

# Kentucky

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## CONGRESSIONAL TOUR

APRIL 2012 • VOL. 12, NO. 3



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On the cover: It's cherry blossom season in Washington D.C.  
Photo by L. Joe Cain  
KFB Director of National Affairs

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**Kentucky**  
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**t**he Kentucky Farm Bureau family has come together to help those in need.

The tornadoes that swept across Kentucky on March 2 left thousands of our members stunned and uprooted. Homes were destroyed or severely damaged. Vehicles were lost. Communities were leveled. Businesses were flattened or rendered inoperable. Barns and milking parlors blew down. Farmland was impaired.



And the tragedy wasn't limited to just a few spots – it stretched throughout the state, impacting sparsely-populated rural areas, the Northern Kentucky metro area, mountain communities like West Liberty, Salyersville and East Bernstadt, and so on. It was our worst tornado outbreak since 1974. It's the worst natural disaster to impact Farm Bureau members in the history of our organization.

Those days of sorrow and outrage that followed, however, were also marked by acts of courage and kindness that should make all Kentuckians proud. I know I'm proud of how Kentucky Farm Bureau responded.

We quickly put in place disaster assistance teams and claims centers. We summonsed colleagues from other states to help process claims as quickly as possible. We also authorized some agency managers to process claims.

Our agency managers, agents and county office employees were visible throughout the affected communities, providing help in any way possible. Our first commitment was to meet the immediate needs of those who had to flee their homes and leave their possessions behind. Farm Bureau representatives were on the front line, finding rental vehicles and lodging for the displaced.

And now, our second commitment is to help our members overcome this disaster, put their lives back together and rebuild their community. The work of rescue is finished. The work of recovery is just beginning, but is moving forward.

Our third commitment is to ensure that when these homes and communities are rebuilt, they are even better and stronger than before the storm.

These trials have reminded us that we are often stronger than we know. They remind us of the power of hope and resiliency. And they remind us that we are all tied together in this life, and that the despair of others touches all of us.

When Kentuckians desperately needed Kentucky Farm Bureau last month, we were there and well prepared to answer the call. My heartfelt thanks to all within the Farm Bureau family who contributed to this effort.

**MARK HANEY**

**PRESIDENT**

**KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU**



# MIKE TOBIN NAMED DIRECTOR OF KFB'S COMMODITY DIVISION

The new Director of KFB's Commodity Division is Michael W. Tobin, a Harrison County farmer with experience at both the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck also announced the hiring of Fran K. McCall as a commodity specialist



MIKE TOBIN



FRAN MCCALL

The Commodity Division serves as liaison to the various agriculture commodity groups and agencies plus works closely with KFB's advisory committees that review policies and programs affecting the respective farm commodities. Among other responsibilities, the division monitors market activities, oversees organization efforts at the KFB Beef Expo, facilitates the Kentucky

Country Ham Breakfast and coordinates annual educational tours for Kentucky beef producers and farm market operators.

A graduate of Eastern Kentucky University, Tobin served Kentucky agriculture the past four years through his role as a project analyst with the Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy. In that position he worked with County Ag Council members and others on project application, management and operation for counties in the eastern portion of the state. Those projects, of course, received approval from the Agricultural Development Board and financial assistance from the so-called "Phase One" tobacco settlement fund.

Prior to joining GOAP, Tobin worked eight years with the KDA, which included responsibilities with the office of the State Veterinarian and Regulatory Services.

Tobin resides in Harrison County with wife Lori and their two children, Haley and Cade. They have a small cow-calf, background and hay operation and enjoy riding and showing quarter horses.

Ms. McCall comes to KFB after serving three years as a 4-H and youth development extension agent in McLean County. She is native of Oldham County and holds an Agriculture Degree from Western Kentucky University and a Master's in Animal Science from UK. She has served as a livestock judging coach at UK and has worked with the state Division of Shows and Fairs.

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hen you take a look at our nation's history, it is no understatement to say the unparalleled growth can be traced to two key resources: coal and agriculture. Coal has been our primary source of energy for hundreds of years, while our farmers have produced the most affordable food supply of any industrialized nation.

