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Kentucky
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As and food prices are rising, corn stocks are low and world demand for corn is soaring. The pieces are moving back into position to re-ignite the food-versus-fuel controversy.

Despite the fact that numerous studies have concluded that corn-based ethanol is barely a factor in global food price increases, corn growers probably need to brace themselves as ethanol's opponents fire up the debate.

It's frustrating to listen to the same claims over and over; blaming corn growers and ethanol producers for the rise in food prices. Fact is, farmers are experiencing some of the same negative factors on their farms, such as higher energy prices, that are driving up food prices. While corn prices are rising, so too are the farmer's costs for essential inputs like fertilizer, fuel and electricity.

Just a few months ago the World Bank released a study showing that volatile oil prices, weather extremes and energy price speculators were largely responsible for the sharp rise in food prices several years ago. But that's not what the public heard during the brief period when food prices soared.

American farmers take pride in providing their fellow citizens with an affordable food supply. It hurts when consumers blame us for hiking their grocery bills.

I'm also concerned about how this issue can pit farmer against farmer. Higher corn prices, of course, are tough on livestock producers. Currently cattle producers are hanging in there thanks to a good market condition, but hog, poultry and dairy farmers are caught in the squeeze of the corn price boom. It could be a tough year for them.

It's my hope that level heads will prevail through this period. If there's anything constant about our agriculture industry, it's that things change. A free market system is marked by peaks and valleys. There's never a "right" time for division within our industry, but with a farm bill and other crucial issues looming ahead, this is a terrible time for conflict among ourselves.

The market will adjust itself in time. Meanwhile, let's remain united in pursuit of our goals.



MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU



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Survey reveals urban concerns about farming

a survey by a University of Kentucky rural sociology class affirms KFB's concern that the non-farm public has some troubling perceptions of agriculture.

A class taught by Dr. Keiko Tanaka surveyed 551 shoppers at three Farmers Markets in Lexington, primarily to gain data on the socio-economic characteristics of those patrons. But in response to the question "Is Farming Better or Worse," 54 percent said "worse." And in explaining why they feel that way, most either said "because of corporate factory farming" or "loss of family farms."

Half of the survey participants said they believe food is worse today than in the past. Asked to list common concerns about their food, "chemicals" was listed by 50 percent, "additives" by 37 percent, and "origin" by 29 percent. On the positive side for farmers, "affordability" was mentioned by only 21 percent of the respondents, indicating that the large majority feel they have an affordable supply of food.

KFB President Mark Haney, who often expresses concern about agriculture's image, said he was not surprised by the survey's findings. The problem, he says, is that most Americans are far removed from the farm and receive information about farming and food processing from groups opposing agriculture on various issues.

"We need to do a better job telling agriculture's story," he said. "Our detractors have been successful in painting a distorted picture of farm and food production. Foremost is the myth about factory farms and corporate agriculture. People in general are unaware that family farms account for more than 90 percent of our farms."

"The facts also reveal that we have a safe supply of food. The food production system is heavily regulated. The use of chemicals does not impede the quality of farm commodities."

"The information is out there to support all of this. It's our job to bring this to the attention of those who are misinformed."

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Every two years Members of Congress take a solemn oath to support and defend the Constitution, and we are reminded of our responsibility to protect the future of our nation, no matter how difficult the decisions.

Our country is facing challenging times and the American people have made it clear that the policies pushed through over the last two years are unacceptable.

I am proud to be a part of the new Congress, one dedicated to shrinking our deficits, controlling federal spending, repealing job-destroying policies and limiting the size and scope of the government.

We cannot continue “business as usual” in Washington, DC. The total debt held by the public is more than \$9 trillion, the highest percentage of the Gross Domestic Product since WWII.

Both parties are to blame for the current fiscal situation, but I know we can work together to enact policies that will bring prosperity back to our nation. This year, the House has already voted to reduce Congress’ budgets and repeal the health care bill. We also have passed numerous bills to chip away at the absurd spending in Washington.

As Congress looks forward, these fiscal challenges remind us of the difficult decisions we were sent here to make; decisions that won’t be made without sacrifice.

I look forward to addressing these critical issues facing our nation.



BRETT GUTHRIE

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE
2ND DISTRICT

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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“The Voice of Kentucky Agriculture”

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KFB HONORED FOR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

K

KFB received special recognition for attaining the 500,000-member level and was cited for program excellence as part of the awards at the 92nd annual AFBF meeting last month in Atlanta.

In 2010 KFB joined Tennessee and North Carolina as the only states with more than 500,000 members. AFBF President Bob Stallman recognized the achievement during a general session by presenting KFB President Mark Haney with an engraved watch.

KFB also captured Awards for Excellence in recognition of its outstanding work in policy implementation, member services, public relations and information, leadership development and agriculture education and promotion. It was among 15 states to win five awards for program excellence.

KFB also captured Awards for Excellence in recognition of its outstanding work in policy implementation, member services, public relations and information, leadership development and agriculture education and promotion. It was among 15 states to win five awards for program excellence.

Steven and Richelle Bach of Bath County were runners-up in the Achievement Award contest that is part of the young farmer and rancher program. Winners of KFB's Outstanding Young Farm Family contest, the Bachs receive a Case IH Farmall tractor for the national achievement.

Daniel and Sarah Mattingly of Marion County were among the finalists in the Excellence in Agriculture program. They represented KFB as winners of the state contest.

KFB Director Terry Gilbert of Boyle County presided over the women's program as chairperson of the Leadership Committee. She was re-elected to a two-year term in that post.



AFBF President Bob Stallman presented KFB President Mark Haney with a watch in recognition of the membership achievement.

KFB had more than 160 participants among some 6,000 who attended the annual meeting of the nation's largest farm organization.

Among other Kentucky highlights, Hardin County Farm Bureau was recognized for innovative programs for putting together a local agricultural heritage exhibit at the annual Kentucky Heartland Festival. Around 200 volunteers were involved with the six-month project, including an organizational core group of around a dozen local agricultural enthusiasts. Hardin County FB coordinated the educational project.

Steven and Richelle Bach of Bath County were recognized as runners-up for the Achievement Award. They won a Case IH tractor.



DELEGATES CALLING FOR OVERHAUL OF DAIRY PROGRAM



From left, KFB's Executive Committee members Mark Haney, Eddie Melton and Fritz Giesecke study policy recommendations during the delegates session.

Delegates at the AFBF Annual Meeting voted to maintain a strong farm income safety net, address dairy price volatility and urge greater oversight of regulatory actions by the Environmental Protection Agency.

