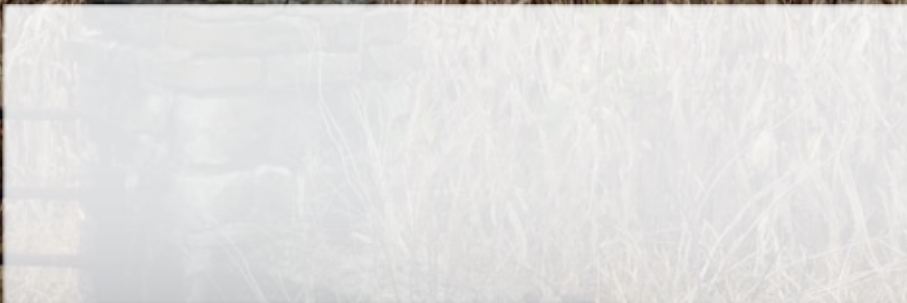


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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS

Volume 13 · No. 9

November 2014

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Cover photo: A scene from Boyle County.

Photo by L. Joe Cain

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The National FFA Convention concluded in Louisville on November 1 with more than 62,000 young people participating this year. KFB was proud to once again play a part in this wonderful event by providing sponsorships, contest judges and other workers. David S. Beck, our Executive Vice President, was Chairman of the Host Committee for the second consecutive year.

We place a high priority on supporting FFA, as well as 4-H, because we realize they can be the catalyst for developing future farmers, Farm Bureau leaders and others within the agriculture industry. That role has never been more important to American agriculture.

While the next generation of farmers will largely consist of those continuing the legacy of their family farm, there are legitimate concerns about how we bring others into production agriculture to meet the future demand for food.

Statistics affirm our concerns. The latest Census of Agriculture showed the average age of principal farm operators is now 58, which is 7 ½ years higher than it was 30 years ago. In 2012, 62 percent of all U.S. farmers were over 55 years old. And get this: We have more farmers over 75 years old than people working in the "prime" ages of 35 to 44.

The census also revealed that only five percent of farmers are younger than 35. Also, we have fewer of these farmers than we had 10 years ago.

The incredible advances in mechanization have made it easier for farmers to continue working into advanced ages. But farmers not retiring is a drawback to beginning farmers wishing to buy out an operation or initiate a new one. In many cases, younger farmers simply cannot afford to buy in. As we know, the cost of increasingly scarce farmland has soared in recent years as the farm economy improved along with the overall real estate market. Many young people today say it's nearly impossible to break into the business without a family connection.

Now that all those bright, promising FFA members have wrapped up their conference, I hope the experiences and knowledge afforded to them by the FFA program will spark an interest in farming. As we move forward, I suspect that the continuing decline in the number of American farmers will give rise to future farm bills and other government initiatives aimed at filling the void. The current farm bill has \$100 million allocated for beginning farmer programs. We'll have to see what kind of effect that will have. Beyond the obvious measures such as low-interest loans and tax incentives is another good idea -- a program rewarding veteran farmers for providing land, equipment and training to young farmers.

It will be interesting to see how we deal with this transition in the years ahead.



Mark Haney

President

Kentucky Farm Bureau

Annual Meeting is December 3-6

KFB's 95th annual meeting is set for December 3-6 at the Galt House Hotels in Louisville. Priorities include electing leaders, recognizing achievements, setting policy goals for the 2015 state legislative session and establishing a wish list for Congressional action next year.

The state's Outstanding Young Farm Family will be announced, awards will be given for county Farm Bureau achievements and top farm leaders will be recognized for distinguished service.

Numerous extension and agricultural specialists will be on hand for commodity and special interest conferences on December 4. A special conference at 3:30 will focus on wildlife issues in dealing with problems such as deer damage to crops and black vultures killing cattle.

AFBF President Bob Stallman will be keynote speaker at the Commodity luncheon.

Women's leadership activities are showcased at a December 5 luncheon where top county leaders are presented gold star awards for outstanding county-level programs. Youth achievements are also given prominence, with college scholarships awaiting the winners of an Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth contest. The Outstanding Young Farm family will be announced at a young farmer awards luncheon on December 5.

The discussion meet is a popular tradition, with young farmers debating selected agricultural issues. The state champion, which will be determined among the "final four" contestants during the evening program on December 5, advances to the national contest at the AFBF annual

meeting in January.

KFB President Mark Haney will present his annual address on the morning of the 5th, just prior to the announcement of this year's recipients of the Distinguished Service awards for Farm Bureau and Kentucky agriculture. The delegates will set policy at the business sessions on the last two days of the convention. Winner of the "Kentucky Farmer of the Year" award will be announced.

The final day begins with a Public Affairs breakfast and is followed by a business session in which KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck presents his annual report on the federation's activities and fiscal condition. The annual meeting concludes with KFB's directors determining a "priority list" of issues to address in the year ahead.

Candidates for KFB Director

The following are seeking election to the KFB Board of Directors from the respective districts. This list includes only the candidates who have asked to be listed in this publication.

District 1

Glenn Howell, 809 State Rt. 781 N, Fulton

District 2

Kelly Thurman, 643 Barrett Hill Road, Livermore

District 3

Pat Henderson, 2261 Hwy. 2202, Irvington

Fritz Giesecke, 3474 S. Jackson Hwy., Horse Cave

District 4

Russell Poore, 168 Keeton Road, Russellville

District 5

Randy Chrisman, 1168 Buckley Lane, Lawrenceburg

Shane Courtney, 6843 Vigo Road, Bagdad

District 7

Kim McCoy, 161 Kim McCoy Road, Burkeville

Danny Wilkinson, 191 Johnson Cemetery Road, Columbia

District 8

David L. Campbell, 2745 KY 78, Stanford

District 9

Shane Wiseman, 5826 Ecton Road, Winchester

District 10

Carroll Amyx, 1743 Sandfield Road, Campton

Correction

An article in the October issue incorrectly reported the maximum tax deduction on purchased property under IRS Code Section 179 for accelerated depreciation. The correct figure is \$25,000.



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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David S. Beck.....Executive Vice President

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Kelly Thurman.....Livermore
Eddie Melton.....Sebree
Mary Kate Kordes.....Central City
J. Fritz Giesecke.....Horse Cave
Larry Thomas.....Elizabethtown
Pat Henderson.....Irvington
Russell Poore.....Russellville
Jay Coleman.....Cave City
Scott Travis.....Cox's Creek
Randy Chrisman.....Lawrenceburg
Joe Paul Mattingly.....Raywick
David Chappell.....Owenton
Terry Rowlett.....Campbellsburg
Mark Haney.....Nancy
Danny Wilkinson.....Columbia
Kim McCoy.....Burkesville
Terry Gilbert.....Danville
David L. Campbell.....Stanford
Alex Barnett.....Cynthiana
Shane Wiseman.....Winchester
David McGlone.....Grayson
Carroll Amyx.....Campton
Holden Williams.....Bays
Bige Hensley.....Manchester
Marshall Coyle.....Owingsville
Betty Farris.....Roundhill
Matt Gajdzik.....Shelbyville
Mickey Sirls.....Benton
Nancy Cox.....Lexington
Brandon Davis.....Frankfort
Nick Carter.....Lexington

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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comment

C O L U M N

The following is a recent commentary from "Farm Policy Facts," which is a coalition of agriculture groups devoted to educating lawmakers and the public about farm policy.

