

# Kentucky

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FEBRUARY 2013 • VOL. 12, NO. 1



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ON THE COVER:  
 A 2012 winter scene in Shelby County.  
 Photo by Roger Nesbitt

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Over the years Kentucky Farm Bureau leaders have come from many backgrounds and types of farming operations. Their involvement starts at the county level and can be initiated by anything from a simple conversation at the farm supply store to a developing issue that has moved them to pursue a solution.



In many cases the folks we rely on at the county and state levels have emerged from a dependable network that has served us well -- FFA and/or 4-H as teenagers, and then our young farmer program.

I've said many times that I believe our young farmer program is second to none. The results continue to affirm that. Our summer and winter weekend outings for young farm families are usually packed with participants. In fact, virtually every event we hold for young farmers and their families draws a capacity.

And then there's the steady stream of awards bestowed upon our program and participants. At the recent AFBF annual meeting, for the third time in seven years a Kentucky young farm family was selected to receive the prestigious Achievement Award. This is a huge accomplishment in this highly-competitive program.

Ryan and Misty Bivens of LaRue County won the award, following in the footsteps of 2007 winners John and Jill Mahan of Fayette County and 2010 winners Aaron and Ashley Reding of LaRue County.

I should also mention that our Discussion Meet state champion, Stacy Vincent of Fayette County, was runner-up in the national contest.

We at KFB are very proud of these accomplishments.

Ryan and Misty are part of what I feel is a very impressive generation of young farmers. The landscape of farming is changing rapidly, and yet rather than regard change as a deterrent to progress, these young farmers are dealing head-on with the issues and challenges. They are seizing opportunities and taking risks to shape their future. I see it every day with the way they produce and market their commodities, as well as their use of the new wave of communication tools.

Times have changed, but the role of a vibrant young farmer program remains crucial to the future of KFB. It's a great way to motivate young farm families to serve our wonderful organization. We commit vast resources to our young farmer and youth development programs because it is money and manpower well-spent!

**MARK HANEY**

**PRESIDENT**

**KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU**

# "FISCAL CLIFF" BILL BRINGS ESTATE TAX RELIEF

Over the years Senator Mitch McConnell continually has told KFB members that he feels the "death tax" is the most senseless tax of all. To make his point he is fond of saying: "You have to visit the IRS and the undertaker on the same day."

The Senate Minority Leader made a dent in the estate tax situation when he

and Vice President Joe Biden negotiated a compromise for the so-called "fiscal cliff" legislation (the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012). The new law prevented the estate tax exemption from dropping to \$1 million, making permanent a \$5 million per person level. KFB has publicly thanked Senator McConnell for his work on this issue.

While the legislation failed to reach agreement on any significant budget savings, automatic cuts under sequestration were delayed for two months to allow the 113th Congress to be sworn in and begin work to reach a compromise. However, federal budget cuts will occur on March 1 if a deal is not reached. Details of some of the tax provisions are:

- **ESTATE TAXES** - The estate tax exemption is \$5 million per person indexed for inflation with any unused amount allowed to transfer to a spouse (portability.) The maximum rate will increase to 40 percent (up from 35 percent). The estate and gift tax exemptions are unified. Stepped-up basis is already permanent law and will continue.

- **CAPITAL GAINS TAXES** - The top rate will be 15 percent for taxpayers making under \$400,000 (single person)/\$450,000 (couple).

- **INCOME TAXES** - Income tax rate brackets will be 10 percent, 25 percent, 28 percent, and 35 percent for taxpayers making under \$400,000 (single person)/\$450,000 (couple). There are no caps on personal exemptions or itemized deductions. The marriage penalty is eliminated for many taxpayers.



SENATOR MCCONNELL

- **ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX (AMT)** - The bill increases the AMT exemption for 2012 to \$50,600 (individuals) and \$78,750 (married filing jointly) and indexes it for inflation.

- **SECTION 179 SMALL BUSINESS EXPENSING** - The maximum amount that a small business can immediately expense when purchasing business assets instead of depreciating them over time will be \$500,000 reduced dollar for dollar when expenditures exceed \$2 million (2012 and 2013).

- **BONUS DEPRECIATION** - 50 percent bonus depreciation (2013).

- **CELLULOSIC BIOFUEL PRODUCER TAX CREDIT (2013)** - \$1.01 per gallon income tax credit for cellulosic biofuel sold for fuel; Additional first-year 50 percent bonus depreciation for cellulosic biofuel production facilities.

- **BIODIESEL TAX INCENTIVES (2012 AND 2013)** - The biodiesel and renewable diesel \$1.00 per gallon tax credit; The 10 cents per gallon small agri-biodiesel producer credit; and the \$1.00 per gallon tax credit for diesel fuel created from biomass.

## DISTRICT MEETING SCHEDULE

District 1	March 18	7 p.m.	Sedalia Restaurant
District 2	March 5	6:30 p.m.	Ballard Conv. Center, Madisonville
District 3	March 28	6:30 p.m.	Rough River State Park Lodge
District 4	March 25	6:30 p.m.	Barren River State Park Lodge
District 5	March 21	7 p.m.	Marion County Extension Office
District 6	March 4	7 p.m.	Kenton County Extension Office
District 7	March 19	6 p.m.	Russell County Auditorium
District 8	March 4	7 p.m.	Farm Bureau Office, Berea
District 9	March 11	6:30 p.m.	Blue Licks State Park Lodge
District 10	March 4	6:30 p.m.	Lawrence County Extension Office
District 11	March 19	6:30 p.m.	State of Mine Restaurant, Hazard

One of the fondest memories of my childhood is the first time I put on that 4-H green jacket and that FFA blue corduroy jacket...special attire that, along with a pair of mud-stained boots, immediately identify a farm kid. I credit these programs for inspiring me toward a life in public service, and I am so honored to have the opportunity to pay them back.