As Congress prepares to draft a new farm bill later this year and in 2012, the delegates reiterated their support for extending the concepts of the 2008 farm bill.

"The 2008 farm bill has worked as farmers and ranchers have weathered market ups and downs over the last four years," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "It's important to maintain a program that protects our nation's food, fiber and fuel supply and the consumers who rely on agriculture's productivity."

Farm program baseline funds should

not be diverted outside the farm bill, the delegates said. The new farm bill should maintain a strong "safety net" that consists of direct payments, a simplified Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) program and the countercyclical, marketing loan and crop insurance programs. Overall, however, the 370 delegates adopted policy that provides flexibility to move forward with farm policy within the budget framework that will become clearer later this year.

A new direction in dairy policy is needed, according to the delegates, to reduce milk price volatility. Recent years have seen both historical but short-term highs and devastating longer-term lows in milk prices. A resolution approved by the delegates says, in essence, that the dairy price support and Milk Income Loss Contract programs have not performed adequately.

"We've seen extreme fluctuations in dairy prices, and in the last two years the dairy sector has had a tougher time than other sectors," Stallman explained. "We can't continue to do the same things and expect a different outcome. We need a change in our nation's dairy policy."

Also adopted was new policy in support of a dairy risk management program that offers protection based on gross margins after subtracting feed costs. The delegates supported creating such a program in a fiscally responsible way by backing the use of all funding previously allocated to dairy price support and Milk Income Loss Contract programs to a new risk management program.

The new dairy policy allows for the consideration of a temporary supply management system, but it maintains AFBF's opposition to a mandatory milk production quota system. The policy enables Farm Bureau to work with the dairy industry to develop solutions for excessive price fluctuations.

Also approved was a resolution calling for more congressional oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory actions. The policy calls for Congress to assess the impact that EPA regulations would have on agriculture and to consider legislation to stop EPA's regulation of greenhouse gases.

The delegates also reaffirmed support for establishing a guest worker program that meets agriculture's need for farm labor, fair and open world trade and continued inclusion of the word "navigable" in the Clean Water Act's definition of the water bodies that are subject to federal regulatory jurisdiction.

STALLMAN: FARMERS BOOSTING “TRUST”

America's farmers and ranchers are positively embracing consumers like never before, but the adversaries of today's agriculture – from overzealous regulators to those trying to split agriculture into good and bad – will also discover a new assertive attitude in farm country, AFBF President Bob Stallman said in his keynote address at the annual meeting.

Stallman said farmers and ranchers are using new tools to share their personal stories like never before. He also relayed to Farm Bureau members a newfound attitude of unity and assertiveness throughout agriculture, in part, “to counterbalance those who are hell-bent on misleading consumers.”

“Our goal is to work together to increase consumer knowledge and restore trust in our nation's food production system,” Stallman said. “While we know we are committed to producing safe and nutritious food, to protecting and enhancing the environment and humanely caring for our animals, the public – our neighbors – still want to be convinced. Improving consumer trust is job one.”

While farmers and ranchers pursue this aggressive, new mission, Farm Bureau will continue to fight on their behalf. Stallman outlined organizational efforts to protect America's farmers and ranchers from regulatory challenges that threaten to “downsize American agriculture, mothball productivity and outsource our farms.”

Stallman announced AFBF will soon file suit against Environmental Protection



A rare blizzard hit Atlanta just as the annual meeting was beginning, dropping snow and then freezing ice onto the downtown area.

Agency regulations aimed at the Chesapeake Bay, which include provisions that will strip power from the states and potentially affect every farm and ranch in the nation.

“EPA likes to call the new regulations a pollution diet, but this diet threatens to starve agriculture out of the entire 64,000 square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed, and this new approach will not end with the bay. EPA has already revealed its plan to take similar action in other watersheds across the nation, including the Mississippi River watershed,” Stallman said.

A litany of EPA regulations, from water and dust, to greenhouse gases and endangered species, has put agriculture in the crosshairs, at the very time agriculture's environmental footprint is shrinking and productivity is on the rise, he asserted.

“We are producing more using fewer resources,” he said. “Total U.S. crop yield has increased more than 360 percent since 1950. Farmers are producing 262 percent more food with 2 percent fewer inputs. It takes 40 percent less feed for a cow to produce 100 pounds of milk than it did just 30 years ago. Any way you slice it, more with less makes sense for people and our planet.”

Stallman urged Farm Bureau members to carefully consider the organization's position on federal fiscal policy. He told members that an organization with Farm Bureau's political and policy influence has “a responsibility and an obligation” to weigh in and help find solutions.

“It will require budget cuts and those cuts will be painful,” Stallman said. “Every aspect of our government and every program and service we enjoy as Americans will be on the table. This problem will not be solved with slogans, sound bites and symbolism. It will not be solved with partisanship that is focused on the acquisition of power, rather than solutions for our nation.”

Stallman said it is appropriate that the nation's budget and deficit concerns drive the debate surrounding the 2012 farm bill. But he said “the historic and stabilizing role the farm program has played in American agriculture” also must be considered as the organization weighs policy options.

“As an organization that represents all regions and all production, this will be tough sledding,” Stallman said. “But to ensure our position of leadership in the farm bill debate, we must have direction that is clear, a strategy that is inclusive and an outlook that is visionary.”

FARM BUREAU WOMEN URGED TO SPEAK FOR AG

A FBF's Women's Leadership Committee is challenging Farm Bureau women to focus on speaking out for agriculture and reaching out to consumers in 2011, according to Terry Gilbert, committee chair and a KFB Director from Boyle County.

She encouraged women in Farm Bureau to focus on improving the perceptions people hold about farming and ranching, "even as our roles on the farm and ranch continue to evolve."

While acknowledging that reaching out to consumers to put a face on agriculture can mean moving outside of one's comfort zone, "this is something we must commit to doing because it ultimately benefits our entire organization and all of agriculture," Gilbert said.

"Communicating so that we can share accurate messages and information about modern agriculture is important. But we must communicate in ways that people use today. We need to accept that the way people communicate is changing all the time and will continue to change," Gilbert said.

According to the Agriculture Department's most recent Census of Agriculture, more than 30 percent of all U.S. farms and ranches are owned by women. Many of them may be producing products for niche markets and could ben-

efit from stronger connections in their communities and with Farm Bureau, Gilbert explained.

In 2010, program activities for the committee included raising funds for 10 scholarships for teachers to attend the National Ag in the Classroom conference, through the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's White-Reinhardt Fund for Education. The committee also awarded 30 grants to county and state Farm Bureaus to create or expand agricultural education programs. Exploring how social media can help put a face on agriculture is another focus of the committee, which has a Facebook fan page and a presence on Twitter, the micro-blog-

ging site.