When commodity prices were strong, farm incomes were up, and the agricultural sector was credited with helping offset some of the economic misery caused by the housing crisis, not too many people seemed happy for America's farmers.

Quite the opposite. A lot of folks used the positive economic situation to attack agriculture and farm policy.

Corn prices are up: Must be ethanol's fault. Farm economy is strong and generating jobs: A perfect time to gut farm spending and weaken the Farm Bill.

Thankfully, lawmakers were smart enough to see through these shallow attempts to score cheap political points. They knew that Farm Bills are written for the bad times, not the good, and that commodity prices inevitably come back down as do farm incomes.

And boy, were they right. As a recent article by Bloomberg points out:

"World food prices fell for a sixth month in September, the longest slide since 2009, as the cost of dairy, grains, cooking oils and sugar declined amid prospects for rising production..."

"Soybeans and corn are trading near the lowest in four years in Chicago amid an outlook for record U.S. harvests. In the past two years, all agricultural products on the Bloomberg Commodity Index other than cattle, hogs and coffee have declined, with the slide led by corn, wheat and soybeans."

So does that mean Big Oil, grocers, and other ethanol opponents will now apologize for their hyped-up claims that food prices would continue to sour as long as the U.S. invests in and supports this homegrown fuel source?

Or will EWG and extremist think tanks recant on their discredited claims about crop insurance and other farm policies?

An apology would be nice now that critics' main talking points in the 2014 Farm Bill debate have been shattered, but it is highly unlikely. Instead we'd settle for the nonsensical attacks to cease and perhaps a little less flip-flopping in the future.

Advisory Committee Meetings

KFB policy emerges from several sources. While most recommendations come from county Farm Bureau annual meetings, another source is through KFB's Advisory Committees, which hold meetings between August and November to assess the condition of their respective area of interest and consider suggestions for potential changes to KFB's state and national policies.

These committees deal with topics ranging from all the farm commodities common in Kentucky to issues of importance to rural areas (education, transportation, etc.) KFB's leadership selects the committee members based on their knowledge of the topic. If possible, the committees have members from all areas of the state.

The advisory committee meetings also involve officials representing the particular areas of concern, most commonly from commodity groups, universities, business and government.

Following are summaries from recent meetings:

DAIRY

This committee met at the Shelby County FB, where County President John Wills welcomed the group and introduced State Representative Brad Montell to make remarks.

Eunice Schlappi, dairy specialist for the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), reviewed efforts to expand the industry in the state. She also spoke about value-added programs such as the "Udderly Kentucky" milk marketing program, reopening of closed dairy farms, organic dairy production and the production of replacement dairy heifers.

Some of the factors that have made it difficult to grow dairy production in Kentucky are adequate land area at a reasonable price, lack of economic incentives to relocate, Kentucky's heat and humidity and milk hauling issues, she explained.

Dr. Kenny Burdine, University of Kentucky, provided an overview of dairy reforms contained in the new farm bill. He noted USDA had announced the signup period for the Dairy Margin Protection Program (DMPP) continues through November 28 for 2014 and 2015.

KFB's Joe Cain provided an update on federal issues, including farm bill implementation, proposed Clean Water Act regulations, farm labor reform and federal tax reform.

Providing written reports to the committee were UK's Dr. Jeffrey Bewley and Dr. Stephen Higgins, David Klee of DPAC; Denise Jones of SUDIA and Maury Cox of KDDC.

State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout gave a report on department activities; Dr. Laurie Rincker of Eastern Kentucky University reported on programs to show how small dairy farms can be successful; Dr. Debbie Reed, interim director of the Breathitt Veterinary Center in Hopkinsville, spoke about plans for their new facil-

ity plus ongoing efforts to improve testing protocols. Debbie Breehn of FSA reported on a USDA announcement on livestock and forage indemnity program signups.

The committee reviewed state and national policy but had no recommendations. KFB Director Terry Rowlett of Henry County is chairman of the dairy committee.

ECONOMIC AND MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Chaired by KFB Director Mary Kate Kordes of Muhlenberg County, this committee began the day at the Alltech Algae plant in Winchester. Following a tour of the facility, committee members met at the Clark County FB Office.

Thomas Fern, USDA Rural Development, provided an overview of the Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) initiative to revitalize the economy in eastern Kentucky. Members from ten SOAR working groups lead discussions throughout the region on topics related to eastern Kentucky's future economic well-being and quality of life. Based on citizen and organizational input, the groups will identify significant opportunities and a long-term vision related to their topics, he said. Fern also discussed Kentucky being awarded a national Promise Zone designation that covers eight southeastern counties; this is one of only five Promise Zones named in the U.S. J. Don Goodin, Director of the Incentive Assistance Division, Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development, said Kentucky was rated seventh in the nation for entrepreneurial activity. He discussed the newly created Office of Entrepreneurship which enhances the state's existing efforts to help businesses at every step of the growth cycle. He also provided a brief overview of the Kentucky Small Business Credit Initiative (KSBCI) and the Small Business Loan Program.

Debbie Beehn, Agriculture Program Specialist, Farm Service Agency, gave a report about implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill. FSA staff has been attending national training and hopes to conduct training for Kentucky county office staff in November, she said.

Nathan Routt, Business Development Specialist, KCARD, provided an overview of the Agribusiness Grant Facilitation Program (AGFP).

The committee reviewed state and national policies relative to economic and market development and made one policy recommendation to the state resolutions committee for consideration. It states "we encourage Kentucky Farm Bureau to aggressively pursue opportunities to increase water availability for farmers and rural communities."

FEED GRAINS, WHEAT AND SOYBEANS

A joint meeting between feed grains and wheat and soybean was held at the Western Kentucky University Expo Center. KFB Director Tripp Furches of Calloway County is chairman of the Feed Grains and Wheat while colleague Kim McCoy of Burkesville leads the Soybean Committee.

Introductions were made with committee members giving a report on crop conditions in their respective areas.

Dr. Will Snell, UK College of Agriculture Department of Agricultural Economics, provided a general overview of upcoming farm bill implementation meetings that will be held conducted around the state. Dr. Snell introduced the newest member of the UK Ag Economic team, Dr. Todd Davis. Dr. Davis provided a review of farm bill programs that have been implemented as well as an outlook of when producers can expect regulations to be released by USDA concerning base acreage realloca-

tion and the new ARC and PLC program decisions that producers will be making.

Joe Cain then provided an update on conservation compliance guidelines contained in the new farm bill, and led a discussion on the EPA and US Army Corps of Engineers proposed CWA guidance rule relative to waters of the U.S. He also updated the group on the status of federal reauthorization of a number of expiring tax provision, outlook for immigration and farm labor legislative reform and proposed rules and legislation dealing concerning the Endangered Species Act.