Their impact is similar in other ways as well. Both provide secure jobs that are tied to the land, and both put us at the forefront nationally and internationally. Kentucky is third among the states in coal production – a key reason why we have the fourth-lowest cost of electricity – and last year saw farming sales top \$5 billion for the first time ever. We have not one but 10 different farm commodities bringing in at least \$100 million annually.

In recent years, these two resources have gotten closer in another way as well: providing energy. I don't farm, but I learned a lot more about farming after sponsoring several new laws that have pushed Kentucky into the growing field of alternative energy. This legislation has provided an array of incentives and received a push into research that will benefit us for decades to come.

Kentucky's agricultural community has taken this initiative and run with it in a way that surpasses even my best hope. The industry's visionary leadership has set the stage with new partnerships and a host of innovative and exciting projects. That is enabling us to capitalize on our strengths - our people, our farms and our natural resources.

You can see that in Daviess County, where the Owensboro Grain Company has the ability to produce 45 million gallons a year of biodiesel. The same type of thing is happening in Hopkinsville with Commonwealth Ag Energy, which not only produces ethanol from grain but also uses the byproducts to produce feed and dry ice.

Future opportunities depend upon the important research that is being conducted in our universities. The University of Kentucky is focused on crop diversification with the Biofuel Research Education Centers, while Murray State University is host to the West Kentucky AgBioworks Initiative.

Research to develop biomass to biofuel production is also being conducted at the Eastern Kentucky University Center for Renewable and Alternative Fuel Technologies.

As much as has been done, we must do more as our energy needs grow and we look to build on our energy independence here at home. There is a seat at the table for all forms of energy, and while coal has been our primary energy course, clearly agriculture is fast becoming an equal partner. Just as both powered our past, both are keys to our future.

Together, through strategic partnerships, research and investment, we will build upon Kentucky's energy policy to create a diverse plan that keeps energy rates low, maximizes our natural resources and leads the way to energy independence.

We are the only nation that has the ability to grow the food to feed our people and the natural resources to provide our energy. We must capitalize on this tremendous opportunity.



REP. ROCKY ADKINS

HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER

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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kyfb.com



# CONGRESSIONAL TOUR

## NEARLY 200 MEET WITH STATE'S DELEGATION

Flanked by colleague Rand Paul (left) and KFB President Mark Haney, Senator Mitch McConnell addressed the KFB contingent during the senatorial session.

**T**he race to determine which political party will control the White House next year commands a lot of the energy coming out of Washington D.C. these days. And so it was no surprise that presidential politics were discussed almost as often as agriculture issues during KFB's Congressional Tour last month. About 190 members participated in the annual visit to the nation's capital.

All eight members of Kentucky's Congressional delegation were on hand for the legislative breakfast at the Holiday Inn Washington Capitol Hotel. Most made at least a brief mention of the election and what could (from their respective views) be at stake. There also was plenty of dis-

cussion about such pressing agriculture issues as the farm bill, the federal deficit and several regulatory proposals that could impact farm production.

The agenda included briefing sessions, tours to popular sites and visits to legislative offices on Capitol Hill. As is the tradition, the concluding event was a question-and-answer session with Senators Mitch McConnell and Rand Paul. That session was dominated by a discussion about soaring fuel costs; the cause, effect and potential remedies.

Senator McConnell also reaffirmed his commitment to abolishing the estate tax. Paul reaffirmed his objection to burdensome government regulations that hinder businesses.

The KFB members were told it's unlikely





that a farm bill will clear Congress this year -- but much progress in the process is expected. Some of the Republican members of the delegation decried the Obama Administration's proposals for regulating youth farm labor practices. "That's going to be a big issue in the months ahead," said KFB National Affairs Director L. Joe Cain, who described the overall tone of the lawmakers as "pretty upbeat."

The youth farm labor issue involves the Department of Labor's proposed rule mandating that those under 16 could only work on a farm if it's "wholly owned" by a parent.

The Republicans also advised the farmers to keep an eye on several environmental regulatory issues, especially the Environmental Protection Agency's effort to regulate all waterways under the Clean Water Act.

AFBF President Bob Stallman attended



the breakfast to give a welcome address. Several AFBF staffers participated in the briefing session.

Among the attendees was the winner of KFB's 2011 Communications Award for a print journalist, Kristi McCabe of The Farmer's Pride. She provided excellent coverage of the event via a front-page story, sidebar article and a personal column in the March 7 issue of "The Farmer's Pride."