Gilbert said Food Check-Out Week 2011, coming up in February, provides an excellent opportunity for farmers and ranchers to connect with consumers. In addition, the committee annually sponsors the Women's Communications Boot Camp, an intensive training seminar that is open to all Farm Bureau women. Farm Bureau women also actively participate in the legislative arena. In 2010 this included urging reform of death taxes and the "Don't Cap Our Future" campaign against climate change legislation.



Kentucky's Terry Gilbert, shown here at the beginning of a general session, was re-elected to head the Women's Leadership Committee.



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FARMERS, GOVERNMENTS SCRAMBLE TO DEAL WITH DEAD ANIMAL REMOVAL

BY WALT REICHERT

Last April a downed power line near Springfield electrocuted 19 cows in a farmer's field. What was a disaster for the farmer turned into an opportunity for the Washington County government, which had just installed a composting system for handling dead animals. Ironically, the operation was approved by the state just two days before the animals were killed.

The cattle, lying in a field about a half a mile from the county's new composting site, were hauled in and covered with wood chips and sawdust. Eight weeks later, nothing was left but large bones; two weeks after that, nothing was left but fine compost.

"We watched very closely for varmints – flies, buzzards – but we didn't detect anything," said Washington County Judge-Executive John Settles.

Washington County is one of several local governments that have come to the aid of farmers needing to find a convenient method to dispose of deadstock. The dilemma emerged after a change in federal regulations prompted two Kentucky companies to quit picking up deadstock on farms for rendering purposes.

For years, the two companies – Griffin Industries of Cold Spring, and Nation Brothers, of Shelbyville – hauled deadstock to rendering facilities for products ranging from pet food to fertilizer. But in April of 2009 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration implemented a rule as part of a trade agreement with Korea that required the removal of brain and spinal cord tissue from any bovine over the age of 30 months before it could be rendered. The rule was made in response to fears of the spread of bovine spongiform encephaly (BSE or mad cow disease).

The FDA's rule was handed down even though no American has died of the human variant of mad cow disease and only a couple of cows in the U. S. have been confirmed to have BSE. Those cows were traced to animals imported from Canada.

State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout said



Composting has proved to be effective in trials at UK's Research Farm in Woodford County.

the FDA rule was "overkill" but that Kentucky's farmers are stuck with it.

"In spite of complaints, they pretty much said, 'Sorry about your luck. Deal with it,'" Stout said.

Gabe Nation, co-owner of Nation Brothers, which picked up dead animals in a 22-county region in the central part of the state, took his fight against the rule to the halls of Congress but ultimately decided to close his family's business rather than comply with a rule he said would more than double his price for hauling animals.

Robert Griffin, of Griffin Industries, told Business Lexington magazine that his company would get out of the dead livestock hauling business rather than deal with the potential liability of trying to comply with the FDA rule. His company served many counties, most in the western part of Kentucky. After the regulation was implemented, Griffin complained that the rule was "politics" and that the 1997 ban on ruminant byprod-

ucts in feed was sufficient to eliminate the potential for mad cow disease in this country.

The void left by the pullout of Nation Brothers and Griffin Industries has farmers and governments in some of the largest cattle and horse producing counties in the state scrambling for ways to handle the carcasses. No small task as Kentucky has nearly a one-million beef cattle herd. Add horses, dairy cattle, sheep and goats and the task of keeping dead animals from contaminating fields and waterways becomes daunting.

Though handling large carcasses is not practical for many farmers, especially small operators on limited acreage, the state puts the responsibility of dealing with dead animals on the producer. KRS 257.160 requires farmers to properly dispose of livestock within 48 hours of "knowledge" that an animal is dead. Proper disposal by law can be incineration, boiling of the carcass for two hours, burial, disposal in an approved landfill and composting. Several of those methods – including incineration and boiling – are not practical for most farmers. And while many large animals are going into landfills, Stout said he fears that approved landfills will stop taking carcasses "if they become a significant part of the volume going in."

Many county governments have stepped in to help farmers. According to a University of Kentucky survey that was presented to KFB's Board of Directors last month, 15 counties are using Ag Development funds for various disposal programs and 14 have received grants from the Soil Conservation Service. At least nine counties are dealing with dead animal removal themselves. Others are contracting with animal haulers that have gone into the business. The state now has a total of 21 haulers licensed by the State Vet's Office to handle dead animals.

The UK survey revealed that 65 counties – most in the middle of the state – have pickup service while 55 do not. In 10 counties where pickup is not available, cost share is available to help farmers



Left: Dr. Steve Higgins of UK told the KFB Directors that composting was a safe, convenient and cost efficient method of handling dead animals. Right: Dr. Gary Palmer of the UK College of Agriculture presented the KFB Board of Directors with the findings from a survey of how counties are handling removal.

with on-farm disposal or to offset costs for transport. Counties also were asked to list the destination for pickups: 22 went to rendering facilities, 21 to a landfill, 7 to incinerators and several reported composting operations.

Following the UK report from Dr. Gary Palmer and Dr. Steve Higgins, the KFB Board decided to form a task force to deal with the issue.

Dr. Scott Smith, Dean of UK College of Agriculture, told his colleagues on the KFB Board that “pickup is a huge issue for farmers” and that “many feel composting may be the best solution.”

“It’s clearly a problem counties have handled in different ways,” Smith added.

Montgomery County’s fiscal court contracts with David Jackson of Bath County for its dead animal removal service, according to that county’s Cooperative Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ron Catchen. He said the service is run at no cost to farmers, but Jackson does not pick up sheep and goats.

In Christian County, fiscal court spends approximately \$5,600 per month for dead

animal removal services, said ag and natural resources agent Jay Stone. When Griffin Industries stopped picking up dead animals, Stone said the county contracted with two local providers of waste removal services to do the job, while the Extension office handles the billing for services. Farmers in Christian County pay a total of \$35 per head with a cap of \$105 per pickup.

“That way, we don’t hit hard a farmer that’s had catastrophic losses,” Stone said.

Like Montgomery County, Christian County currently sends its dead animals to landfills, but the county is looking into setting up a composting system similar to that set up in Washington County. Stone predicts once the composting system is up and running the county will save about half of the cost of dead animal removal services because of lower transportation costs.

“My hope is that cost savings will be split between the county and the farmers,” Stone said.

Composting may ultimately be the answer to dead animal removal for most

of the state’s farmers and local governments.

