," said Mark. "After a couple of years I started having people ask if I also had flowers, and that is when we decided to start raising flowers."

Mark realized he wouldn't have enough room in the single greenhouse to grow both his vegetable transplants and flowers for his growing customer base, so he built another greenhouse. As his customer demand grew so did his operation, soon the family had eight greenhouses at two locations on the farm.

While the greenhouse and nursery business was growing, so were Mark's two sons, Ian and Tyler. As the boys began helping more in the operation and showed an interest in coming back to the farm, Mark decided it was time to get out of vegetable production and focus for the future on the greenhouse and nursery operation.

"With the vegetables I had to have several employees on the farm, but I realized if we were just focusing on the greenhouses and nursery the boys and I could do most of the work," explained Mark. "So I decided to get out of growing vegetables and began making plans to develop the greenhouse operation."

Mark knew that the existing farm set-up, with greenhouses on two locations at the farm and no central market for customers, was not the most efficient way to operate the business. He decided if the family business was going to grow he needed to look at how to create a true destination location to expand his customer base.

"I started doing research about four years ago and then two years ago we began developing our business plan for the new market and expansion," explained Mark.

They secured a no-interest loan through the Agricultural Development

LEFT: Mark Owens with sons Tyler and Ian

Fund and a low-interest loan through the KY Ag Finance Corporation. In addition, they also received an Energy Efficiency Grant from USDA toward construction costs on the new facility. This grant has allowed them to meet the most energy efficient standards in the horticulture industry by installing state-of-the-art equipment including an energy curtain and a bio-thermo heating systems.

The new marketing center and greenhouse includes a 16,000 square foot building with a retail market and larger display area for seasonal flowers. The building will open up to the greenhouses which will house the Owens' wide selection of transplants, annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees.

"This isn't just about the new building, we are making the new market an agritourism destination for our customers," said Ian, the new market manager. "We are planning to have educational workshops at the retail market on such topics as container gardening, raised beds, herb gardens, cut flowers, and even some cooking workshops when produce is in season."

www.owensgardencenter.com for directions and more information on the selection of products at the market.

Kara Keeton coordinates KFB's Certified Roadside Farm Markets program.



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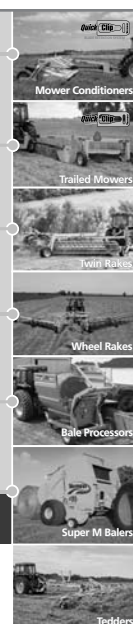
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Japan a big market for American farmers

The disaster's future impacts on Japanese people, businesses and trading partners are uncertain. Japan is the world's third-largest agricultural importer (over \$40 billion in 2009). Based on calories consumed, Japan imports about 60 percent of its food. It's the fourth-largest market for U.S. agriculture, accounting for about \$11.8 billion in 2010. The U.S. is the leading agricultural supplier to Japan. U.S. imports represent over one-fourth of Japan's total agricultural imports, a share that rose in 2007 and 2008 after declining since the mid-1990s. Japan's exports total over \$550 million per year.

USDA data show how important Japan is to various commodities. U.S. exports for January-December 2010 were: corn, \$3.018 billion; pork, \$1.602 billion; oilseeds and products, \$1.428 billion; vegetables, \$808 million; beef and veal, \$546 million; poultry, \$101 million; dairy products, \$204 million; eggs, \$44 million; and cotton, \$64 million.