Over the next few weeks, I will again take to the road to promote our Ag-Tag Program. I will visit more than thirty counties encouraging local residents to make a voluntary \$10 donation when they renew their farm license plates. All of these proceeds will be split evenly among 4-H, FFA and Kentucky Proud, the special brand that appears on Kentucky-grown and made agriculture products.

At the same time, I will be introducing a new Kentucky Proud label to the Commonwealth. Homegrown by Heroes honors our military/veteran farmers and promises to add value to their agriculture products. Please ask your local vendors to seek out members of the Homegrown by Heroes brand and join me in supporting the men and women who have so bravely served our country.

I know I can count on Farm Bureau and all the members of our agriculture community to participate in these unique and targeted programs, all of which ultimately help shape the future leaders of our state. And when we are in your community, I hope you will stop by and share your memories of your 4-H and FFA years. If you can still squeeze into them, feel free to sport those green or blue corduroy jackets. In our agriculture family, they never go out of style.

**JAMES COMER**

**COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE**

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

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# KENTUCKY COUPLE WIN NATIONAL YOUNG FARMER AWARD

**R**yan and Misty Bivens of LaRue County won the prestigious Achievement Award for young farmers during AFBF's 94th annual meeting last month in Nashville. As winners of the highly-competitive contest for young farmers throughout the nation, Ryan and Misty get their choice of a 2013 Chevrolet Silverado or GMC Sierra. They also receive paid registration to the upcoming AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Conference in Phoenix.

The Achievement Award recognizes those who have excelled in their farming operation plus have displayed leadership abilities. Participants are evaluated on a combination of their agricultural operation's growth and financial progress, Farm Bureau leadership and leadership in other groups.

The Bivens qualified for the national contest by winning the Kentucky contest. They are large-scale row crop producers plus raise hay and have a commercial cattle herd. They also have other agricultural business interests and Misty is an award-winning agriculture teacher.

Both have won KFB's Discussion Meet. Ryan is a past chairman of KFB's Young Farmer Committee. Just last year they were honored with one of only five "America's Best Young Farmer" awards by DTN/Progressive Farmer. They've also won KFB's Excellence in Agriculture Award.

KFB's young farmer program got another accolade with Stacy Vincent of Fayette County finishing as a runner-up in the Discussion Meet. He receives a Case IH Farmall 55A, \$3,000 cash and STIHL merchandise. The Discussion Meet simulates a committee meeting in which active discussion and participation are expected.



Ryan and Misty Bivens (left) receive the prestigious award from AFBF President Bob Stallman and Mark Gilbert (right) of General Motors, which is providing them with a new vehicle.

Participants are evaluated on their ability to exchange ideas and information.

KFB received excellence awards in five program categories. AFBF President Bob Stallman announced the winners during the meeting's general session. The Awards for Excellence are awarded to state Farm Bureaus that have demonstrated outstanding achievements in five program areas: Education and Outreach; Leadership Development; Member Services; Policy Development and Implementation; and Public Relations and Communications. KFB was honored in each category.

KFB Director Terry Gilbert of Boyle County was re-elected to what will be her seventh two-year term as chairwoman of AFBF's Women's Committee. Mrs. Gilbert has served on the national committee since 2000.

In another highlight, Mercer County FB was among 25 county Farm Bureaus to



AFBF President Bob Stallman congratulates KFB President Mark Haney for KFB's five excellence awards.

receive a "County Activities of Excellence Award." It was recognized for a "FarmSCool" educational program and had an exhibit of the program on display at the trade show.

About 500 KFB members attended, including 26 voting delegates.

# FARM BILL TOPS POLICY GOALS

**V**oting delegates to AFBF's annual meeting expressed support for a bipartisan, reform-minded farm bill, crafted around a broad, flexible, crop-insurance-based program, including risk-management protection for peanuts, rice, forage and specialty crops.

"After ending a long year of policy uncertainty culminating with an extension of the old bill, we will push hard, in cooperation with our congressional and administration allies, for a five-year farm bill that provides our farmers certainty and extends much-needed risk management tools across more acres and more crops," said AFBF President Bob Stallman.

Delegates said AFBF would not only support a farm bill with a strong safety net and risk management programs to protect farmers from catastrophes, but they also would work for programs that provide emergency assistance for livestock and tree producers not covered by federal crop insurance programs.

Delegates reaffirmed policy supporting changes to the dairy safety net, consistent with the margin insurance programs included in versions of the farm bill approved by the House and Senate Ag Committees.

On another dairy issue, delegates approved a new policy that states only pasteurized milk and milk products should be sold for human consumption. Delegates approved the measure in light of the potential risks to public health and food safety posed by consumption of raw milk.

On national fiscal policy, delegates reaffirmed the importance of a sound budget process with a priority on spending



KFB Directors Joe Paul Mattingly of Marion County (center), Terry Rowlett of Henry County (right) and Scott Travis of Spencer County at the business session. They were among 26 delegates from KFB.

restraints rather than tax increases.

Delegates also voted to support streamlining or replacement of the H-2A seasonal and temporary agricultural worker program in addition to allowing experienced, undocumented agricultural workers to adjust to legal status.

"Only comprehensive immigration reform through legislation can solve the agricultural worker problem," Stallman said.

Recognizing the important role played by agricultural biotechnology and rapid developments in the industry, delegates expressed continued support of a private-sector, industry accord to govern how biotech traits are managed when patents expire. They also reiterated support for the continued implementation of an industry solution that promotes investment and marketability of new technologies.

On regulatory policy, delegates said that "all federal agencies shall be held to the strictest interpretation of law when

setting regulations" and "no federal agency shall be allowed to legislate through their regulatory power." They also said that "no regulatory action should be taken against landowners based on satellite or aerial imagery."