Dr. Steve Higgins at the University of Kentucky has set up composting models that can be duplicated by counties, and even larger operators, across that state. The system requires an impervious site – a concrete pad – and enough organic material to cover the animal above and below. Experiments show that the compost maintains temperatures of 140-160 degrees, enough to kill most pathogens, and to reduce the animal to finished compost within 8 to 10 weeks. Sites must be inspected yearly by the state and operators pay \$25 for a permit to compost dead livestock.

Washington County has access to sawdust from its local stockyards and wood chips from a line removal service to provide organic matter for its compost operation. To provide transport services to the composting site, the county is retrofitting a county truck to make it suitable for hauling dead livestock. A county employee will be used part-time to operate the service, which, Settle said, should be up and running this month.

Settle expects the composting system to be good for the farmer – and the county’s taxpayers.

“We were spending \$27,000 a year before,” Settles said. “Now our main cost will be a part-time employee. We’re proud of it.”

Higgins has travelled the state educating farmers and other interests about composting. He’s convinced it offers the best uniform solution.

A Stout public servant

STATE VETERINARIAN HAS HAD A BARNFUL OF ISSUES TO HANDLE

ARTICLE AND PHOTO BY WALT REICHERT

When the human and equine competitors paraded into the ring during the opening ceremonies of the FEI Alltech World Equestrian Games last fall, the pomp and circumstance of a spectacular event was on full display. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout and his colleagues were continuing what amounted to years of work to ensure that the foreign horses – no matter how well bred – didn’t unwittingly spread disease into Kentucky’s fabled horse industry.

Finding a way to get foreign horses into the state safely and efficiently for the Equestrian Games was just one of the many challenges Stout has faced in his seven-year tenure as State Veterinarian. Among many high-profile issues, he has had to deal with an outbreak of an equine disease, meet the needs of the burgeoning poultry industry, respond to a crisis with dead animal removal, address the controversial “animal identification” issue that USDA forced onto the states and contribute his extensive expertise to the “animal welfare” debate.

The former equine veterinarian wasn't interested in a spotlight when he was appointed to the post, but circumstances have given him a high profile for a position that essentially involves overseeing mundane regulatory programs. Veteran agriculture officials say Dr. Stout not only has gained an unusually high profile as a result of many crucial developments in the animal agriculture industry - - but has shined in his handling of those challenges. The Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association named Dr. Stout as its "Veterinarian of the Year" for 2010.

Stout grew up in Vevay, Indiana. His family later moved to central Kentucky. He earned an animal science degree from the University of Kentucky before heading to vet school at Ohio State University.

Following an internship in Georgia, Stout went to work for the Woodford Veterinary Clinic, seeing mostly horses and large animals. From 1984 until 2002 he worked for Equine Veterinary Associates in Versailles. That job ended when he tore up both of his shoulders.

"I couldn't palpate mares anymore," Stout said. "So I laid around six months figuring out what I wanted to do."

He served in a Homeland Security position at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture for a year before being appointed State Veterinarian in 2004. The office has about 60 employees that serve in one of two divisions, the Division of Animal Health and the Division of Producer Services. The two divisions regulate animal movement into Kentucky, conduct surveillance for disease, have protocols in place for responding to disease, train and educate producers, extension agents and veterinarians, and provide outreach education to producers and consumers.

Stout sums up the role of his office: Protect the state's animal industries against introduction of disease while still maintaining an environment where individual producers can operate.

If protecting the state's herds and flocks from disease while keeping producers happy were not enough of a challenge on an ongoing basis, Stout's office has also had unique situations to deal with during his tenure.

Most visible, of course, was the equestrian games held at

the Kentucky Horse Park last fall. Stout said the trick there was to allow foreign horses in while protecting the state's horse industry from a tick-borne illness call equine piroplasmosis. He helped develop a protocol for the safe introduction of the

foreign horses, approved by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, that established a quarantine facility in northern Kentucky that housed the foreign equine.

"The challenge was to allow the benefits to go on but not the risks," Stout said. "It was a challenge we met very well. I'm proud of that effort."

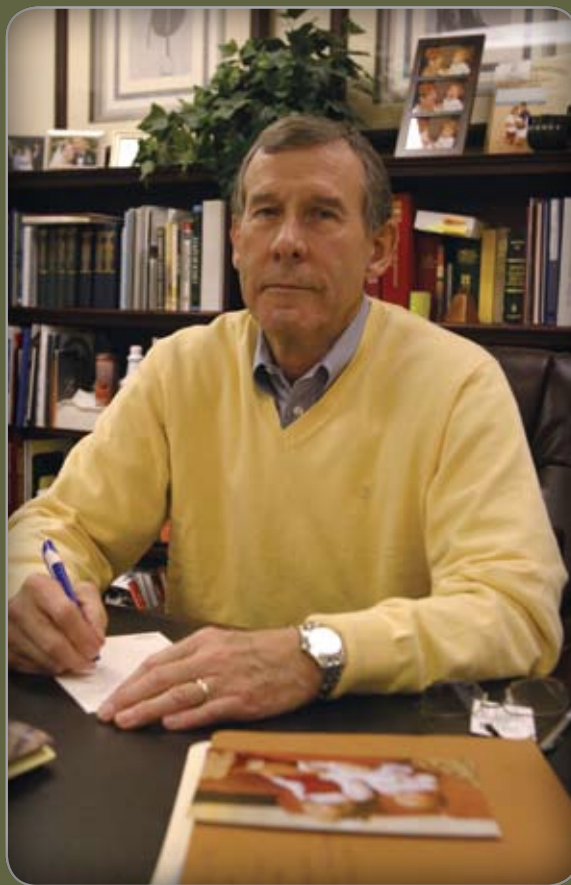
During Stout's time in office he has also had to deal with the relatively new health issues brought on by the increasing size of the state's poultry industry, including an outbreak of avian influenza that, fortunately, remained confined.

He is also working to update the state's livestock marketing regulations, especially in the face of the Eastern Livestock Company's issuing \$81 million in worthless checks to hundreds of cattle producers in the region; the company is now facing bankruptcy proceedings. Stout said many of the state and federal stockyards regulations were written for marketing conditions of the 1950s and haven't kept pace with the times.

"Since I've been here one of my main goals has been to update outdated regulations so that they're not onerous to industry," Stout said.

Stout said what may prove to be an ongoing challenge for his office is the issue of animal care in the state. He lauded the General Assembly for setting up the Kentucky Livestock Care Commission. The commission, he said, will set standards for animal care by producers but also serve as a pre-emptive strike against attacks by radical animal welfare groups seeking to challenge livestock production methods in the state. Stout said the job of the commission would be both to educate producers about the best, most humane ways to care for production animals but also to educate the public about animal agriculture.