The committee had considerable discussion on grain sampling techniques.

Several members noted wheat was being docked hard at elevators this year, especially for vomitoxin, or deoxynivalenol (DON) levels. Concern was expressed that elevators may be oversampling loads of grain causing DON test levels to be higher than they may actually be. Members recommended exploring means for on-farm DON testing to allow producers to know levels before delivering grain to market.

The group made three policy recommendations, two involved adding "vomitoxin" to the chemical testing program at UK and the Breathitt Center labs and to crop insurance loss adjustment procedures. For national policy there was a recommendation to reestablish base acres to reflect five years of production.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Chaired by KFB Director Larry Thomas of Hardin County, this committee met at the Kentucky Division of Water office in Frankfort. Director Peter Goodmann, provided an overview of the unique relationship that exists in Kentucky between the agricultural industry and the Kentucky Division of Water that facilitates working together to be effective. He discussed the success of the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Authority across Kentucky. He also spoke about the harmful algae blooms (HAB) and concerns for drinking water, but also the potential concerns at the farm level with livestock and farm ponds.

Branch Manager Paulette Akers reviewed the draft Nutrient Management Reduction Strategy for Kentucky and proposed efforts to reduce the amount of nutrients entering Kentucky waters and, ultimately, the Gulf of Mexico. The draft proposal is currently being reviewed by stakeholders across Kentucky.

UK's Dr. Steve Higgin and Dr. Amanda Gumbert discussed the effective role Ag Water Quality Authority plans can play in reducing nutrient loads. Dr. Gumbert has seven training programs and an interactive Excel program that are available for use in developing nutrient management plans. She also discussed outreach efforts to help landowners understand how to become compliant with AWQA. She noted the need for continued technical assistance.

Agency updates were provided by Steve Kelly and David Wayne of KDA, Karen Woodrich and Mark Ferguson of NRCS; Kimberly Richardson, Director of the Kentucky Division of Conservation; and Zak Danks, representing Kentucky Fish & Wildlife.

Joe Cain provided an update on federal issues, including the EPA/US Army Corps of Engineers proposed rule on waters of the US, legislative action on reauthorization of expiring tax provisions, and legislative action concerning the Endangered Species Act guidelines for determining critical habitats.

The committee had no policy recommendations.

Upon adjournment, committee members were provided a demonstration of river water sampling procedures by USGS staff, coordinated by Mr. Peter Cinotto, USGS, at the Kentucky River gauge located in Frankfort.

TOBACCO

The Tobacco and Dark Tobacco Committees held a joint meeting at the KFB state office. State Senator Paul Hornback, a former KFB Director and member of the tobacco committee, provided an overview of how the Kentucky General Assembly is considering oversight of the e-cigarette and vapor product markets. He noted the General Assembly passed legislation to limit sales of these products to persons aged 18 or older, but at this point that is about the only oversight of this particular industry. Senator Hornback said the General Assembly may consider bills in the 2015 Session that would allow for more regulatory oversight of the products being sold, and well as possible taxation of the product. He asked KFB to carefully consider possible policy to address what oversight might be needed.

UK economist Dr. Will Snell said there is a lot of tobacco being grown off contract this year, especially in central Kentucky.

He noted that for the most part the crop looked good, but there has been some storm damage recently. His concern was with a good crop this year, those producers growing off contract may not be able to find a market for their crop. Dr. Snell also provided some market data on e-cigarettes and vapor products.

Clifton Parker, Custom Ag Solutions, provided the committee with a general overview of the USDA Risk Management Agency and crop insurance products that are available. He went further to provide specific program details for products that are available for burley and dark tobacco crops and how to understand how the programs work, and important dates tobacco producers need to be aware of.

Randy Smallwood of NRCS reviewed conservation compliance for highly erodible soils as required in the new farm bill in order to qualify for crop insurance. He reviewed how this affects tobacco production practices and services available through NRCS.

Updates were provided by Burley Co-op President Pat Raines, Steve Kelly of KDA, Hoppy Henton of the Council for Burley Tobacco and Dr. Orlando Chambers, KTRDC.

Joe Cain provided an update on federal issues.

The committee then reviewed state and national policy relative to tobacco and made 11 policy recommendations, with several regarding the regulation and taxation of e-cigarettes and vapor products. Under "farm labor," the committee recommends language stating "we support retention of the present family farm exemption from the child labor provisions of the fair labor standards (FLSA) regardless of business structure where family members are owners; enforcement of federal child labor laws designed to prevent underage children from working in all industries. We support existing FLSA provisions, which specify and provide opportunities for young people of the proper age to perform certain agriculture jobs; the family farm exemption in migrant and seasonal agricultural worker protection act (MSPA) and oppose any efforts to restrict its application."

KFB Director Scott Travis of Spencer County is chairman of the tobacco committees.

SHEEP & GOAT

This group met at the Woodford County

Cooperative Extension Office in Versailles, Kentucky. KFB Director Carroll Amyx of Wolfe County is chairman.

Tess Caudill of KDA updated the committee on markets, stating prices for sheep and goats have been very strong this year. Goat numbers are low right now, resulting in high sale prices, she said.

Dr. Beth Johnson said small ruminants are increasingly being sold at flea markets and swap meets, so surveillance by the State Veterinarian's office has been increased. They are still trying to get producers signed up for the Scrapie Program, she said. State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout said the new Livestock Care Standards were in effect. He expressed appreciation to committee member Bob Leer, who served on the Livestock Care Standards Commission representing the small ruminant industry. Dr. Stout added that the Scrapie Program is seeing declining participation. In response to Mr. Amyx, Dr. Johnson stated that sellers at flea markets or swap meets are allowed to sell only if they have health certificates for their animals, but there currently is no fine for those who don't have certificates.

Kelly Yates of the Kentucky Sheep & Goat Development Office spoke about an upcoming annual producer conference. In 2013 there were 72,000 goats and 64,000 sheep in Kentucky, with death loss increasing from three percent to six percent, possibly due to the weather and parasites, she said.

Dr. Don Ely of UK noted that Dr. Robert Harmon would be retiring soon as director of the Animal Sciences Department and stated there are three finalists for his replacement: Dr. Tony Pescatore, Dr. Richard Coffey, and Dr. Darrh Bullock. Dr. Ely then reviewed student numbers in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Dr. Ely stated the feed mill that was lost is being replaced and should be back in business by spring, and then work will begin on silos for the sheep unit.

Dr. Kenneth Andries of Kentucky State University said their new College of Agriculture is continuing to grow and change. Student numbers are well-below projections, but with the recent change in university administration, they are making progress. The college has 60 students currently, 36 of them new. The two animal-related classes offered are Introduction to Animal Sciences, and Livestock Production. The college is working to obtain a grant to start a vet tech program, and needs to add more animal-related

classes. Dr. Andries discussed the National Sheep Improvement Program (NSIP), and there was an extended discussion of small ruminant parasites, such as lung worm and coccidia.