Delegates expressed concern about the advantage that Internet retail sellers have over local merchants when it comes to charging sales tax. They noted that in addition to lost revenues that affect rural communities' budgets, the resources those communities have for economic development activities also are reduced.

Delegates voted to support greater flexibility within the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Specifically, they voted to oppose mandatory limits on calories and serving sizes for lean meats, protein-rich foods and dairy products, believing that local school districts are best able to determine how to meet the nutritional needs of their students.

# SOCIAL MEDIA CONFERENCE STRESSES THE NEED TO INFORM

A quartet of agricultural social media “stars” offered tips and encouragement to farmers and ranchers at a strategic engagement conference during the AFBF annual meeting.

“Social media allows us to be part of the conversation,” said Ryan Goodman, a cattle rancher from Arkansas who created the AgricultureProud.com blog and is a guest contributor to CNN’s Eatocracy blog.

“Consumers are already talking about what we’re doing on the farm and ranch. Through social media we can have direct access to people with questions,” Goodman said.

Zach Hunnicutt, a Nebraska farmer who was recently elected chairman of AFBF’s national Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee, explained that he is able to

advocate for agriculture by “giving a tour of my farm every day using Facebook and Instagram.”

“Be positive all the time, and be passionate when advocating for agriculture on social media,” advised Hunnicutt. “It draws people in,” he said.

Setting up a business page on Facebook for your farm is a strategy Janice Person of Monsanto recommends. Having a business page means your farm can be found on Internet search engines. And it addresses privacy concerns many people have – you can share family photos and stories only on your personal page, for example.

“Interacting on Facebook with people in your community, at church and with college friends is a great way to get started,” Person said. From there, interest in a farmer’s Facebook page often grows dramatically in concentric circles,

Person has found. A Colorful Adventure is her personal blog.

“Be consistent with social media and you will build community,” said Katie Pinke, author of the Pinke Post blog. “Especially if you’re just starting out, concentrate on doing just one or two things well,” she added.

Pinke, who started her blog several years ago as a “lonely pregnant woman on the prairie trying to find friends,” offered encouragement to those in agriculture who may be hesitant to get started in social media. “What you do does not necessarily have to be fancy or flashy,” she said.

KFB has created a comprehensive social media presence and has added a staff member, Carilyn Gravatte, to handle social media. Ms. Gravatte welcomes input and can be contacted at [Carilynn.Gravatte@kyfb.com](mailto:Carilynn.Gravatte@kyfb.com). Or at (502) 495-5000.

## A COOL PROJECT

Mercer County Farm Bureau’s innovative agricultural literacy program titled “FarmScool Week” was recognized by AFBF for a “County Activities of Excellence” award. Mercer County FB had this exhibit at the trade show of the annual meeting. The project involved a five-day agricultural literacy program which is spelled out on this display. Mercer County Agriculture Extension Agent Linda McClanahan spearheaded the project along with Doris Hamilton, the program administrator for Mercer County FB. Ms. McClanahan serves on the Mercer County FB Board of Directors.



# KDA launches programs to assist military veterans

**a**griculture Commissioner James Comer has launched two new programs to help Kentucky military veterans find jobs in agriculture and sell their farm products.

Kentucky Proud Jobs for Vets connects veterans looking for work with farmers who need labor. Homegrown by Heroes is a new logo that identifies farm products produced by Kentucky veterans. The programs will operate out of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

“Kentucky Proud Jobs for Vets and Homegrown by Heroes enable Kentucky veterans to pursue careers in agriculture,” Commissioner Comer said in a news conference at the Boone Center National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility in Frankfort. “With these programs, the department is doing its part for those men and women who have already done their part to protect our great nation.”

Kentucky Adjutant General Edward W. Tonini thanked Commissioner Comer and the department for launching the veterans programs and pledged the Kentucky National Guard’s support to help them succeed. “I truly appreciate your demonstrated patriotism and the unbridled service to the Kentucky National Guard and the troops of Kentucky,” Gen. Tonini said.

Michael Lewis, a Berea farmer, veteran, and director of the Growing Warriors program that helps veterans get started in agriculture, said the Homegrown by Heroes logo “gave me the courage to step out of my comfort zone” and buy his own farm.

“Homegrown by Heroes is more than a label,” Lewis said. “It’s a call to action. We all ... have a responsibility to seek this label out and thank a veteran by buying their product.”

Kentucky Proud Jobs for Vets is a strategic partnership initiative between the department and USA Cares, a Kentucky-based 501(c)(3) charitable organization that provides financial and advocacy support to military members, veterans, and their families. Kentucky

Proud farms and agriculture-related businesses may participate. Farms and businesses in the program may display the Kentucky Proud Jobs for Vets logo.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate among post-9/11 veterans nationwide was 10.8 percent in December 2012, compared with an overall unemployment rate of 7.8 percent.

The Homegrown by Heroes logo will enable consumers and retailers to identify Kentucky Proud products

produced by Kentucky farmer/veterans, providing an incentive for consumers to buy those products and for retailers to stock them on their store shelves. At the news conference, Commissioner Comer said he is working to expand the Homegrown by Heroes concept nationwide.

To find out more about Kentucky Proud Jobs for Vets and Homegrown by Heroes, and to learn how you can help, go to [www.kentuckyproud.com/veterans](http://www.kentuckyproud.com/veterans) or [www.kyagr.com](http://www.kyagr.com).

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# DRY RUN

# (HYDRANT)

Tom Sutton installed a hydrant connected to his ½-acre pond. INSET: The Eubank Fire Department tested the system last summer, finding that it worked perfectly.



## PULASKI COUNTY FARMER PARTNERS WITH RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE NEW SOURCE OF WATER

Tom Sutton is a retired college professor who moved from New Hampshire to Pulaski County in pursuit of life on a farm. Three years ago he bought a 60-acre spread and embarked on a series of projects to make the place what he wanted it to be. Accomplishments thus far include a renovated house, a large garage/work area, acquisition of three beloved tractors and some land improvements.