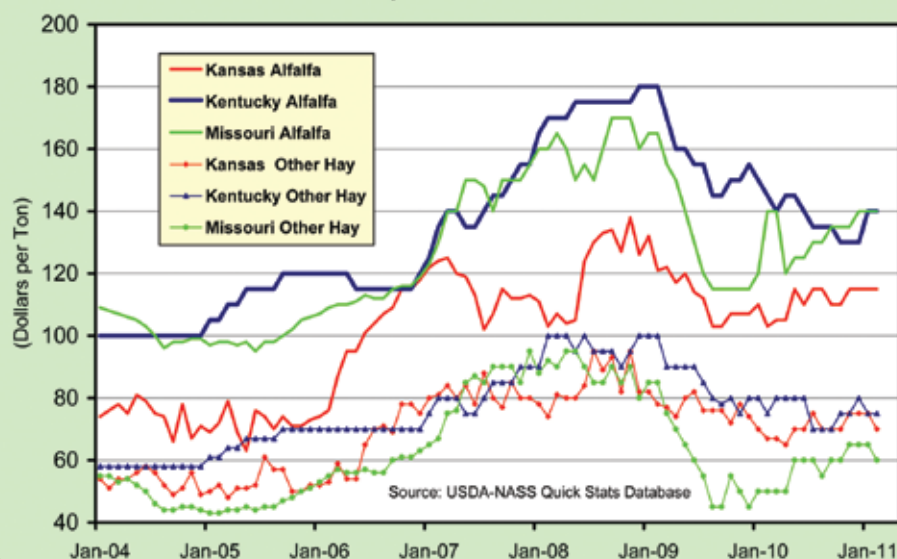
Red meat production climbing

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 3.81 billion pounds in February, up two percent from February 2010. Beef production, at 2.02 billion pounds, and cattle slaughter of 2.62 million head, were both up three percent from last February. The average live weight was up one pound at 1,286 pounds. Pork production totaled 1.77 billion pounds, up one percent from a year ago. Hog slaughter totaled 8.51 million head, down two percent, while the average live weight was up seven pounds at 277 pounds. Lamb and mutton production, at a record-low 10.9 million pounds, was down 12 percent from February 2010. Sheep slaughter totaled 155,100 head, down 13 percent. The average live weight was 141 pounds, up one pound.

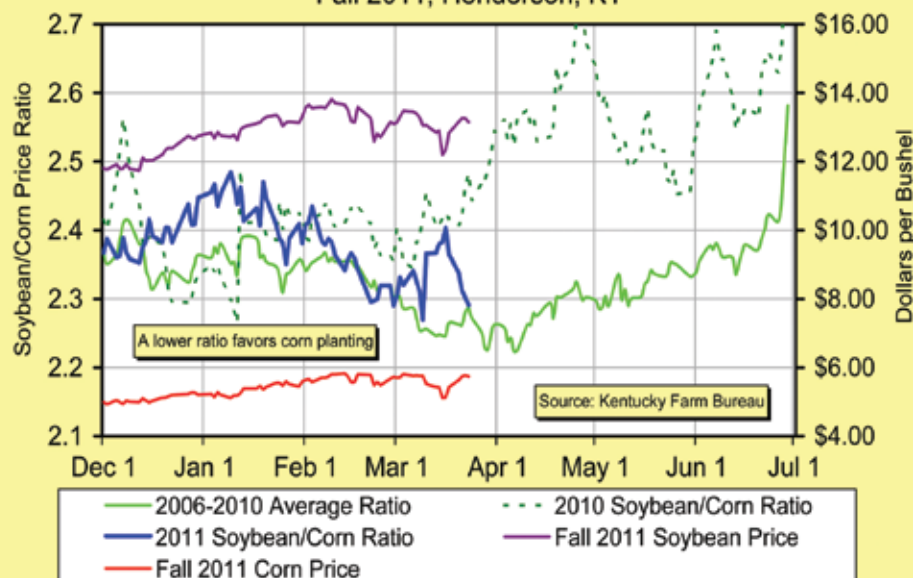
Food use of wheat is rising

Of the 1.176 billion bushels of U.S. wheat projected to be used domestically in 2010/11, 930 million bushels will be for food use, up 13 million bushels from 2009/10. USDA says the higher year-to-year food use reflects: 1) continued high flour extraction rates, 2) population growth, and 3) constant per capita flour consumption year to year. Per capita all-wheat flour use for 2010 is estimated at 134.2 pounds, down 0.4 pounds from the 2009 estimate and 3.9 pounds below the recent peak in 2007. Per capita 2010 flour use is marginally lower than the 2005 low of 134.3 pounds, which was down sharply from a peak of 146.3 pounds in 2000, apparently due to increased use of low-carbohydrate diets.

Prices Received by Farmers: Alfalfa and Other Hay
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Report shows impact of soybean production

To provide soybean farmers with information on the value of poultry and livestock to the economy, the United Soybean Board (USB) funded an independent examination of the most recent annual data available. Findings show that poultry and livestock produced 1.8 million jobs, and contributed \$252 billion in U.S. gross domestic production on an annual basis. Livestock and poultry also contributed \$41 billion to U.S. household incomes, increasing income by \$3 billion over the past 10 years, according to the study.

ADM cited as "most admired"

Archer Daniels Midland Company was ranked the world's most admired company in the food production industry for the third consecutive year by Fortune magazine.

ADM's operations in Kentucky include river terminals in Ledbetter and Henderson and a grain elevator in Silver Grove. An animal feed subsidiary, Alliance Nutrition Inc., has operations in Campbellsville, Henderson and leases a facility to another feed company in Park City. ADM also leases a river terminal along the Ohio River in Paducah, and has a grain storage facility in Henderson. Its animal feed business serves beef cattle, dairy and specialty feeds for producers in Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois and Indiana.