Dr. Debbie Reed, Interim Director of the MSU Breathitt Veterinary Center, stated the center received funding last spring to build new facilities. She thanked KFB for its long-standing support.

Turning to policy, the committee has forwarded language stating: "We encourage cooperation between the laboratory, referring veterinarian and producer." Another recommendation says "we support the use of livestock grazing and browsing as a valuable tool to improve resource conditions and to control weeds and/or other vegetation."

TAX

Chaired by KFB Director Pat Henderson of Breckinridge County, the tax advisory committee met at the state office. Pat Wolff, AFBF's Senior Director of Congressional Relations, gave an update to the committee (via conference call) on expiring tax provisions, including section 179 Small Business Expensing and bonus depreciation. She stated that Congress currently is considering a number of expired tax provisions that impact agriculture; and the House has already passed legislation that would restore Section 179 levels and reinstate bonus depreciation and would make those provisions permanent. The House has passed HR 4457 that would make permanent Section 179 small business expensing with a maximum deduction of \$500,000 reduced dollar for dollar when expenditures exceed \$2 million, and HR 4718 to make permanent 50 percent bonus depreciation, she said.

However, the Senate has yet to act, and most feel action will be delayed until after the election during the Lame Duck session. While the Senate is considering the same levels as the House they are looking at only a two-year extension for 2014 & 2015. Ms. Wolff also indicated that the November elections could have an impact on the timeframe on which this legislation may be considered depending upon who has control of the Senate.

KFB Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper discussed the prospect that state tax reforms could be on the agenda during the 2015 session of the Kentucky General Assembly.

This committee had a number of policy

recommendations. One statement calls for the General Assembly to develop mandatory annual training for taxes and fees implemented by special taxing districts. Another statement supports "restoring the sales and use tax vendors compensation back to the pre-2013 level." The committee also supports regulation and taxation of e-cigarettes and other vapor products. On the national level, the committee would like KFB to adopt policy objecting to the federal government providing financial bailouts to cities.

POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Political Education Advisory Committee met at KFB's Frankfort office. Sam Youngman, political writer for the Lexington Herald Leader, provided the committee with an overview of the Kentucky General Assembly races, the US Senate race, and a preview of the 2015 Governor's race.

Mary Ellen Allen, Executive Director of the State Board of Elections, updated the committee on all the activities of that office and the Secretary of State's office in general.

Roger Thomas, Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy, updated the committee on the GOAP activities and stressed how crucial it was to reach a settlement with the tobacco companies to maintain the revenue stream of Master Settlement dollars into Kentucky. He said the pool of funds in the KY Ag Finance Corp has grown from \$23 million to \$50 million.

Drew Graham noted the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment had a record enrollment this past fall. Fred Nesler of KDA provided an update of KDA activities and spoke about the bright agricultural climate that exists in Kentucky.

Jeff Harper advised the committee that KFB had decided to continue to offer the Campaign Management Seminar, noting the success of the program. The committee also discussed the importance of KFB's Get-Out-the-Vote and Measure-the-Candidates programs. The group adopted a policy suggestion to voice support for the campaign management seminar.

KFB Director Marshall Coyle of Bath County is chairman of the political education committee.

FORAGE

This group assembled at UK's Veterinary

Diagnostic Laboratory, where Dr. Michelle Arnold, DVM, UK Ruminant Extension Veterinarian, gave an overview of the facility. It is a full service animal health diagnostic facility and one of the biggest in the United States. UKVDL performs testing to diagnose animal diseases as well as to safeguard the health of the animal population in Kentucky; the Lab may also provide an early warning system for impending epidemics, she said.

UK's Tom Keene updated the committee about the work of the forage extension staff and also handed out a list of researchers in various UK departments working on forage-related research. He also stated that Dr. Garry Lacefield, Forage Extension Specialist, is retiring in February after the Alfalfa Conference.

Dr. Glen Aiken, Research Animal Scientist, USDA-ARS, provided an overview of the research being conducted at the ARS Forage-Animal Production Research Unit (FAPRU) in Lexington. The mission of this unit is to improve productivity, profitability, competitiveness and sustainability of forage-based enterprises. The FAPRU opened in 2003 on the UK campus and provided specific cooperative agreement funding for research based on stakeholders' input. The close working relationship between UK and ARS-FAPRU was highlighted. Dr. Aiken noted some of the accomplishments in their research programs.

Tom Keene gave the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council (KFGC) update. Board minutes were distributed to show the activity and professionalism of the KFGC organization.

Kimberly Field gave an overview of the KDA hay testing program, highlighting the large number of samples submitted. Staff has attended 23 events this year, she added.

A motion was approved to allow language to be submitted to the State Resolutions Committee supporting the collaboration between the USDA-ARS and the UK College of Agriculture.

KFB Director David McGlone of Carter County is chairman of the forage committee.

FORESTRY

The Forestry Advisory Committee met at the Kentucky Division of Forestry Morgan County Nursery. After a tour of the facility, the committee convened at the Martha Caudill Stacy Building in West

Liberty. KFB Director Holden Williams of Breathitt County presided.

Leah MacSwords, Director, Kentucky Division of Forestry, thanked the members for visiting the Morgan County Nursery and for Farm Bureau's interest and support. She encouraged KFB and members to publicize the nursery and its tree seedling sales.

Mr. Paul Finke, National Resources Staff Officer, and Robert Sitzlar, Forester, of the U.S. Forest Service, provided a brief update on personnel changes and the challenge to keep management positions filled. Finke gave an overview of the Triplett Creek Project in Rowan County.. This project provides opportunities to increase awareness and engage local landowners in creating fire-resilient communities while continuing to address forest health and haz-

ardous fuels issues on public and private forest land in the area. Forest improvement activities in this watershed have the added benefit of increasing or restoring habitat for rare species, he said.

Finke addressed the proposal for the Northern Long-Eared Bat to be added to the Endangered Species List and the conservation measures they have already taken to protect the bats. U.S. Forest Service has partnered with the University of Kentucky Forestry Program to train students to be fire-certified and to become "Fire Cats" employed by the Kentucky Division of Forestry, he said.

Dr. Terrell "Red" Baker, Chair, UK Department of Forestry, stated that undergraduate enrollment is up from last year, but overall is still down from their highest

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point. The Department is making an effort to bring in new students by focusing on retention activities that allow students to get involved, have fun, and possibly make money such as with the "Fire Cats". Dr. Baker gave an overview of Extension programs such as the Farm Assist Program which helps connect with farmers with small woodland lots who are not aware of the practice of managing timberlands. The Department received a two-year grant to fund forestry research in Kentucky with a focus on forest health issues; this operation will need the support of other organizations to help identify more permanent sources of funding. They are also seeking funding to research bats and tree harvesting; UK has a top bat expert. UK does plan to fill this fall the wood products research position being vacated by the retirement of Carroll Fackler, said Dr. Baker.

Jack Rentz, President, Kentucky Woodland Owners Association, gave a brief overview of the organization. KWOA encourages members to manage their timber resources in a sustainable manner and educates the public about the importance of woodland management and what it contributes to Kentucky.