To protect all this, the transplanted New Englander took one step common to rural Kentuckians and another that's fairly unique: He insured his property with Kentucky Farm Bureau insurance. Then, to acquire additional peace of mind, he partnered with the Eubank Volunteer Fire Department to install a dry fire hydrant connected with a pond only a stone's throw from his home.

Dry hydrants, which are rare in Kentucky but quite common in New England states, consist of a non-pressurized pipe system installed in ponds, lakes and streams which provide a suction supply of water to fire department tank trucks. In areas without water mains and domestic fire hydrants, a dry hydrant can provide a simple, cost effective solution to the need for a rapid access to water sources.

Eubank Fire Department Chief Norman Rutheford Jr. says dry hydrants can prove to be "a huge help" to rural firefighters needing sources to quickly refill their trucks without returning to their home base. Sutton's is the first in the area, he said.

"We'd like to see more of these," he said, "because it gives us a wider source away from the city water source. It's a good asset for rural areas. It can make a difference."

KFB has policy stating "we encourage the use of dry hydrants as a way of improving fire protection in rural areas."

Sutton approached the fire department, which is housed about four miles north of his farm, after constructing the ½-acre pond near the gravel road leading to his house. The Pulaski County Fire Commission approved the expenditure for the 6-inch pipe connecting the hydrant to a 50-gallon drum sitting eight feet deep in the pond. The county provided the gravel pad surrounding the hydrant and connecting it to the road.

Last summer, when everything was completed, the fire department held a couple of training sessions to teach its volunteers how to connect and draw the water out. The system worked perfectly, with a tank filled in as quickly as four min-

utes, Sutton said.

The Eubank Fire Department covers roughly the northern third of Pulaski County, which is one of the state's largest counties in area. Rutheford said the department has 28 volunteers and seven trucks that range from 500 to 2,400-gallon capacity.

There are three homes and three barns within a few hundred yards of the hydrant, plus hundreds of other homes and farm buildings scattered throughout the area.

Besides the satisfaction of doing a good turn for the community, Sutton says he's also saving money on his insurance because the hydrant allowed for a better rating. "It's regarded (for rating purposes) as a full-fledged fire hydrant," he said.

Dry hydrants also are money-savers for fire departments via reducing fuel and equipment costs through shorter transportation distances, Rutheford noted.

Also, communities can preserve more of their treated water since dry hydrants use untreated water.

Sutton's next project is fencing. He also intends to paint the hydrant red someday. In turn, he hopes it never has to be used to put out a fire.

"But it's good to know it's there," he said.

# PROGRAM TO BOOST MILK PRODUCTION MAKING GAINS

A unique, home-grown program to boost farm milk production in Kentucky is making gains.

The Milk Incentive Leadership for Kentucky (MILK) program was designed in 2006 by the Kentucky Dairy Development Council (KDDC) to combat insufficient milk production in the state. Kentucky has long been a milk deficit state, meaning that its dairy farms do not produce enough volume to meet the state's annual consumption. As a result, milk is trucked into Kentucky from several other states, including from as far as New Mexico.

The MILK program offers participating producers incentive payments for increased production: 50 cents per hundredweight for a monthly percentage gain of between 5 and 9.9 percent; and 75 cents per hundredweight for a hike of 10 percent or greater. Under program guidelines dairy farms can receive up to \$15,000 a year.

To qualify, participants must be a member of KDDC and be enrolled in the Dairy Herd Incentive Program (DHIA) which requires detailed management record-keeping and higher quality standards.

"We're interested in both higher production and higher quality," explained Maury Cox, Executive Director of KDDC.

The program continues to garner financial support from the Kentucky Agriculture Development Board and the companies that buy milk from Kentucky producers. Late last year the Ag Development Board approved a two-year, \$1 million grant to the MILK program. Those funds go to provide 50 percent of the incentive payments to producers. The other half comes from the respective milk

marketing companies that do business in Kentucky: Dairy Farmers of America, Dean Foods Company, Prairie Farms Dairy, Dairy Marketing Services Inc., Lone Star Milk Producers Cooperative and Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative.

Currently, around 206 of the state's 800 dairy farmers are in the MILK program, representing approximately 45 percent of Kentucky's milk production. Since its inception MILK has issued about \$3.3 million in incentive payments, according to Cox, who said no other state has such a program.

"This is one of the more dynamic programs that I'm aware of," he said. "It is truly unique. We think it has increased production in the state to really help offset the amount of pounds that are transported here. The herds on the (DHIA) program, their annual production is around 19,000 (pounds) while the state is 15,000."

KDDC District 8 Producer Director Charlie Edgington said his family's dairy in Garrard County has upgraded some of its facilities with the incentive payments from the MILK program.

"The program definitely has impacted our operation," he said. "We like the fact that it rewards quality as well as higher production. We've been in DHIA for many years; it's great to be rewarded for a commitment to quality."

A committee chaired by Cox developed the program proposal to present to the Ag Development Board six years ago. Cox credits retired UK dairy production specialist Bill Crist Sr. with spearheading the initiative.

Among those welcoming this concept is Henry County dairyman Terry Rowlett,

who is a director for both KFB and Dairy Farmers of America.

"It's certainly a benefit to those looking to expand, and especially to the smaller producers," Rowlett said. "It's especially encouraging that the buyers all signed on (to participate by matching payments to their respective dairy farmers)."

"This alleviates some of the transport of milk into Kentucky which all producers, whether they realize it or not, pay for."

Area Manager John Brooks said DFA has 51 of its producers enrolled in MILK, but not all have received payments thus far. He said that predictably, DFA members in other states aren't pleased about the premiums for Kentucky, but that "all in all, we consider this a good thing."