TOP: Third District Congressman John Yarmuth (right) visited with a group that included (from left) Gary McGruder of Bullitt County, Eddie Mathis of Shelby County and Sam Crawford of Jefferson County

BOTTOM: AFBF President Bob Stallman welcomed the group to Washington D.C. AFBF headquarters is just across the street from the Holiday Inn Washington Capitol Hotel that KFB uses for the annual Congressional Tour.

# CONGRESSIONAL TOUR



ABOVE: First District Congressman Ed Whitfield (right) met with his constituents following the breakfast.







ABOVE: Second District Congressman Brett Guthrie had breakfast with a group that included Ron Cole of Warren County and his son, Austin Cole, who was the male winner of the 2011 KFB Outstanding Youth contest.



INSET: Emily Drury of Anderson County got to meet Senators Rand Paul and Mitch McConnell. She earned a trip on the Congressional tour for winning the 2011 Outstanding Youth contest for females.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM FAR LEFT: Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers (right) spoke with Arlen Burton of Lawrence County following the breakfast.



BOTTOM CENTER: Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis (left) had a conversation with Mike Bach of Bath County, a longtime Farm Bureau leader who's also President of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association.

AT LEFT: Sixth District Congressman Ben Chandler told the KFB members that although they may sharply disagree on some issues, the Kentucky delegation maintains good relationships and strives to serve the best interest of Kentuckians, and not necessarily the respective political party.

# Open (the) season . . .

## KFB HOLDS MEETING FOR ROADSIDE FARM MARKET OPERATORS

**i**t won't be long until Mother Nature puts Kentucky's roadside farm markets season into full swing. To gear up, KFB conducted an educational meeting for participants in its Certified Roadside Farm Markets Program.

The half-day program at Elizabethtown's Convention and Tourism Center included two presentations -- on employee management and advertising and promotional strategies -- from one of the nation's most successful market operators, Hugh McPherson of Maize Quest Fun Park in southeastern Pennsylvania.

A panel discussion featured state and federal officials outlining a variety of programs available to assist farm markets.

KFB Director Russell Poore, who operates a market in Logan County, emceed the meeting in his role of Chairman of KFB's Roadside Farm Markets Advisory Committee. KFB President Mark Haney, who operates a market in Pulaski County, welcomed the group with a message about the opportunities for farm markets to succeed and serve as effective ambassadors for the agriculture community as a whole.

Noting that the KFB program has expanded to 108 markets since its inception in 1996, Haney said "I'm so proud of this program; we can see how effective this can be."

He added: "The opportunity we have is unbelievable. We have witnessed the growing market demand over the years and have reacted to it. We can sell to consumers and we can directly communicate with them at our markets. Consumer education is important."

In his remarks, McPherson said Kentucky has a national reputation for supporting the development of farm markets. "Kentucky has great organization," he said.

McPherson was a riveting speaker who mixed a wealth of information and personal experience with humor. His presentations were well received as he offered tips on hiring and management practices for market workers, and strategies for buying advertising and promotional activities. He fielded numerous questions from a captivated audience.



TOP: Hugh McPherson, who has a successful agritourism and farm market operation in Pennsylvania, gave a presentation on advertising and promotional strategies.

BOTTOM: KFB Director Russell Poore introduced the panel consisting of (from left) Tim McNeilly, Rural Development Coordinator at USDA's London office; Angela Anandappa, Program Coordinator at UK's Food Systems Innovation Center; Larry Snell, Executive Director of the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development; Ben Shaffer, Director of Agritourism at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture; and Sandy Gardner, Communications Director for the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy.



# Legislative Drive-In

**O**n a sunny, 80-degree day in mid-March that no doubt had farmers scrambling to catch up with chores, the turnout was understandably low for KFB's legislative "drive-in." Among what those members missed from Frankfort that day was a sunny forecast for legislative issues impacting Kentucky agriculture.

The drive-in affords a good opportunity for KFB members to improve relationships with their state legislators. While they seek to educate urban legislators about agriculture issues or maintain good ties with rural lawmakers, the KFB contingent realizes that they compete for attention and support with many different interest groups.