Robert Bauer, Executive Director, Kentucky Forest Industries Association, updated the committee on legislative issues the KFIA is supporting, such as harsher fines and stricter enforcement for repeat bad actors who continue to operate in non-compliance and harm the sustainability of Kentucky timber resources. KFIA is also working with stakeholders on creating a Timber Theft Task Force to increase enforcement against timber trespassing, he said.

Jonathan Van Balen, KDA's Import/Export Advisor, discussed aspects of the export market for Kentucky's forest products. Forest products were in the top 10 of agriculture exports for 2013. Kentucky exported \$170 million of wood products; 60% of the exports were barrels and oak lumber, he said.

The committee then discussed policy and made a recommendation that KFB support efforts to establish a forest health research and education center at UK.

ENERGY AND TRANSPORTATION

This group met at the Kentucky-Argonne Battery Center, in Lexington.

First speaker was Dr. Joe Dvorack, Assistant

Professor, UK Biosystems & Agriculture Engineering. He discussed the differences, advantages and disadvantages of mechanical, fluid and electrical motors. He went on to highlight groundbreaking research of electrical components of tractors.

Brydon Ross, Vice President of State Affairs, Consumer Energy Alliance, gave a presentation on the organization, which he said stresses the need and advocates for a balanced and affordable approach with regards to sources of energy.

John Daviess, Dept. of Energy Development and Independence, told the group that Kentucky recently received a \$200,000 grant from the USDA for the purpose of improving the utilization of woody biomass resources for energy. He also informed the committee that the propane issues which surfaced in the winter of 2014 will likely resurface in 2015 if it is a tough winter. He stated the problem is with transportation of the product but there is abundant supply.

Dr. Hancock then gave a tour of the Kentucky Argonne Battery facility.

Juva Barber, Executive Director, Kentuckians for Better Transportation (KBT), presented a slide show which highlighted the need to try and keep the Kentucky Road Fund as stable as possible. She stated one of the best ways to do this was to not let the Motor Fuels Excise tax fall by more than 10% in any fiscal year.

KFB's Bryan Alvey discussed new state legislation.

In the policy review, the committee advanced language calling for amending state law to specify that the motor fuels excise tax should not decline by more than 10 percent under the average wholesale price in any fiscal year.

KFB Director David Campbell of Lincoln County is chairman of this committee.

FARM LABOR

This committee, chaired by KFB Director David Chappell of Owen County, assembled at the state office.

Leon Sequeira, an attorney specializing in H-2A and H-2B issues, provided the committee with a report on farm labor issues of the past year and what future farm labor initiatives may look like. He worked with the U.S. Senate and AFBF to help craft the Senate Immigration Reform Package that passed the chamber last year. He stated that the biggest reason that immigration reform did not advance further than it did was because of the much

publicized primary election loss of Eric Cantor in Virginia. Immigration was the focal issue of that election, he said.

Jeff Gatewood, Kentucky Office of Employment and Training, gave an update on his role as Monitor Advocate for Migrant Worker Programs, and noted the H-2A program grew by 47 new employers, requesting nearly 1,000 additional workers over 2013.

Karen Garnett, US Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division, touched on enforcement action taken in Kentucky this year. The primary violations involved failure to comply with pay statements and earning record requirements. Agriculture is a priority industry for DOL in their 2014 Strategic Plan, she said.

Next on the agenda, Steve Kelly gave a KDA update and then KFB's Bryan Alvey talked about new state legislation.

The committee had a couple of policy recommendations, including changing the agricultural temporary worker program by requiring reimbursement being paid at the 50 percent point of the contract.

EMERGING AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

This committee met at UK's Horticulture Research Farm. Jeffrey Wheeler, Research Analyst for the Department of Horticulture, began the agenda with a presentation on Kentucky's grape and wine. He listed problems in these areas: environmental, economic, cultural and social. Developing solutions involves research such as identifying the best grape cultivars for Kentucky, trellis designs and wine making experiments. Taking action is done through extension work for both viticulture (grapes) and enology (wine) by helping producers with establishment decisions, technical assistance and management decisions. Wheeler spoke of the drawbacks of owning a vineyard and the need to make consumers aware of the high quality wine made in Kentucky. The committee then toured the wine-making area and equipment used by UK researchers.

Dr. David Williams of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, spoke about industrial hemp production in Kentucky. Adam Watson of KDA discussed the industrial hemp research projects that are ongoing at six universities (Morehead State University, Eastern Kentucky University, University of Kentucky, Murray State

University, Western Kentucky University, and Kentucky State University). The KDA is working with private cooperatives on industrial hemp projects as well. Soon the KDA will be collecting the data from the researchers and figuring out the next step in the research process. In 2015, a publication should be available that will provide information about this year's industrial hemp projects, he said.

Kiley Parker of KDA updated the committee on the "Udderly Kentucky" and "Appalachia Proud" programs. Elaine Wilson, Executive Director, Office of Adventure Tourism, Kentucky Department of Tourism, provided an update on the Kentucky Trail Town Program which is designed to help connect communities to trail systems, via river or land trail, and help develop them as tourist destinations. Dawson Springs, Livingston, Morehead, and Olive Hill are the only Kentucky Trail Towns as of now with 42 applicants trying to become one, she said.

Aleta Botts, Executive Director, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, said the organization has worked with 115 individuals or businesses thus far this year. She said KCARD also

helps businesses access resources and funding that they might not have known existed; the Agribusiness Grant Facilitation Program is funded by the Kentucky Ag Development Board and led by KCARD.

Dr. Lee Meyer, UK Extension Professor, addressed several items of interest to farmers. A new publication on pasture-based beef is being finalized; a new partnership between UK and Aramark for the University's dining service which will increasingly feature Kentucky Proud products; a partnership with Aramark to create Food Connection in the College of Agriculture; the Food Systems Innovation Center and the Market Ready Program.

Dr. Teferi Tsegaye, Dean of Kentucky State University's College of Agriculture, Food Science and Sustainable Systems, gave a report on the College's personnel



The emerging agricultural enterprises committee toured the wine making facility at UK.

changes, research projects, and student recruitment efforts.

In the policy discussion, the committee advanced language supporting industrial hemp research, development and marketing. Another proposal recommends "the strengthening, labeling and policing of the common names of retail beef and pork cuts."

KFB Director Joe Paul Mattingly of Marion County is chairman of this committee.

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KFB grant supported award-winning garden



A \$500 mini grant from the KFB Women's program helped establish an educational garden at an Ohio County school that is a source of community pride and state recognition.

In a ceremony that attracted nearly 300 people to Beaver Dam Elementary School, Agriculture Commissioner James Comer joined officials from Perdue Farms, the city of Beaver Dam and Ohio County schools and government to launch the first "Ready, Set, Grow" school garden in Kentucky. Also present was Miss Kentucky Ramsey Carpenter, who is from nearby Hartford.

"The 'Ready, Set, Grow' program teaches children gardening skills that they can use all their lives," Commissioner Comer said. "Some of

the students in the program might even be inspired to take up a career in agriculture."