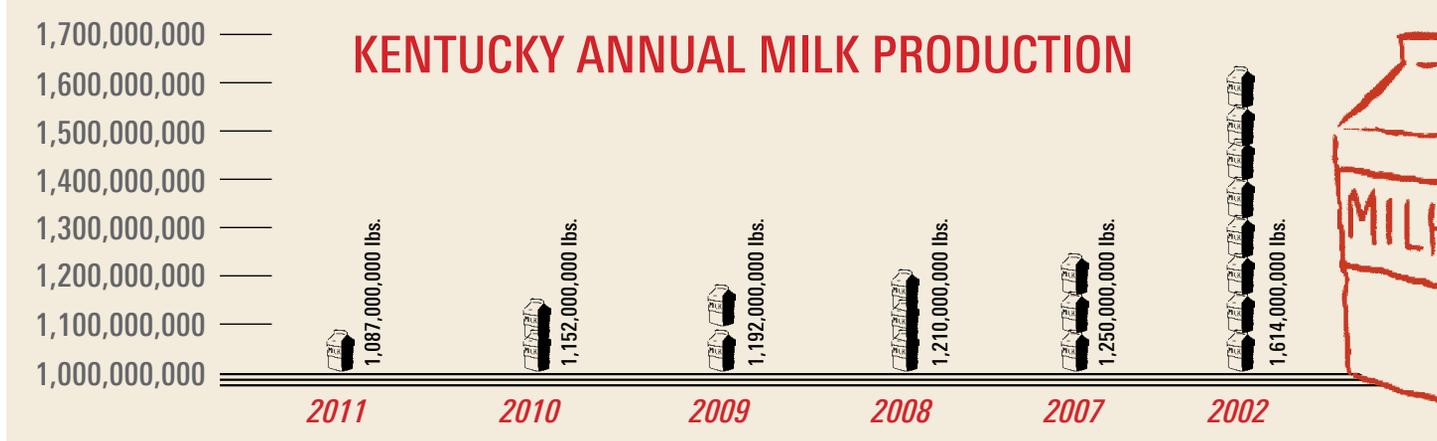
He noted that DFA had signed on to participate for another two years.

Cox said getting all of the milk marketing companies on board was a significant accomplishment and "crucial to making this work."

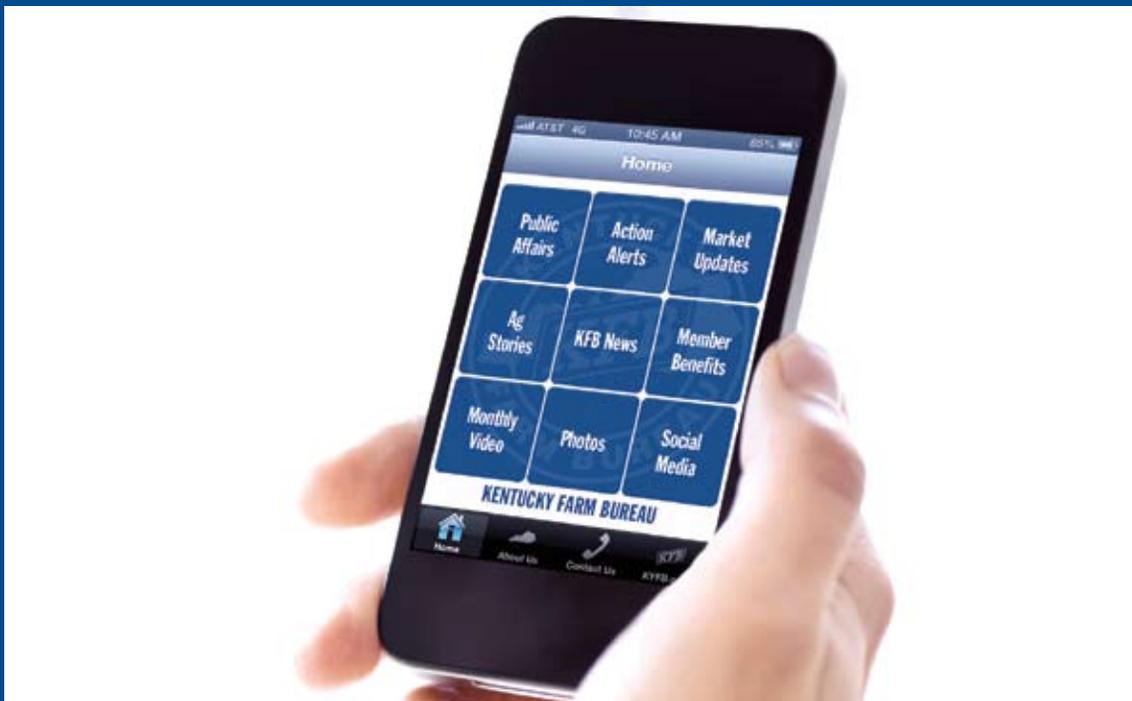
During the second quarter of 2012 milk production in Kentucky was slightly higher from the same period a year earlier. Final 2012 production is expected to be above 2011, according to industry reports.

A KDDC study using the 2009-10 production bases for MILK program participants indicates that in 2011, those producers realized a revenue gain of around \$12 million from increased volume and higher prices. There's also an estimated \$1 million savings from reducing the volume of milk shipped into the state, said Cox.

Those interested in participating can contact KDDC at (859) 516-1129 or [kddc@kydairy.org](http://kddc@kydairy.org).



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# National FFA Week is February 16-23

**F**FA has undergone a transformation since changing its name in 1988. With a broad base of programs aimed at leadership and career development for both rural and urban youth, “it’s not your father’s FFA,” as Kentucky FFA Executive Secretary Matt Chaliff noted.

Today, girls represent about 40 percent of the 14,000 FFA members in Kentucky. On the national level, membership is almost equally drawn from rural, urban and suburban cultures, according to Chaliff.