"The general population is two to three generations separated from the farm and do not understand animal agriculture," Stout said. "We need to develop education programs so people in town understand ag better. Treating animals right and productivity are not in opposition to each other."



DR. ROBERT STOUT

THERE'S STILL WORK TO DO ON TAX ISSUES

Farmers got an unexpected Christmas present from Washington D.C. with the extension of the so-called "Bush tax cuts" that have brought lower rates on income and capital gains taxes. And although H.R. 4853 reinstated estate taxes, it's at a more favorable threshold than scheduled.

While this is good news for farm families and agribusinesses, the celebration won't last long because it all is scheduled to expire in two years. That means that Farm Bureau must continue the fight to abolish the estate tax and keep capital gains rates at low levels.

The estate tax was repealed for 2010 and was scheduled to be reinstated with a \$1 million exemption and top rate of 55 percent. H.R. 4853, however, set the exemption at \$5 million per person and the top rate at 35 percent. The exemption amount is indexed beginning in 2012. The old rates of \$1 million and 55 percent are set to be reapplied in 2013.

The new law also reunifies the estate and gift taxes, creating a single graduated rate schedule and a single lifetime exemption for gifts and/or bequests. This is effective for gifts made after December 2010.

Individual income tax rates and capital gains tax rates remain the same as for 2010.

The bill extended or reinstated a number of renewable fuels tax incentives, but for 2011 only.



The 2011-12 LEAD class had its initial meeting last month in Lexington. Much of the agenda focused on an orientation to KFB, with several staff members explaining the organization's history, structure and program of work. The group will next assemble for the annual Congressional Tour in late February. During a break the group paused for a group photo,

Back Row (Left to Right): David S. Beck, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Tony Grubb, Floyd County; Brandon Sears, Madison County; Tom Tucker, Warren County; Jonathan Fox, Pulaski County; Curt Divine, Union County; Nathan Highbaugh, Hardin County; Chris Pierce, Pulaski County; Susie Tanner, Director, Special Programs, Kentucky Farm Bureau

Front Row (Left to Right): Curtis Jones, Marion County; Nathan Lawson, Spencer County; Jamie Guffey, Barren County; Chris Mitchell, Fleming County; Amber Houck, Nelson County; Kristal New, Owen County; Todd Powell, Calloway County; Nathan Hampton, Butler County.

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“Century Farms”

GREENUP COUNTY PROGRAM HONORS AG HERITAGE

BY CARRIE STAMBAUGH

Main photo above: Terry and Lisa Osborne operate a farm that's been in the family since 1902. He is Vice President and she is secretary of Greenup County FB.

Photo inset left: John and Elizabeth Mann own Old Liberty Farm, which has been in her family for three generations. John serves on the Greenup County FB Board of Directors.

Photo inset right: Three generations of the Hiene-man family posed in front of the farmhouse built in 1906. From left are Curt and then George and Linda with their son, George.

Agriculture has a proud history in northeastern Kentucky that dates back to the region's earliest settlers. A recent initiative to honor that legacy in Greenup County located 27 farms that have been passed down from generation to generation through the same family for a century or more.

The farms have, in many cases, changed drastically over the last 100 years but each family has retained its land and carried on some aspect of a disappearing lifestyle.

The Greenup Century Farm program was initiated by State Representative Tanya Pullin (D-South Shore) who sought out the farms and paid for a November ceremony honoring them.

Pullin said she wanted to draw attention to these farmers and the contribution farming has made to Greenup County, as well as celebrate and honor the accomplishment and commitment of each family.

The idea was planted by one of Pullin's

constituents, John Mann, a Greenup County Farm Bureau board member and a century farm owner. He wrote Pullin a note after reading about a similar program in Indiana.

Mann and his wife Elizabeth own Old Liberty Farm, a 500 acre beef cattle operation which has been in Elizabeth's family for three generations. It is located on the site of the former Liberty village, which disappeared in the late 1800s.

Pullin said she began researching the idea and found Kentucky once had a program to honor historical farms but it was linked specifically to the state's Bicentennial celebration and required extensive documentation.

She decided to create a new, less formal, more flexible program for Greenup County.

"The point was not to cause them additional work or effort, the point was to recognize this tremendous accomplishment," said Pullin. She said she had no

idea more than two dozen families would come forward.

"I was so surprised. It's something we learned about our community, we have an even longer and richer agricultural heritage than we realized," she said.

Each century farm self-reported its history and modern agricultural activity.

"Many times Greenup Countians over-



Left: During the awards ceremony, Jeff and Tina Dupuy had daughters Ava (4) and Ashton (11) go to the stage to receive their farm's recognition from State Representative Tanya Pullin, who organized and emceed the event.

look this important aspect of our culture and our legacy but it's not just legacy it's still part of us. Because the farms in this part of the state don't tend to be those enormous spreads like (those) in western Kentucky, that might be another reason our farms don't get as much attention, but the love of the land is just as strong. The families passing that land and that vocation down from one generation to another and to the current generation, that should be celebrated too," said Pullin.

At the November ceremony held at Raceland-Worthington High School, Pullin honored families with accommodations from the Kentucky House of Representatives and shared the history of each farm with attendees.

Farmers were also given a metal outdoor sign, reading: "Celebrating over 100 years of family farming." These were specifically designed and crafted for the event. Pullin said she wanted to give farmers something to distinguish them, which could be displayed outside on their property for at least another century.

The Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy and the Office of the Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture also recognized families with accommodations and Greenup County Farm Bureau handed out special license plates with a Century

Farm Family designation.

Kenny Imel, president of Greenup County FB, said he believes the concentration of Century Farms in one county is rare but a simple reflection of the region's strong morals and values.

"We are very fortunate in Greenup County to still have people who are interested in agriculture because we've had so many that have gotten away from that grassroots approach. If we don't continue that on, farming as a livelihood, as a source of food, will be gone," he said.

"Family farms and agriculture are the backbone of everything Kentucky represents," said Roger Thomas, executive director of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, quoting Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear at the November ceremony.

Roger Bingham, deputy director for Ag marketing and product promotions with the Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture, also echoed that sentiment in his remarks.

"If you had to pick one group of people who have made this nation what it is today, without a doubt it is the American farmer. We feed basically the bulk of the world," he said. "American farmers have always been a very inventive person, able to adapt and that is basically what we have seen a lot of farmers do throughout the Commonwealth," Bingham said.