Jim Booth, director of operations for the Perdue processing plant in Cromwell, presented a grant check for \$5,000 for the project on behalf of Perdue and the Arthur W. Perdue Foundation.

"We are honored to be able to provide funding for a shelter for the outdoor classroom space at Beaver Dam Elementary," Booth said. "This school has initiated an innovative learning program that teaches children about where their food comes from and how they can participate in its cultivation. This space will further enhance this wonderful learning opportunity for the children of this school."

"Ready, Set, Grow" is a partnership

Students at Beaver Dam Elementary School planted seeds this spring and enjoyed positive results such as these sunflowers and vertical squash.

of Commissioner Comer and First Lady Jane Beshear to help Kentucky children learn how to grow fruits and vegetables. Ohio County FB applied for the grant, working with Beaver Dam Elementary School teacher Becky Gaither. Among many crops, the students grew watermelons, pumpkins, squash, tomatoes, green beans, sunflowers and cucumbers.

"We're very proud to have the first certified garden in the state," said T.C. Sanderfur, the Ohio County FB Insurance Agency Manager. He was joined at the ceremony by several Ohio County FB leaders.

Beef checkoff vote is Nov. 20

Leaders of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association attended last month's meeting of the KFB Board of Directors to provide information about the upcoming beef checkoff referendum. A vote on whether Kentucky cattle producers may be assessed \$1 per head for a state beef checkoff program is scheduled for November 20. All producers involved in the marketing or sale of cattle in Kentucky are eligible to vote from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. at county extension offices.

The referendum will ask Kentucky cattle producers: "Shall the producers of bovine animals assess themselves an additional ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00) per head sold, and use the funds so collected by the Kentucky Beef Promotion Council to finance a program to promote and stimulate by research, market development, and education, the use and sale, domestic and foreign, of bovine animal products?"

Currently, producers are assessed \$1 per head for the national program, of which 50 cents is returned to Kentucky. Therefore, the referendum is about increasing the checkoff fee in Kentucky to \$2 per head.

KCA Executive Director Dave Maples told the KFB leaders that the additional dollar would generate around \$1.4 million and would be the first checkoff increase in 27 years. KCA has not developed specific plans for spending the additional revenue, but anticipates expanding many of its programs and initiating more cooperative projects, he explained.

Maples stressed that all of the funds would go for Kentucky programs, and not the national program. U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has proposed another \$1 national checkoff program in addition to the current one, but the idea has drawn opposition. (There is no state law that would require the additional \$1 Kentucky checkoff to be rescinded if the national assessment is raised)

KCA President Steve Downs, a Marion County cattleman, called the state checkoff "a good insurance policy to have for us."

To vote by absentee ballot, a request form must be completed and sent to the commissioner of agriculture at least 10 days in advance of the referendum date. The request form may be obtained from any Extension office, the Kentucky

Department of Agriculture, or the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association. Completed request forms should be sent to Steve Kelly, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, 105 Corporate Dr., Frankfort, KY 40601.

The department will tabulate the votes and announce the



Kentucky Cattlemen's Association Executive Director Dave Maples addressed the KFB Board as KCA President Steve Downs awaited his turn.

results. If producers vote in favor of the state checkoff, it will become effective April 1, 2015.

As is the case for commodity checkoff programs, upon a written request producers can obtain a refund within 30 days of the date on which the assessment is collected.

KFB does not take positions on specific checkoff referendums, but has policy calling for referendums and refund options on all checkoff programs.



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FFA Convention has big send-off

By the time you read this, the 87th annual National FFA Convention will have concluded in Louisville, with KFB once again playing a significant role by sponsoring events, providing judges and other volunteer workers. Weeks before, KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck presided over a kickoff news conference held in front of the Louisville International Convention center.

Beck, who again served as Chairman of the Host Committee, was joined by Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer and other local officials..

As part of the kickoff event, dozens of FFA members from the Greater Louisville area gathered in downtown Louisville to plant marigolds. FFA members traditionally do many hours of volunteer work during their stay in the host city of their annual convention.

In his opening remarks, Beck told the FFA group that “we are honored to host this” because “FFA changes the lives of people.”

Mayor Fischer also praised the organization and expressed the community’s interest in agriculture. “Agriculture is hot,” he said. “People are re-connecting with their food sources as never before.”

He noted that the event pumps about \$40 million into the local economy, making it easily the most lucrative convention business for Louisville. With around 63,000 expected to attend, more than 11,000 rooms at 136 hotels were booked, he added.

National FFA President Brian Walsh said the organization was “incredibly grateful to the city of Louisville.” In return, “our students will go all out to serve this community while we are here,” he said.

The convention returns to Louisville next year.



KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck gave the opening remarks at the event in front of the Kentucky International Convention Center. He was joined as a featured speaker by Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, National FFA President Brian Walsh, Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau President Karen Williams and Rebecca Matheny, Executive Director of the Louisville Downtown Partnership.



FFA members planted marigolds in downtown Louisville as part of the “welcome” event.

It's peak season for deer encounters

Kentucky's drivers should brace themselves for the annual three-month increase in roadway encounters with the deer. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) estimates that each year white-tailed deer cause car accidents across the nation that are responsible for tens

of thousands of injuries and the deaths of approximately 200 Americans. Those collisions also carry the hefty price tag of \$4.6 billion in insurance claims annually.

Vehicular collisions with deer increase during this time of year in conjunction with the annual peak season for deer

migration and mating. Kentucky's exploding deer population has only expanded the opportunities for these accidents to occur. Deer are also naturally on the move during this season, and urban sprawl has introduced many new roads into the natural habitats of these animals. Consequently, deer are seen and struck on the roadways during the last three months of the year almost more often than all the other nine months combined.

Kentucky State Police (KSP) data reports that Kentuckians were in a total of 2,766 automobile collisions with deer last year (32 fewer than in 2012), resulting in 132 injuries but no deaths. However, Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Insurance claims data also shows that these collisions have clearly defined seasonal peaks. Approximately \$21.2 million in deer collision claims were filed with KFB in 2013, but nearly 46% of those claims resulted from accidents occurring during October, November and December.

Further analysis of KFB Insurance claims data from the past five years shows that automobiles collided with deer on Kentucky roadways at a clip of 28.51 deer per 1,000 drivers during the month of November, well outpacing the national average of 14.1. As a result of those collisions, KFB Insurance customers filed more than \$4.7 million in claims just during November of 2013.

"The numbers are certainly telling of the frequency of these accidents, but we have to keep in mind that behind those numbers are real people and real injuries," said Greg Youngblood, KFB Insurance's Vice President of Claims. "Our hope is that calling attention to the seasonal increase in deer collisions will increase driver awareness and reduce the number of incidents on Kentucky's roads this fall."

Now that the seasonal jump in deer activity is here, motorists should take the time to be aware of their surroundings even more than usual. KFB advises motorists to drive defensively on the roadways this fall, especially when headed through wooded areas where deer are likely to be seen.

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Black buzzards causing a buzz



This roost of black buzzards is about eight miles southeast of Shelbyville.