The rural flavor, however, is still predominate, and FFA remains near and dear to KFB, which has benefitted greatly from a continual stream of leaders who developed skills through groups like FFA and 4-H. The list of KFB leaders and staff who emerged from FFA is far too lengthy to list in this space. Ditto for an overall list of Kentucky agriculture leaders.

KFB is proud to join in for the annual observance of National FFA Week, which is set for February 16-23. FFA Week gives members a chance to educate the public about agriculture. During the week, chapters host teacher appreciation breakfasts, conduct “Ag Olympics” competitions, speak to the public about agriculture, volunteer for community service projects and more.

The week of George Washington’s birthday was designated as National FFA Week in 1947 at a National FFA Board of Directors meeting. FFA Week always runs from Saturday to Saturday, and encompasses February 22, Washington’s birthday.

Governor Steve Beshear will be issuing a proclamation to recognize the occasion and many of the 138 high school chapters will be actively promoting both agriculture and the organization.

There’s much to tell about both.

“A lot of people still think that we are just about farming,” said Chaliff. “We prepare kids for a wide variety of careers in agriculture; production agriculture certainly is part of it but there’s much more. The fastest-growing program we have is a Science Fair. In fact, we (Kentucky) had the national winner this year.

“We’re also seeing great interest in the food sciences. We’ve added a dairy foods career development program. We’d love to see more and more of our members in the field of developing new food products or quality control.”

Another advancement is an entrepreneurship program that has received financial support from the Kentucky



Calloway County FFA members pack boxes for a food drive initiative that was part of the state FFA Convention. Community service projects are popular among FFA youth.

Agricultural Development Board. Participants receive grants for starting businesses. The long list of operations includes lawn care, fruit and vegetable production and greenhouse production, Chaliff said.

FFA also has moved with the times in regard to social media. It currently has over 4,100 followers of its Facebook page. And it has partnered with the Kentucky Soybean Board with a project to create YouTube videos about agriculture.

Many of the old staples – livestock judging, public speaking, marketing, public policy, parliamentary procedures, etc. – are still going strong, said Chaliff.

KFB and FFA are both known for a commitment to service. Chaliff said the current generation of FFA participants has impressed many people with their work in community service projects.

“They really get interested in community service projects,” he said. “Two years ago at our state convention we added a day of community service; we had over 200 sign up. And that interest has continued. Food drives, beautification projects . . . whatever; they want to help.”

FFA members made a huge, positive impression on metro Louisville when the national conventional had a seven-year run there. The event returns to Louisville this October for a three-year run. KFB is among the many sponsors of the national event and solidly supports the state program. FFA was established just a couple of years after Farm Bureau and there are many similarities.

“We’re from the same foundation; that farm mindset,” Chaliff acknowledged.



# Mural honors rural culture

## AT WOLFE COUNTY FB OFFICE

ABOVE: The mural depicts farm and rural scenes from Wolfe County.

Entering downtown Campton from the west on Main Street, it's hard to miss the Wolfe County FB office. Adorning the side of the building is an eye-catching 8 ½ X 44-foot mural depicting farm and rural scenes from Wolfe County, where some 600 farms are scattered among the Appalachian foothills.

The artwork is part of a community development project spearheaded by Wolfe County FB Directors George and Pam Pilgrim and made possible by the creativity of local artist Linda Harse-Lancette. She designed the nine-panel

mural after several weeks of observing various scenes throughout the county, and then supervised the painting project in which 28 volunteers worked a total of 284 hours over a 27-day period culminating last September.

The project was sponsored by the Downtown Campton Renaissance Alliance, which is chaired by George Pilgrim. Pam Pilgrim, who is Vice President of Wolfe County FB, moved things forward by putting together a grant application submitted to the Brushy Fork Institute at Berea College. The grant was approved through the Appalachian Regional Commission to support a community enhancement project. Pam, who coordinated the project, then enlisted Mrs. Harse-Lancette to come up with a design, conduct required workshops and oversee the painting.

Mrs. Harse-Lancette is a New York native and former Art teacher. She and husband Bernie moved to a Wolfe County farm from Syracuse in 1998 to lead, as she put it, "a quieter life." She has a business,

"Art Naturally," involving various types of art, including gourds, wheat weaving and egg art and carvings.

She said she got the idea for the panels and borders from a quilt show in Paducah.

"The first concept I had was a 'then and now' agriculture type of thing but I was afraid it might be too difficult in drawing equipment, horses and some other aspects," she explained. "But after two months of looking around the county I thought it would be especially eye-catching to do a four-seasons thing and show different times of day. It was a better way for people to paint layer-by-layer. I made it harder to mess up. But we still have a lot of things in there."

A schedule was set up for the various participants to take their turns painting. The group included County Judge-Executive Dennis Brooks and Wolfe County Schools Superintendent Kenny Bale, as well as the entire Wolfe County FB Board.

To prepare for the mural, the surface



From left, Wolfe County FB President Carroll Amyx, artist Linda Hause-Lanette and Wolfe County FB Directors George and Pam Pilgrim.



was power-washed. And the building also received fresh paint, a new porch and sidewalk.

“This was basically a learning thing that helped us dress up the building,” said Wolfe County FB President Carroll Amyx, who also serves on the KFB Board of Directors.

The mural is lighted at night.

Pam Pilgrim said the project is a source of great pride for Wolfe County FB, but is not an uncommon achievement.

“Our Farm Bureau is very involved in community affairs,” she said. “Our board members serve other organizations and we really like to do things to improve the community and agriculture. We are very proud of our farmer’s market; it’s a good sized market and getting bigger each year. We also have a greenhouse project in the works.”

Wolfe County FB also is selling prints of the mural to raise money for a local animal shelter.