"Our visit reminds them (legislators) that agriculture has a strong impact and a strong presence in our state," said KFB President Mark Haney. "Personal contact is always valuable."

A group from Fayette, Anderson and Franklin counties took an extra step: They brought in lunch for their visit with Senator Julian Carroll, enjoying soup, sandwich and snacks with the former Governor of the Commonwealth.

The day began with a briefing session at the Transportation Cabinet building. Haney and KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck welcomed the group before KFB's public affairs team gave updates on legislation and comments on the political landscape in Frankfort. On that day, prospects were good for such "priority" issues as funding for a new Breathitt Veterinary Center in Hopkinsville, the state environmental stewardship fund and the agricultural development fund, according to KFB Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper.

After the briefing session, participants went to the Capitol Annex to see their respective lawmakers.

A group from Lincoln and Mercer counties heard some encouraging words from Senator Jimmy Higdon. He said that although KFB doesn't rank among the leading organizations in expenditures for lobbying in Frankfort, "you have a lot of influence here. We listen to you. Farm Bureau is respected."

This marked the first "drive-in" (which is held every two



**TOP:** Senator Julian Carroll had lunch in an unoccupied legislative office with a small group from Fayette, Anderson and Franklin counties. Area Program Director Mark Lyle orchestrated the informal gathering.

**BOTTOM:** KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck underscored the purpose of the event while welcoming the group. From the left are Second Vice President J. Fritz Giesecke, President Mark Haney, Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper and legislative agents Bryan Alvey, Tony Sholar and Paula Smith.

years) that members could visit former KFB Director Paul Hornback, who is now in his second year as State Senator for Shelby, Bullitt and Spencer counties. There are several other legislators with Farm Bureau backgrounds, including House Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom McKee of Harrison County.

Still, as the state's population has become more and more urban, the General Assembly has lost a bit of its rural foundation, making the "drive-in" even more important toward communicating agriculture's perspectives.

"We've found that although many of the urban legislators don't know much about what we do, they are very interested in hearing about our issues," Haney explained.

# 2012 KFB BEEF EXPO



KFB President Mark Haney spoke at the awards presentation for the breed shows. He affirmed the organization's commitment to Kentucky's vibrant cattle industry. At left is KFB Beef Cattle Advisory Committee Chairman Fritz Giesecke, a long-time cattleman in Hart County, and then Ag Commissioner James Comer, who raises cattle in Monroe County. Behind them is Warren Beeler of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, which administered the show.

**T**he \$1 million barrier fell at the KFB Beef Expo with records set for gross sales, average per head, and top price for a single lot. Several other records were shattered in the individual breed sales. Overall, 485 lots sold for \$1,062,940, an average of \$2,192 per head, in the 11 breed sales and the pen heifer sale. Gross sales were 24.1 percent higher than the 2011 total of \$856,545, and the average was a 27.4 percent increase over last year's average of \$1,720.

KFB leaders participated in the awards presentation and the organization had a display at the trade show. This was the 26th year for the event, which is administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Shows and Fairs.

"The department does a wonderful job with this show," said KFB Second Vice

President Fritz Giesecke, a Hart County cattleman who chairs KFB's Beef Cattle Advisory Committee. He presented the John C. Hendricks award for top prospect Kentucky steer to Ashley Burks of Hardinsburg. The award is named for the late KFB First Vice President, who raised cattle in Clark County.

The sale topper was an Angus female consigned by Boyd Beef Cattle of Mayslick that sold for \$27,000 to Bridges Beef Cattle of Shelby, N.C. The Simmental sale had the highest gross, \$173,600 on 60 head. That was followed by Angus (\$153,850 on 47 lots), Pen Heifers (\$118,875 on 72 head), Hereford (\$99,150 on 42 lots) and Charolais (\$90,850 on 42 lots). In the junior show, 477 animals entered the show ring, including 138 from Kentucky.

Other Kentucky-consigned highlights included:



# IS A RECORD-SETTER!



In the Angus show, Kentuckians swept the top awards. Heritage Farms of Shelbyville had the champion bull (\$3,900) and Toll Angus of Lawrenceburg had the reserve (\$2,100).

For females, Smithland Angus of Russell Springs had the champion (\$7,000) while Burks Angus of Park City had the reserve (\$6,700).