Greenup's Century Farms have done just that to survive, with most having moved away from very diverse operations designed to feed their families. Many also stopped growing tobacco in recent years and participated in the Tobacco Settlement.

Agricultural activities today range from livestock operations to harvesting hay to planting small personal-use vegetable gardens. All, however, "are maintaining some portion of the farm on the farm," Pullin said.

Many of the Century Farms have strong ties to KFB. They include:

OLD LIBERTY FARM: John Mann is a past Greenup County FB president and sits on the current board while his wife Elizabeth is involved with the Women's Committee. Elizabeth's father, Richard Dupuy, was the first Greenup County FB President. He instilled in her a deep appreciation for the bureau and its commitment to farmers, she said.

THE OSBORNE FAMILY FARM: Owned by Terry Osborne, vice president of Greenup County FB, and his wife Lisa, the

farm has been in the family since 1902, having been passed down by father to son through four generations. The Osbornes raise beef cattle, chickens and once bred pigmy goats. They cut hay from their property as well as from five others that were part of the original Osborne homestead.

THE HIENEMAN FAMILY FARM:

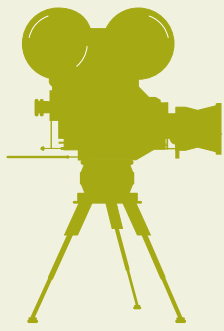
Owned by Curtis and Janet Hieneman and George and Linda Hieneman, who are fourth and fifth generation owners respectively. George Hieneman is a member of the Greenup County FB Board of Directors and his wife, Linda is Greenup County's UK agriculture extension agent. Each couple owns half of the adjoining 400 acre farm on which they operate a joint beef cattle operation. Their property lines go through the middle of several 19th Century barns and the families live in side by side farm houses built in 1906 and 1908 by brothers Bill and George Hieneman, who purchased it together in 1892. The brothers were sons of the first George Hieneman, who immigrated to Greenup County from Frankfurt, Germany in 1866. The family also owns his 35 acre homestead.

FOREST HOME FARM: Owned by Nita Cropper and her sons Bill and Dwight Cropper. Bill Cropper sits on the Greenup County FB Board. The Croppers can trace ownership of the farm back seven generations. It is also believed to have been part of a large land parcel given to American Founding Father Patrick Henry for his service in the French and Indian War. They cut hay and have a horse and donkey on the property.

Following November's ceremony, there has been a flurry of interest from various agriculture agencies to preserve the information and further expand the Century Farm program in Greenup County. Linda Hieneman said the extension office is applying for a grant to work with 4H to record the location of each farm using GPS technology.

The Greenup County Library has also expressed interest in preserving information on each farm through their genealogy department, according to Pullin. She encouraged any family in Greenup County that owns a Century Farm and was not included in November to contact her.

Carrie Stambaugh is a freelance writer based in Ashland. She can be reached at carrie@carriestambaugh.com.



‘Facing’ an issue

VIDEO
PROJECT
DELIVERS
MUCH-NEEDED
MESSAGES FOR
KENTUCKY
FARMERS

Some powerful messages about agriculture and farm families have been delivered through Kentucky television outlets and the internet via a project spearheaded by the Kentucky Soybean Promotion Board.

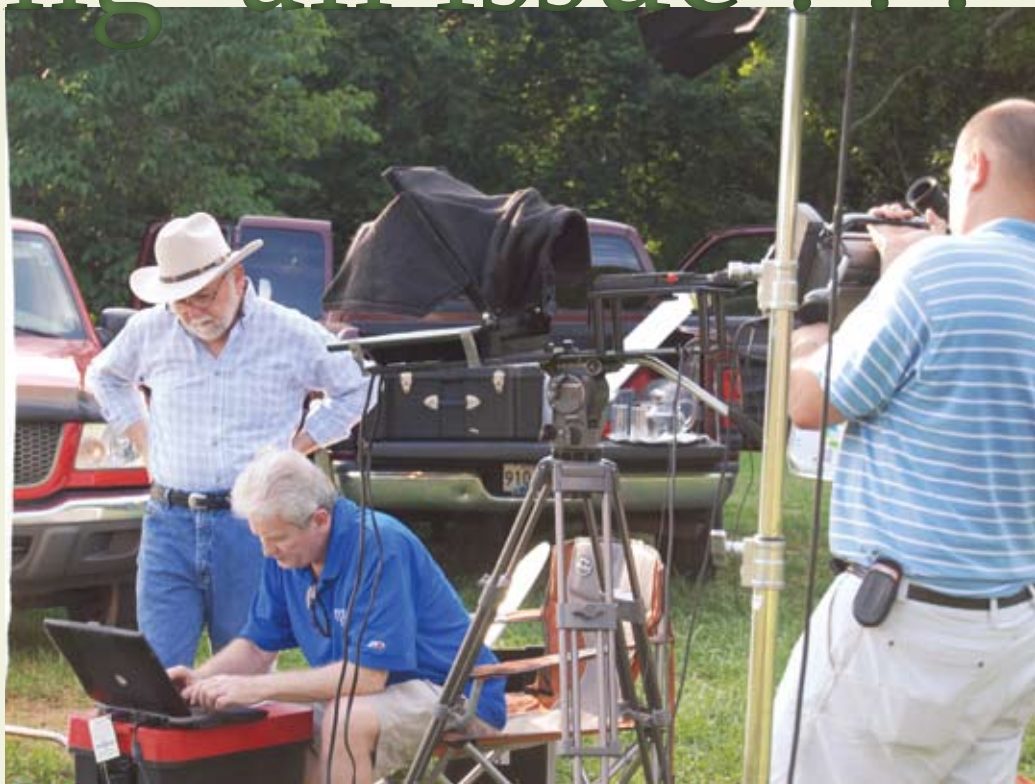
“Faces of Farming” encompasses a 30-minute TV program, various segments on the web and short public service spots featuring six Kentucky farmers or farm families. Each segment touches on a specific theme, such as stewardship, animal welfare, agricultural education and heritage.

One segment features Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman David Givens discussing the need to bring together urban and rural interests in the public policy arena.

The project was sparked by frustrations about the continual attacks on agriculture from special interest groups, said Debbie Ellis, Executive Director of the Kentucky Soybean Association.

“Our board is very concerned about all the negativity spread through the media and the misinformation that’s out there,” she explained. “They decided they wanted to do something about it. They made it a priority.”