Fortune ranked ADM at the top spot in the food production industry in six of the nine categories by which companies were evaluated: people management, social responsibility, quality of management, financial soundness, quality of products and global competitiveness.

Applications now available for Farmer of Year contest

KFB is now accepting applications for the Kentucky Farmer of the Year Award. The contest is open to those who are at least 21 years old with farming as a main source of income. Applicants must be nominated by their county Farm Bureau president or a designee.

Applications are available at county FB offices or at kyfb.com. Deadline is July 1.

The state winner will receive \$1,000 in addition to a commemorative award that will be presented at KFB's annual meeting in December. Two other state finalists will receive \$250.

The winner will represent Kentucky in the 2012 Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest sponsored by Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Ag Expo. This contest includes nine other state winners. Since the program began in 1990 more than \$843,000 has been awarded to state and overall winners.

Farm Credit Services issues 2010 report

Farm Credit Services of Mid-America topped \$17.5 billion in owned and managed assets in 2010, growing 5.9 percent in 2010. At nearly \$214 million, earnings were good, up 51 percent compared to 2009. Additionally, special programs such as equipment loans and financing through equipment dealerships added over \$237 million in volume, about 12 percent of the market. Crop insurance, a key risk management strategy for FCS, also grew in 2010, with the association insuring over 1.2 million acres representing \$33 million in premiums, according to the lender's annual report.

"We experienced loan volume growth due to rallying farm commodity prices that led to stronger sales activity and increased demand for land and equipment purchases," said Donnie Winters, president and chief executive officer. "Other factors contributing to strong earnings included adding almost 9,000 new customers to the portfolio and Farm Credit System Insurance premium savings."

Winters stated that last year's strong earnings and fundamental strength of the cooperative over the last several years allowed Farm Credit to lower customer interest rates in early 2011. "In February, Farm Credit rolled back interest rates on all existing loans by .35 percent creating an annual savings to customers of \$43 million," he said. Additionally, the association adjusted the spreads on future loans by .35 percent.

In addition to lowering interest rates, more than 33,000 loans (representing \$5 billion in volume) were converted to lower rates in 2010 saving customers an estimated \$140 million in interest expense over the next three years.

The Loan Conversion Option gives customers the ability to quickly and easily change the interest rates on their Farm Credit loans during the term of those loans. The option consists of an amendment to the loan agreement which authorizes Farm Credit to change the type of loan product being used for a very small processing fee. When favorable rates are available, customers can take advantage of the reduction without the expense of refinancing.

Jim and Betsy Payne, Estill County, Kentucky



WHEN YOU'VE GOT THE “BUG” FOR COUNTRY LIVING...

BUILDING YOUR DREAM IS WITHIN REACH

WITH FLEXIBLE CONSTRUCTION LOANS FROM FARM CREDIT SERVICES.



Not a house. A dream. That's what Jim and Betsy Payne are building back along a country lane on the banks of the Kentucky River. Their dream started with a desire to move to the country after Jim's long military career (three stints in Afghanistan). Gradually, they pieced together 200 acres, added some cattle, a few goats and some barns. Finally, it came to building their log home. But finding the right lender who understood all these components was difficult. That's when Jim found Mickey Staton and Farm Credit Services of Mid-America. With Mickey's help all the things that caused other lenders problems – like added acres, a log home, farm income and a desire to self-contract their home – simply melted away. “We couldn't have asked for a better lender to work with,” Jim said. So if your dream is country living and farming, give us a call.



**Loans for Land, Construction,
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- 2.) Scan this barcode for more information.

WHAT'S YOUR 300 BUSHEL RECIPE?

Great chefs spend a lot of time selecting the best ingredients, measuring the right amounts, mixing them carefully, and then cooking properly to create their masterpiece. Just like great food, raising 300 bushel corn needs a special recipe. Visit beckshybrids.com or scan the barcode with your smartphone to hear the stories of our top 5 participants and learn how their recipes resulted in an average 66.9 Bu./A. increase over historical yields! We invite you to take the challenge in 2011. Register online or contact a Beck's representative to learn more.

TOP FIVE CHALLENGE PARTICIPANTS



Larry Holaday
Farmland, IN
5354HXR™
280 Bu./A.



Dan Deering
La Moille, IL
5244wx
279.7 Bu./A.



Tim Lawyer
Modoc, IN
6733HXR™
271 Bu./A.



Jay Bosse
Bluffton, OH
5454HXR™
267.7 Bu./A.



Randy Bensman
Sidney, OH
5779VT3
266.1 Bu./A.



OVERALL CHALLENGE SUMMARY

110 Challenges
Average Yield of 221.90 Bu./A.
32.90 Bu./A. Increase Over Historical Yields
91% of Participants Experienced a Yield Increase

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