Kyle Skidmore of Shepherdsville got \$7,300 for the champion Beefalo bull.

For Charolais, Hayden Farms of Bardstown had the champion bull (\$5,000) with reserve going to Burns Charolais of Richmond (\$3,600).

Grand Ole Place Farms of Nicholasville consigned the champion Chiangus bull (\$3,250).

For Gelbvieh, Pleasant Meadows Farms

of Glasgow had the champion bull (\$4,600) while Reynolds Bee Lick Gelbvieh of Crab Orchard had the champion female (\$2,700).

HB Farms of Midway received \$9,250 for the champion Limousin female.

Cundiff Farms of Nancy had the top Red Angus bull (\$2,450), Martindale Shorthorns of Hardyville consigned the champion Shorthorn bull (\$5,500) and Matthew Young of Simpsonville had the champion Red Poll cow (\$1,950).

In Salers, the champion bull (\$2,300) came from Diamond J. Salers of Eubank

ABOVE: Consignors of champions from the various breed shows posed afterward with KFB and Beef Expo officials, as well as Agriculture Commissioner James Comer, who is in the middle of the photo. To his right is KFB Second Vice President Fritz Giesecke and behind them is First Vice President Eddie Melton. To the far right are Executive Vice President David S. Beck and President Mark Haney .

LEFT: Ashley Burks of Hardinsburg won the John C. Hendricks Award for having the winner in the prospect steer show. KFB Second Vice President Fritz Giesecke presented the award.

and the champion female (\$1,950) was consigned by Willis Farm of Frankfort.

In the Simmental show, the reserve champion female (\$5,300) came from Fritz Kieckhefer of Simpsonville.





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## wept off

### BOYLE COUNTY FB GROUP HELPS TORNADO VICTIM 90 MILES AWAY

ABOVE: The crew put up more than three miles of fence over the two days.

INSET: Don Whitaker (left) and Cameron Foster prepare some barbed wire for attachment. Whitaker Farm Fencing of Danville supplied the fencing. Don owns the company and Foster is an employee.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The Kentucky Farm Bureau family put its best foot forward in response to the March 2 tornadoes, helping fellow Kentuckians in many ways (see KFB President Mark Haney's column on page 3). This story of how Boyle County FB members helped an elderly farmer some 90 miles away is among the many shining examples of how KFB makes a difference.*

Boyle County wasn't impacted by the March 2 tornado outbreak, but members of its Farm Bureau certainly were. Media images of the devastation prompted the Boyle County FB Directors to decide that they had to do something to help an affected farmer. They approved up to a \$2,000 expenditure and then raised thousands

more from other groups (including the Boyle County Cattlemen's Association) and individuals.

Vice President Allen Goggin then called Boyle County Extension Agent Jerry Little, asking him to find a farmer that they could help. While helping to distribute fencing to storm victims in Menifee County, Little repeatedly was told about an elderly cattle producer whose farm was ravaged.

And so along a narrow country lane in a remote area south of Frenchburg, Little found 84-year-old Clayo Wells sorting through the rubble created by the same tornado that leveled West Liberty in neighboring Morgan County. Wells' house was only slightly damaged, but his sheds were flattened, trees and brush were scattered throughout his hilly 120-acre spread and most of his fencing was



damaged or destroyed. Friends and family were rounding up his cows, to be moved to another farm.

Several days later Little and Goggin were among a group that toured the Wells farm to determine what would be needed to get the job done. Don Whitaker, owner of Whitaker Farm Fencing Company in Danville, supplied the fencing materials at cost. Six of his employees volunteered to help. Caverndale Farm supplied a truck and trailer. Two

which is about 100 yards from his home. She and her husband had to be pried from the remains but suffered only minor injuries.

Little said six cows were found dead amid fallen timber but about 23 head survived.

With so much devastation surrounding him, Wells said he felt fortunate that his home was spared. But otherwise, "I have a mess here," he said.

Said Don Whitaker: "My father is a

retired claims adjuster – he told me he'd never seen worse than this."

Little credits Allen Goggin for initiating the project, but noted that "a lot of people were involved with this." (One of the workers, in fact, was from Washington County)

"Real people helping real people – that's the rural people way," Little said.

"This sort of thing really makes you proud to be part of Farm Bureau," said KFB Director Terry Gilbert of Boyle County.