While networking through the Kentucky Livestock Coalition, the soybean growers found the perfect facilitator in Ray Bowman, a Franklin County farmer and former Executive Director of the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office. Bowman, who has media experience and a passion for promoting agricul-



Ray Bowman (left) and John Moore of Destiny Productions prepare for one of the segments of “Faces of Farming.” Bob Karsner is the videographer.

ture and agricultural education, suggested the video and then developed it with Destiny Productions, a Frankfort-based video production company.

“He really put it all together,” said Ms. Ellis.

The program has aired on the KET stations as well as several cable outlets throughout the state. The PSAs have been widely broadcast, particularly in urban areas.

The Soybean Promotion Board has paid for the project. Bowman graciously volunteered his time.

Bowman introduces the program in an opening segment featuring Bourbon County sheep and cattle producer Kathy Meyer. After Mrs. Meyer talks about her commitment to caring for her animals, Bowman notes that “she, like all Kentucky farmers, has a story to tell.”

In his narrative Bowman explains that the program’s purpose is to put a face on family farmers and a spotlight on their dedication to caring for their land and

animals. Then he addresses the attacks from groups who have a different view of how agriculture should be, saying: “They portray farmers and ranchers as greedy opportunists, willing to use methods deemed inhumane or unethical to make a profit.” He then retorts with: “Farmers are skilled and trained stewards of the land. More than that, they are community leaders. They need an opportunity to tell their story.”

Bowman wrote the script and selected the participants after consulting with various farm interests.

“We really needed to show people what farmers look like - -there’s such a gap between urban and rural people and no understanding about agriculture,” Bowman explained. “I felt we needed to show the honesty and dignity of those producing our food. And we tried to paint as broad a picture as we could; with large and small farmers.”

Other program segments consist of the following:

*Davie Stephens of Graves County, a director of the Soybean Association, discusses the link between livestock and grain production along with “myths” about so-called factory farms. The segment has footage from one of his broiler houses.

*Corrine Kephard of Henry County, who is past president of the Kentucky Cattlemen’s Association, talks about how she became involved in agriculture through FFA and 4-H and the various responsibilities on her farm. She and her teenage daughter are shown caring for their shorthorn cattle. Their hogs also were filmed. “We need to do a better job of educating folks,” she said.

*Senator Givens, a farmer and agribusinessman in Green County, is filmed from the capitol in his legislative role. He talks about agriculture’s importance to Kentucky’s economy and culture. He notes that his first legislative session last year made him realize that there’s a divide between urban and rural interests. “Farming is still in many cases a way of life,” he said.

*Shawn Harper, an adult agriculture instructor and farmer in Marshall County,

is interviewed at the Kentucky State Fair, speaking about his family’s involvement in livestock shows through FFA and 4-H. His wife, Jenny, is the 4-H agent in Graves County and their daughters, ages 12 and 14, show goats. They also cure hams for contests. Harper talks about the family’s background in agriculture and importance of telling agriculture’s story.”

*Three generations of the Howard Ragland family of LaRue County are featured on a segment stressing heritage and the farm culture. Howard explains the family history in farming, noting that his Shady Rest Farm was established in 1925 as part of nine generations of farming. His son, David, talks about hog production and the overall farm operation. “It’s way of life – we want to do our best to pass it on to the next generation,” he says. David’s son Caleb then speaks about his love of farm life. “Farming isn’t the easiest profession,” Caleb says, “but I wouldn’t trade it for the world.” Caleb also addresses good stewardship, saying “we want to treat our land in the best way possible.”

The combination of the messengers and the messages paints a good picture of farmers’ challenges and concerns.

Bowman said the Ragland family is “a perfect centerpiece” of the program because of their heritage, commitment to the land and sincerity.

“They represent what the whole idea was about – putting a face on the people producing our food,” Bowman said.

Ms. Ellis says the soybean group is pleased.

“We didn’t expect it to take off on KET and all those cable stations – it’s worked out better than we could have imagined,” she said.

At this writing in late January, the last scheduled KET airing was February 28 at 9:30 a.m. EST on KETKY.

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Beef exports exceed imports

According to USDA forecasts, the United States exported more beef in the fourth quarter of 2010 than it imported – something that has only occurred in one other quarter (Q3-2008) since 2003. U.S. beef exports for 2010 will likely be 2.3 billion pounds, up 19 percent over 2009. A fourth-quarter 2010 export total of 650 million pounds is 25 percent greater than a year ago and is the largest quarterly export quantity since 2003. Beef imports during the fourth quarter of 2010 are forecast at 470 million pounds, down 15 percent year-over-year, resulting in the U.S. being a net exporter. For 2010, imports are forecast at 2.3 billion pounds.

Global demand for U.S. beef in 2011 should remain strong, especially among our Asian trading partners, but there will be less beef produced and available for export. USDA forecasts 2011 beef exports at 2.3 billion pounds, unchanged from 2010. U.S. beef imports in 2011 are forecast at 2.45 billion pounds. USDA expects imports to accelerate in the second half of 2011.

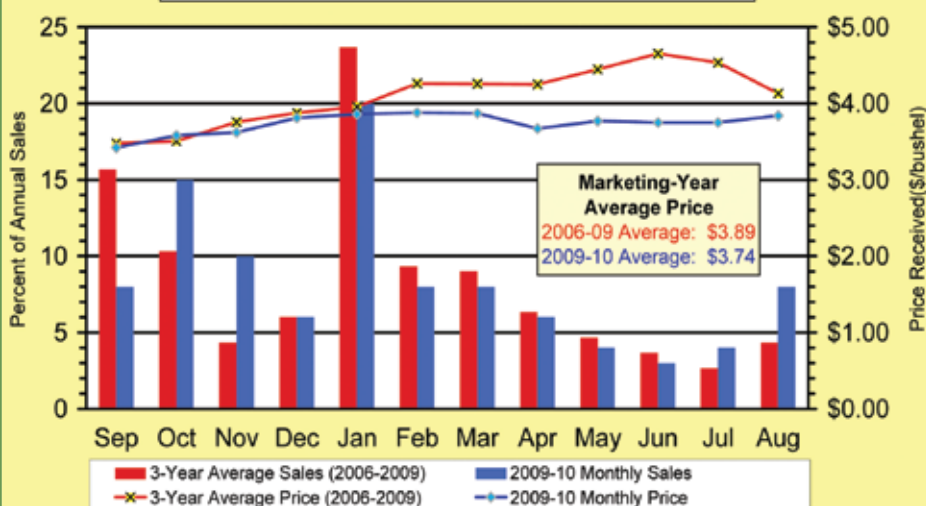
Corn stocks fall at high rate

USDA lowered its 2010 corn production estimate to 12.447 billion bushels due to the average yield dropping 1.5 bushels to 152.8 bushels/acre. Total use for the 2010/11 marketing year was unchanged from the December report at 13.430 billion bushels, up from 13.066 billion in 2009/10. These changes result in 2010/11 ending corn stocks of 745 million bushels, down 88 million from December, and 963 million bushels less than 2009/10 ending stocks. The 2010/11 stocks-to-use ratio is projected at 5.5 percent, the lowest since 1995/96 when it dropped to 5.0 percent. Similarly, the 2010/11 ending soybean stocks-to-use ratio is a very tight 4.2 percent.