Coincidentally, the mural was completed just prior to the dedication of a sparkling new Wolfe County Judicial Center which is nearby on Main Street.

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The 27th rendition of this popular cattle show is set for March 1-3 at the Kentucky Exposition Center. This

year's event has a tough act to follow as the 2012 show established a record with \$1,062,940 in gross sales. That marked the first time that gross sales exceeded \$1 million.

Once again the competition will involve 11 breeds plus a pen heifer show. Last year's show involved 203 consignors with 485 lots. Equally impressive was that buyers came from 15 states to purchase Kentucky genetics.

The Beef Expo is administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Shows and Fairs.

Kentucky Farm Bureau proudly sponsors and promotes the Beef Expo because it recognizes the beef cattle industry's importance to our farm economy. Its leaders participate in the awards presentations and the organization has an exhibit in the trade show area. In April, KFB will conduct its annual Beef Tour for producers to observe cattle operations and industry facilities in other states. This year's tour is going south to Alabama and Georgia.

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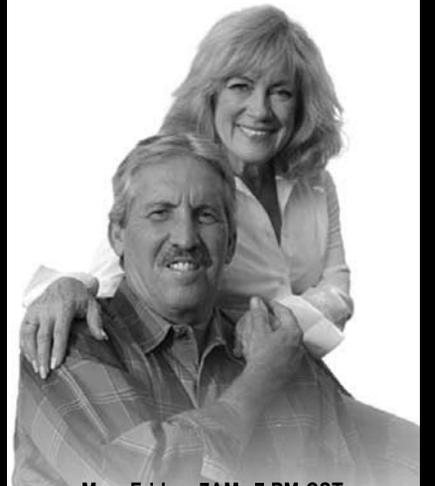
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## Frozen meat and poultry stocks are plentiful

According to the USDA monthly Cold Storage Report, there were plentiful inventories of meat and poultry products in commercial freezers on December 31, 2012. Compared to a year earlier, total frozen stocks of 2.024 billion pounds were up 12.1 percent. This increase was amplified due to last year's stocks level being the lowest since 2003. By comparison, the record large inventory on December 31, 2008, was about ten percent greater than this year.

The authors of the CME Group's Daily Livestock Report (dailylivestockreport.com) made these observations about the data. Frozen beef supplies of 465.5 million pounds were only 1.8 percent higher than 2011. Frozen pork stocks of 554.4 million pounds were 14.4 percent larger than on December 31, 2011, and were the second largest ever for December, lagging only those of 2008. Pork ribs in storage were record large and accounted for about 20 percent of total pork stocks. Chicken supplies of 679.3 million pounds were up 7.9 percent, thanks mainly to leg products. Stocks of chicken wings at 69.4 million pounds were 68 percent higher than a year ago. Turkey stocks were up 40 percent to 295.1 million pounds.

## Grain storage grows

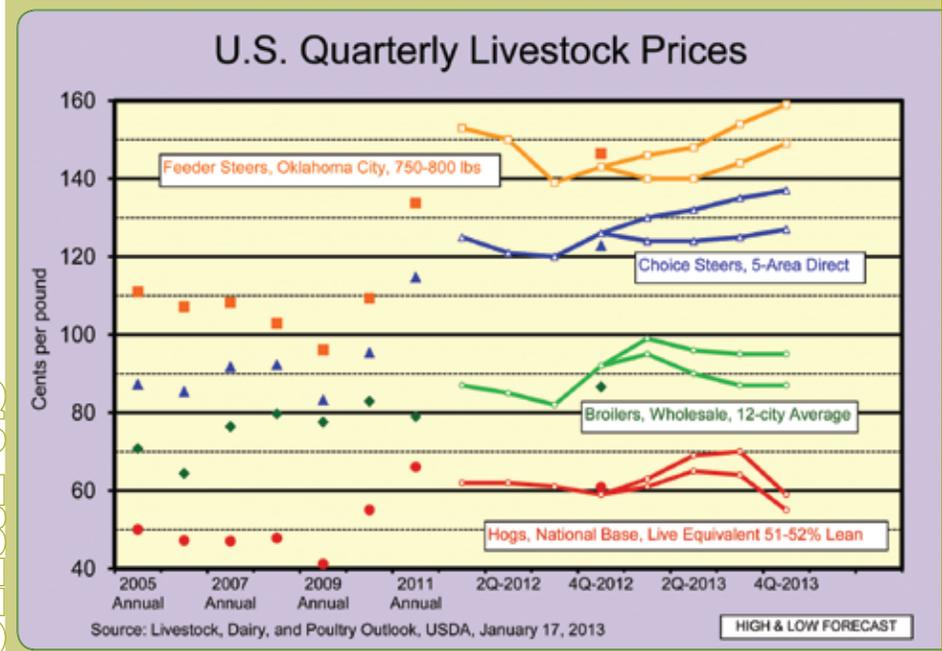
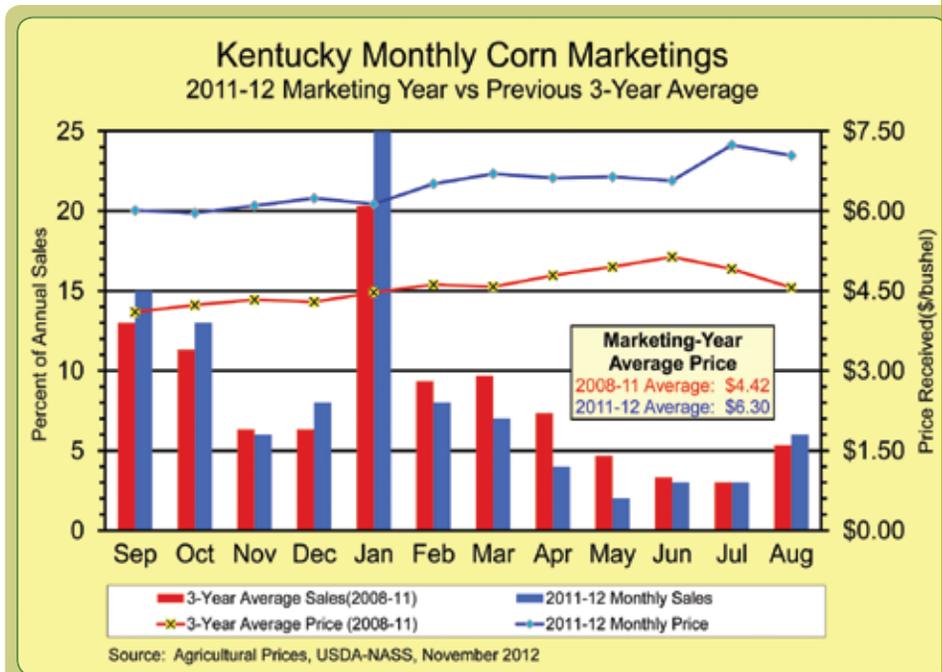
USDA statistics show that Kentucky producers added five million bushels of on-farm grain storage capacity during the twelve months ending December 1, 2012. At 200 million bushels, this is the largest on-farm estimate since storage reached a low of 150.0 million bushels in 2002. Commercial off-farm storage totaled 72.0 million bushels, up two million from December 1, 2011. Kentucky has 160 facilities, down ten from 2011.