Clayo Wells points at a storage shed flattened by the twister.

Caverndale family members joined the work group.

The Boyle County bunch then rounded up all the heavy equipment and additional manpower necessary to clear debris and replace the fencing.

On the weekend of March 19-20, 18 men on Saturday and 14 on Sunday installed more than three miles of barbed wire fencing around the perimeter of Wells' farm. They piled up tons of debris at spots throughout the knobby terrain in the Appalachian foothills. They also restored a small family cemetery atop a hill near Wells' home, resetting several headstones and replacing fencing.

Wells, a Menifee County native who has lived on this small farm for 25 years, was deeply moved by this act of kindness.

"A neighbor told us 'you don't know how much this means to this old fella,'" said John Hamm, a Whitaker Farm Fencing employee. "All he wanted was his cows to be able to come home. He said to us: 'It's nice to see that there are still people with good hearts.'"

Wells said he and his wife had warning about the approaching twister. They rushed from their house to the basement of their son's home about 500 yards up the road. The tornado arrived about 10 minutes later, flattening his daughter's house



## Helping HAND

KFB Federation purchased 45 solar and electric boxes and worked with county extension offices to distribute them to tornado victims in several Eastern Kentucky counties. Here, KFB President Mark Haney and veterinarian Dr. David Fugate unload the boxes at a veterinary center near West Liberty that served as the pickup point.

# COUNTY FARM BUREAUS RECOGNIZE AG WEEK



County Farm Bureaus joined with other farm groups in conducting activities for National Agriculture Week, which was March 4-10. The week is set aside annually to draw attention to how America's food system improves the quality of life for everyone.

One of the more prominent events occurs in Henderson, where for more than 10 years the Chamber of Commerce has held an Agricultural Appreciation Breakfast. The Henderson County FB Insurance Agency and Federation were among 23 sponsors of the breakfast conducted at the Fine Arts Center at Henderson Community College. It was a sellout, with several hundred local businessmen and women enjoying a buffet breakfast priced at 85 cents, an estimate of the farmer's share of the cost of the farm commodities in one meal.

Henderson County FB President Bob Watson was among the speakers, with Agriculture Commissioner James Comer giving the keynote address. Watson spoke about Farm Bureau's role in service to farm families and agribusinesses. He went into detail to explain the difference between Farm Bureau's insurance service and agricultural advocacy work, noting that the local insurance agency with Manager Chase Fulcher and agent Roger Campbell has a strong presence in the community. Watson also touted the value of a Farm Bureau membership, with the large number of product and discount services offered to members.

Henderson County FB drew praise from county extension agent Mike Smith and Tony Krampe, a bank executive who is chairman of the Chamber's Agriculture Committee. Krampe said agriculture represents the largest sector of chamber membership, with 43 of the 623 mem-

bers. Referring to the Chamber as a whole, Krampe said: "We get it – we recognize agriculture's importance to this community."

Smith described Farm Bureau as "an important part of our community."

Henderson County ranks among Kentucky's top 10 counties in cash receipts from farm commodities. It's a huge row crop producer.

Fayette County FB also had high visibility with a display at the Fayette Mall. Their Ag Week exhibit featured an agricultural quiz game in which contestants spun a wheel to learn their question. Fayette County gave away bag clips, markers and publications. Central Equipment Company brought out a John Deere Gator utility vehicle for mall-goers to check out.

Volunteers manned the Fayette County FB display throughout a busy Saturday at the mall.

Organizers of the National Ag Day pro-





OPPOSITE PAGE: Henderson County FB was recognized as one of the sponsors of the sold-out Agriculture Appreciation Breakfast in Henderson. Participants enjoyed breakfast from a setting on the stage of the Fine Arts Center at Henderson Community College.

CENTER TOP: Henderson County FB President Bob Watson was among the featured speakers at the Chamber of Commerce's annual Agriculture Appreciation Breakfast.

CENTER BOTTOM: Fayette County Farm Bureau's display at the Fayette Mall was abuzz with activity all day.

ABOVE: Linda Tucker (left), Sherry Ferguson and Maner Ferguson worked a shift at the Fayette County FB display. Maner is a retired Fayette County agriculture extension agent and also headed up a county farmland preservation program.

gram believe that every American should understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced, as well as the essential role agriculture plays in our society.