Hay production and stocks are down

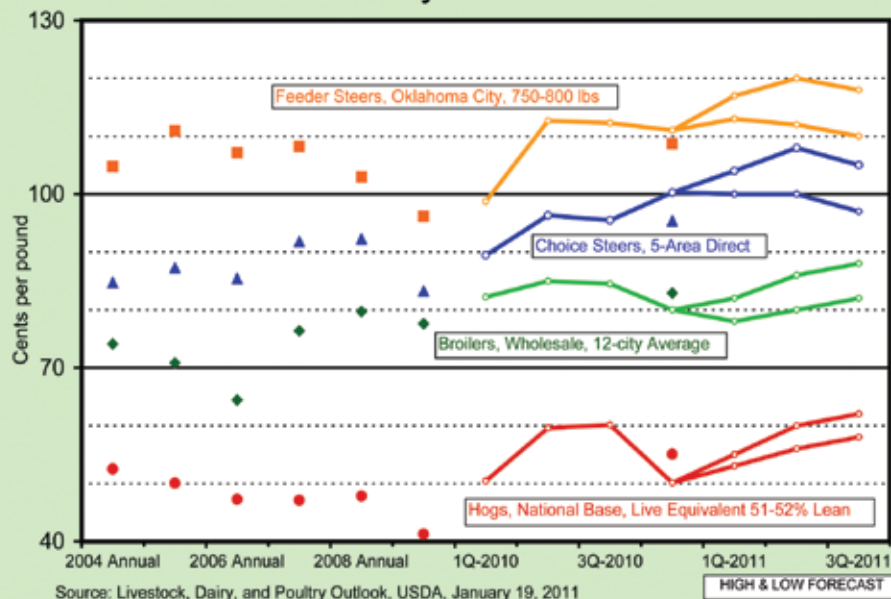
USDA estimated U.S. all hay production at 146 million tons for 2010, down one percent from 2009. The average yield at 2.4 tons per acre is down 0.04 tons. Production of alfalfa hay and mixtures is estimated at 67.9 million tons, down four percent from 2009. Harvested area, at 20.0 million acres, is down six percent and the average yield of 3.40 tons per acre is up 0.05 tons. Other hay production totaled 77.7 million tons, up one percent from 2009. The 39.9 million acres harvested is up four percent and the average yield is down 0.04 tons to 1.95 tons per acre. Stocks of all hay stored on farms totaled 102 million tons on December 1, 2010, down five percent from a year ago.

Kentucky Monthly Corn Marketings
2009-10 Marketing Year vs Previous 3-Year Average



Source: Agricultural Prices, USDA-NASS, November 2010

U.S. Quarterly Livestock Prices



Source: Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook, USDA, January 19, 2011

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AFBF files suit versus EPA plan

AFBF filed a lawsuit in federal court to halt the Environmental Protection Agency's pollution regulatory plan for the Chesapeake Bay. AFBF says the agency is overreaching by establishing a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or so-called "pollution diet" for the 64,000 square mile area, regardless of cost. The TMDL dictates how much nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment can be allowed into the Bay and its tributaries from different areas and sources.

Among its arguments, AFBF believes the rule unlawfully "micromanages" state actions and the activities of farmers, homeowners and businesses within the six-state Chesapeake Bay watershed. EPA's plan imposes specific pollutant allocations on activities such as farming and homebuilding, sometimes down to the level of individual farms. The Clean Water Act, the AFBF action contends, requires a process that allows states to decide how to improve water quality and take into account the economic and social impacts on businesses and communities in the states.

EPA finalized the TMDL on Dec. 29, despite documented discrepancies in the data it used to establish the TMDL, AFBF said. The six states in the Chesapeake watershed (Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia) must now follow very detailed watershed plans, or else EPA could block necessary permits and cut federal funding to the states.

Three scholarship programs underway

The KFB Education Foundation is accepting applications for three unique scholarship opportunities. The Paul D. Everman Fund for Lifetime Learning Scholarship is awarded to an adult Farm Bureau member who plans to continue undergraduate studies at an accredited Kentucky college or university. The Louis F. Ison scholarship is for a full-time graduate student pursuing a degree at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. The recipient will receive a scholarship of \$1,000 to be awarded in three separate payments.

For 2011, a \$2,000 and a \$1,000 Young Farmer scholarship will be awarded to two current college or vocational/technical school students. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-35 years old and major in agriculture or a related field at a Kentucky college or university.

Applications must be postmarked by April 29. Recipients will be notified by May 16.

Applications may be accessed at: kyfb.com/federation/scholarships or by contacting your county Farm Bureau office.

Farm Credit Services cuts rates

Farm Credit Services of Mid-America has rolled back interest rates on all existing loans by .35 percent, creating an annual savings to customers of \$43 million. Also beginning February 1, interest rates on all new loans were adjusted down by .35 percent.

"This is a special and unique action that we are able to take because of the fundamental strength of our cooperative," said Paul Bruce, Senior Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer. "We are able to pass along this savings because of some extraordinary earnings events and because our cooperative has performed well financially over the last several years. These rate adjustments will provide additional flexibility for our customers to withstand market volatility. This is something we're pleased to do, and this is the right time to do it."

The interest rate reductions on existing loans will take place automatically, and no action by customer-members is required to receive the new benefit.

Bruce explained that during 2009 and 2010, Farm Credit Services of Mid-America had experienced a combination of slower growth and strong earnings, which increased the association's capital position. This stronger capital position allowed the association to roll back interest rates.

FFA and USDA form new alliance

The National FFA Organization and National FFA Foundation have entered into a strategic alliance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and National Council for Agricultural Education designed to develop agriculture students' skills, leadership qualities, personal growth and career success. The partnership establishes a general framework for cooperation between four entities, all of which work toward common goals of advancing agriculture education and increasing awareness about the importance of agriculture through assuring international competitiveness and the sustainability of the industry by creating a highly prepared workforce.

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