The protected status of the black buzzard isn't flying with some Kentucky farmers who have lost cattle to the ominous scavengers. The problem is so prevalent, it's being discussed at KFB meetings on the state and county levels.

"Across the state we are seeing mounting livestock losses," said KFB Director Danny Wilkinson of Adair County, who has lost calves and heifers. "It's the worst predator I have; much worse than coyotes."

Lyon County FB Director Brent White has launched a crusade of sorts to attack the black buzzard problem after losing cows and calves from a large roost near the Fredonia Valley area in northern Lyon County. He has been speaking to groups and penned a letter that county Farm Bureaus can use.

"It's been a terrible problem for me," White said. "It started about two years ago. I had two newborn calves in a small pasture; they came off a roost and attacked both of them. They killed one. I lost a large cow that had a hip problem; they got up on his back and pecked his eyes out. They've killed a couple more calves. They would follow my herd from paddock to paddock waiting to take advantage of a calf. I've seen some distract the cow while others attacked the calf."

Black buzzards (also called "vultures") are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Act. While most common in rural areas, they're also seen in the city ravaging through garbage cans.

Farmers can get a permit to kill the buzzards with steel shot, but must go through both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and USDA. Some farmers claim that process is cumbersome.

KFB's Public Affairs Division is studying potential options for addressing the problem through legislation or regulations. "We're asking people to document losses and report them to us so we can use that information," said Wilkinson, who chairs KFB's swine advisory committee and serves on the Kentucky Livestock Care Standards Commission.

Turkey vultures also are common in Kentucky, but are not known to attack live animals.

"The blacks are the ones that will eat live animals," White said. "Blacks are smaller and more aggressive. They will run a turkey (vulture) off a carcass. They are not afraid of humans, either."

White said he wants "to get the word out" in hope that the federal government will develop some form of a quick remedy for farmers. Meanwhile, he advises those with livestock losses to take photos and record the date and location. That information can be used to obtain livestock indemnity loss payments through the Farm Service Agency.

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Roadside Market signup period is underway

Enrollment for the 2015 KFB Certified Roadside Farm Market program is now open.

The program was established 20 years ago to help farmers sell their produce directly to consumers. Membership has expanded over the years to include green-houses, landscape nurseries, Christmas tree farms, vineyards/wineries and meat/cheese farm markets.

Markets certified through this program are identified by the cornucopia logo and listed in the KFB Certified Roadside Farm Market Directory. The program also provides collective advertising, promotional items, education tour opportunities, and other marketing benefits with the intent to increase the net farm income of member markets.

All enrollment applications must be post-marked by December 31 to guarantee placement in the annual Membership Directory.

Applications for membership are available on the KFB web site, kyfb.com/roadside. For questions about enrollment and the benefits of participating in the KFB Certified Roadside Farm Market program, contact Fran McCall, Commodity Specialist and Roadside Farm Market Coordinator, at (502) 495-5000 ext. 7238 or by e-mail at Fran.McCall@kyfb.com.

Monsanto scholarships

Kentucky students pursuing a degree related to agriculture are invited to apply for a "Grow Ag Leaders" scholarship from the Monsanto Fund. The program provides \$1,500 college scholarships. Starting Nov. 15, high school seniors and college students in Kentucky and other eligible states can apply. The scholarships are administered by the National FFA Organization, but FFA membership is not required to apply. Students have until February 1, 2015 to complete the application online at FFA.org/scholarships.

Farmers interested in promoting the program and endorsing students' scholarship applications can learn how at GrowAgLeaders.com.

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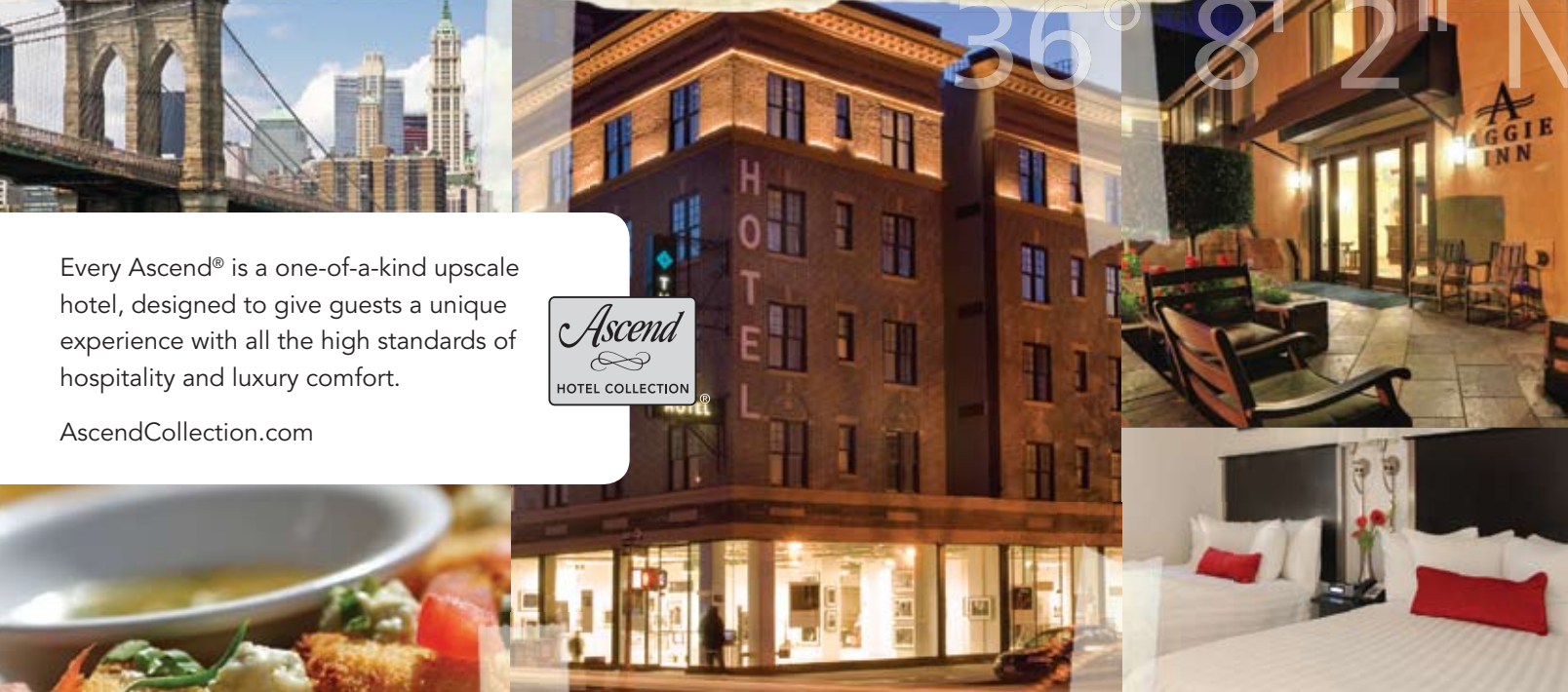
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By Ed McQueen

2014 alfalfa and hay yields hit record

Production of alfalfa and alfalfa mixture dry hay for 2014 is forecast by USDA at 64.5 million tons, up 12 percent from 2013. Yield is expected to average 3.55 tons per acre, up 0.31 ton from last year. If realized, the alfalfa yield would be the highest on record. Harvested area is forecast at 18.2 million acres, up two percent from 2013. Arizona, Nebraska and Utah are expecting record high yields in 2014.