"Just a few generations ago most families in Kentucky were directly connected to farming. We realize that is not the case today," said KFB President Mark Haney. "We need to make sure that all people, and especially our youth, understand the major role that agriculture has in everyday life."

There are many effective messages to underscore agriculture's importance. Although the number of farms in the United States has steadily declined over the years, agricultural production continues to meet the needs of a growing American and global population. Today's farmer grows twice as much food as his or her parents did, but uses less land, water and energy to do so. About 90 percent of

those farms are operated by families or individuals.

Additionally, an estimated 20 percent of U.S. farm production is exported and, according to government statistics, agriculture is one of the few remaining industries with a positive balance of trade.

Kentucky's economy is strongly supported by agriculture as well, accounting for more than \$5.3 billion in annual economic activity plus more than 270,000 jobs, according to a University of Kentucky survey. Only four states have more farms than the 87,000 in Kentucky.

Healthy as American ag production is, the amount of exported goods from the U.S. will need to increase even more if global demand for its food and fiber continues at the current pace. It is projected that the world's population will grow by one-third its current size to an anticipated nine billion people by the year 2050. With that kind of growth, full support of the country's agri-

cultural producers is needed.

"Feeding people has always been the central role of farmers," said Haney, "but feeding a growing world population while the amount of farmland is simultaneously shrinking is a real challenge. Appreciating, understanding and partnering with the ag community will be necessary at all levels of society if we are to meet these increasing demands."

Haney, who operates an orchard and cattle farm in Pulaski County, said he hopes National Agriculture Week's promotion of farmers will entice more people to educate themselves about what farmers do.

"Agricultural education should not just be for those who choose to pursue farming or agribusiness as a career," concluded Haney. "A broader understanding of agriculture leads naturally to a greater appreciation of the safe and abundant food supply we have all come to enjoy."

# MARSHALL COUNTY POULTRY FARMERS FIND A MARKET FOR COMPOSTED LITTER

By Katie Pratt  
UK College of Agriculture

**C**hickens produce a lot of poop. In fact, poultry farmers struggle to find ways to dispose of or reuse chicken litter in a way that's friendly to the environment. In Marshall County, poultry farmers and KFB members Doug and Dianna Hall are using the litter in an innovative way that not only is environmentally sensitive but is making them a little money on the side.

The Halls are composting the chicken litter and selling the finished product as a composted soil amendment that land-

scapers, home gardeners and personnel of parks and golf courses can use to enrich and improve their soils.

"If we put the time and effort into planting seeds in our gardens and do nothing to

learned that day, improved some things, eliminated others and applied intelligence, knowledge and research to find out what it might take to do this," Martin said. "I don't think they've looked back since."

Determining the correct formula for composting the litter and eliminating its smell didn't happen overnight. The Halls began experimenting with different compost mixtures in 2009 and daily monitored the temperature and moisture content of the compost until they found a formula that worked for them. Dianna Hall also consulted Iin Handayani, an agronomist and her graduate school adviser at Murray State University.

The Halls wanted to keep costs as low as possible for the composting project. They

used equipment they had already purchased for the poultry operation to start the composting process. Doug Hall collected old farm equipment from area farmers that they no longer had a use for and created a machine that sifts the finished product to give it a uniform appearance and allow for easy packaging. Compost that doesn't fit the uniform standards is sent back through the process.

"It was a lot of trial and error, but the main thing is it was low budget," said Doug Hall, who is Vice President of Marshall County FB. "We're not looking at a lot of money and equipment to get our product out."



Doug Martin uses a makeshift machine to sift the litter prior to packaging.

improve our soils, we're just wasting our efforts, because we end up with diseased plants, unhealthy plants and unproductive plants," Dianna Hall said.

The Halls came up with the idea and connected with Lincoln Martin, University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service agriculture and natural resource agent in Marshall County. He was able to arrange a visit for them with a producer who was doing the same thing in southern Tennessee.