U.S. producers have 12.98 billion bushels of on-farm storage, up 1.4 percent from December 1, 2011.

## U.S. alfalfa production hits 60-year low

USDA's final estimate of U.S. alfalfa and alfalfa mixture hay production for 2012 is 52.05 million tons, 3.5 million tons less than the previous October estimate. 2012's production is 20 percent less than 2011's crop and is the lowest U.S. production level since 1953. Harvest area is estimated at 17.3 million acres; USDA reports that 1948 is the only year on record with fewer acres harvested. The average estimated yield of 3.01 tons per acre is down from 3.40 tons in 2011.

Kentucky producers harvested 180,000 acres of alfalfa, down 30,000 from 2011, with an average yield of 2.90 tons per acre, compared to 3.40 tons in 2011.



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## Scholarship applications are encouraged

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Education Foundation is accepting applications for three unique scholarship opportunities. The Paul D. Everman Fund for Lifetime Learning Scholarship (worth up to \$3,000) for a non-traditional student 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 Memorial 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. Young Farmer Scholarships for \$2,000 and \$1,000 will be awarded to two current college or vocational/technical school students. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-35.

Applications can be accessed at [kyfb.com/scholarships](http://kyfb.com/scholarships) and must be postmarked by April 26. Scholarship recipients will be notified by May 17th.

## New lending program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has created a new loan program to help operators of small farms, including those who want to take advantage of growing consumer interest in locally produced food.

Agriculture Department Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that new "microloans" of up to \$35,000 are designed to help bolster family-run farms and help disadvantaged farmers and military veterans seeking to start a farm who might otherwise have trouble qualifying for small loans from banks or other USDA loan programs. The loans can help farmers seeking to grow niche or organic crops to sell directly to ethnic and farmers markets, or contribute to community-supported agriculture programs.

## Kentucky among leaders in crop insurance losses

Kentucky is among 12 states that had crop insurance loss ratios of at least 1.1 (crop losses paid are \$1.10 for every dollar received in premiums) for the 2012 crop year – according to the Risk Management Agency. The highest loss ratio states are in the heartland, with the top five states including Illinois at 2.36, Missouri at 2.24, Kentucky at 2.16, Nebraska at 1.83 and Iowa at 1.66.

As of mid-January, most of the crop losses were on corn and soybeans, with corn producers accounting for 59 percent of all indemnities paid and soybeans accounting for roughly 12 percent. Cotton, wheat and grain sorghum make up the other top five crop losses.

While most of the losses nationally can be attributed to the record drought of 2012, other parts of the country suffered from other weather anomalies. The spring freeze that damaged crops in New England and the upper Midwest resulted in high losses in many apple orchards, with loss ratios in New Hampshire coming in at 1.24 and Massachusetts at 1.1. Nationally, the loss ratio is 1.12 and rising.

In 2012, farmers paid more than \$4.1 billion in premiums to purchase crop insurance. More than \$12.3 billion has been paid out to farmers as of January 18, easily surpassing 2011's old record of \$10.8 billion in indemnities paid. Unlike disasters of the past, however, the private sector is paying for a significant portion of the bill.

In fact, past natural disasters – prior to the widespread availability of crop insurance – cost taxpayers \$45 billion from FY1989 to FY2001, according to the Congressional Research Service. And while the data is still not in, private sector losses from 2012 will almost certainly be in the billions of dollars, according to the Risk Management Agency.

## Warren Beeler named to KDA policy position

Agriculture Commissioner James Comer appointed Warren Beeler to Director of Agriculture Policy at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Beeler, who has served the KDA for more than 14 years in livestock marketing and shows and fairs positions, will speak on behalf of the KDA at agriculture conferences and workshops and will serve as Commissioner Comer's chief advisor on all animal agriculture issues.

"I have known and admired Warren Beeler since my days as an agriculture student at Western Kentucky University," said Comer. "He is one of the most respected leaders in animal agriculture, and I am honored to work with him to ensure that everything we do at KDA is most beneficial to our family farmers and agri-businesses."

Beeler's achievements in agriculture are numerous and diverse. He is a former president of the Kentucky Pork Producers Association and a Hall of Fame member, WKU agriculture alumnus of the year, Middle Tennessee State University Animal Science Hall of Fame member, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association Service Award winner, and Kentucky FFA Distinguished Service Award recipient. Regarded as the most experienced livestock judge in the country, Beeler has judged livestock shows for 35 years in 42 states.



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