Except in the far western states, the U.S. growing season was characterized mostly by good moisture and below-average temperatures. This resulted in favorable growing conditions for most of the nation's alfalfa hay crop as well as for other types of hay. Production of other hay is forecast at 84.1 million tons, up seven percent from 2013. Based on October 1 conditions, yields are expected to average 2.13 tons per acre, up 0.19 ton from last year. If realized, other hay yield would be a record high. Harvested area is forecast at 39.5 million acres, down three percent from 2013. Producers in Alabama, Colorado, Louisiana, North Dakota, and Wyoming are expecting record high yields in 2014.

Kentucky is forecast to average 3.30 tons per acre for alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures, unchanged from 2013, with production of 594,000 tons, down ten percent from last year. For all other hay, yield of 2.10 tons per acre is down 0.10 tons. The all other hay yield is estimated at 2.10 tons/acre, 0.10 tons less a year ago; production of 5.145 million tons is 135,000 tons under the 2013 crop.

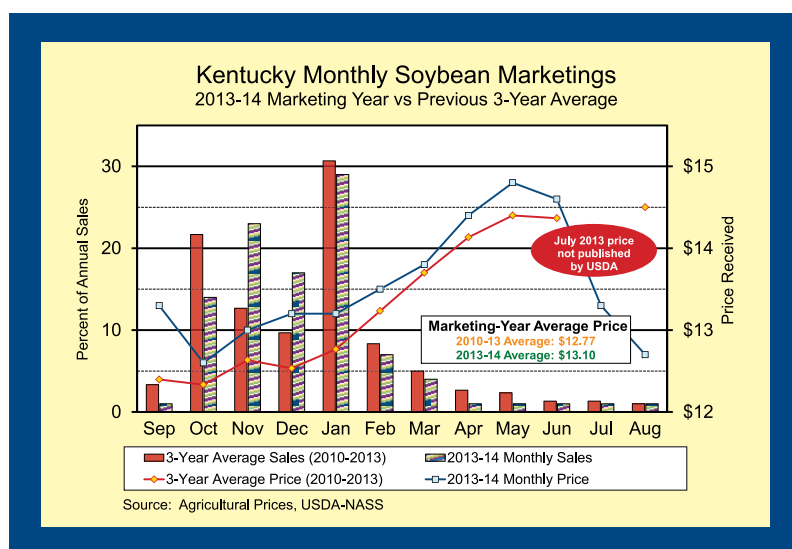
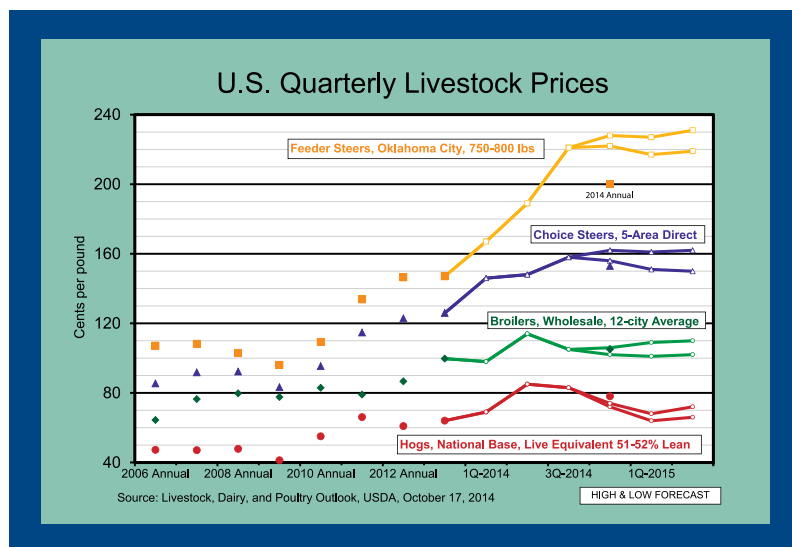
Beef export value soars

For the second consecutive month, U.S. beef export value in August increased year-over-year despite declines in volume, according to USDA statistics compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). August beef exports overcame a three percent decline in volume to 102,456 metric tons (mt) to set a new monthly value record of \$655.2 million, up 16 percent from a year ago. For January through August, beef exports were up three percent in volume (790,208 mt) and 13 percent in value (\$4.55 billion) compared to the same period last year. Exports equated to 14 percent of total beef production.

August fed beef slaughter was down ten percent year-over-year, making the beef export value record more noteworthy. Export value per head of fed slaughter reached \$326.94, up 29 percent from August 2013 and shattering the previous record of \$299.14 set in June. Through August, YTD per-head export value is \$279.48, up 15 percent from the same period last year.

Soybean supply swings to plenty

Soybean use in the fourth quarter of 2013/14 dramatically slowed from the third quarter but historically tight supplies still developed. September 1 soybean stocks totaled 92 million bushels, down from 141 million bushels a year earlier, and were the lowest season-ending inventory since 1973. On a stocks-to-use basis, 2013/14 ending stocks dropped to a record low of 2.6 percent - or less than a 10-day supply. This data led USDA to raise its final 2013/14 production estimate for soybeans by 69 million bushels to 3.358 billion based on 384,000 more acres and a yield of 44 bushels per acre (originally 43.3 bushels). While the unprecedented tight old-crop supply situation has been price-supportive, especially with new-crop soybeans slow to fill the marketing pipeline, it does not materially alter the 2014/15 supply outlook. Soybean production is forecast at a record 3.93 billion bushels with a record yield of 47.1 bushels per acre. The 2014/15 marketing year is forecast to end with 450 million bushels; USDA's season average price range forecast is \$9.00-11.00, compared to \$13.00 for 2013/14.



Tree seedlings are available from KDF

Tree seedlings can be ordered through the Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF), with more than 50 species of trees including white pine, bald cypress, black walnut, white oak, yellow-poplar, dogwood, redbud, pawpaw, hazelnut, pecan and many more. These bare-root seedlings can be used by private landowners, as well as the public sector for reforestation, wildlife habitat development, erosion control, wind-breaks and numerous other conservation projects.

Seedlings will be available for shipping from January through April; they can be purchased in bundles of one, 10 or 100 and range in price from as little as 23 cents per tree to \$5 per tree, depending on the quantity ordered. They are available on a first-come, first-serve basis; therefore, it is advised to place orders as soon as possible. Order forms and contact information for placing orders are available online at <http://forestry.ky.gov>.



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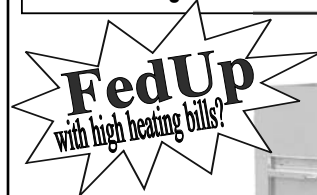
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