"They built upon some things they

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- **April 28 in Shelbyville, KY** - Great Meadows Angus Association 30th Annual Spring Sale, selling 140 head of registered Angus Cattle.
- **May 6 in Frankfort, KY** - Bridgeview Angus Production Sale

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## Lamb/mutton production rising

First quarter 2012 production of lamb and mutton is forecast at 38 million pounds, or five percent higher than a year earlier. With tight supplies, USDA reports that Choice Slaughter lamb prices at San Angelo during the first quarter of 2012 are down only slightly since 2011, one of the best years on record. USDA attributes the price strength to various factors. The first is global supply-demand issues. Australia and New Zealand, major suppliers, have seen declines in the number of animals harvested. In addition, high prices have increased retention for herd expansion. A second factor in strong lamb prices is exchange rates. The weak U.S. dollar relative to competing exporters' currencies has made U.S. exports very attractive. In 2011, lamb and mutton exports were up 19 percent from 2010. USDA warns that 2012 prices could be negatively impacted by an increased number of over-finished lambs.

## U.S. Beef: 2012 exports slip, imports climb

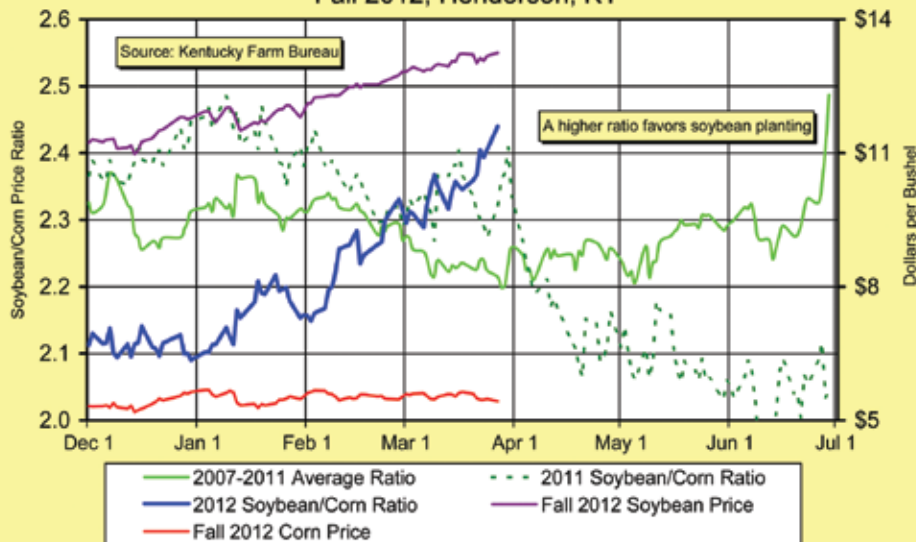
U.S. beef exports for 2012 are forecast at 2.76 billion pounds, fractionally below 2011's export level. USDA forecasts eight percent growth in the first quarter of 2012, with 685 million pounds exported. Second quarter exports are expected at 735 million pounds, or nearly five percent higher than a year earlier. Total U.S. beef production levels are expected to be 1.7 and 2.2 percent lower in the first and second quarters of this year, respectively. However, beef production will be 5.3 and 8.5 percent lower for the third and fourth quarters, and beef exports are expected to be nine and six percent lower, respectively, in those quarters. At 2.2 billion pounds, U.S. beef imports in 2012 are expected to be nine percent above the historically low import level of 2011.

## Crop production values rose in 2011

The five principal crops produced in Kentucky experienced an increase in value for the 2011 crop year compared to the 2010 crop year. Except for hay, the increase in value was more a result of larger production than the increase in the average price received. By far, corn was the highest valued crop for Kentucky at \$1.156 billion dollars, a jump of 47 percent over 2010. In second place, soybeans increased 29 percent to \$693 million. All-hay production in 2011 was valued at \$501 million, up seven percent from 2010; the average price jumped from \$89.50 to \$106.00 per ton. All tobacco's value of \$333 million compared to \$309 million for the 2010 crop year. The much bigger wheat crop of 2011 was valued at \$203 million, up 115 percent from the previous year.

### Soybean/Corn Price Relationship

Fall 2012, Henderson, KY



### U.S. Pork Exports to China vs China Hog Price



Note: Data include fresh, chilled and frozen pork; sausage casings; offal; and processed pork products. China hog price converted to U.S. dollars at official exchange rate.

Source: China's Volatile Pork Industry, USDA-ERS, February 2012







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