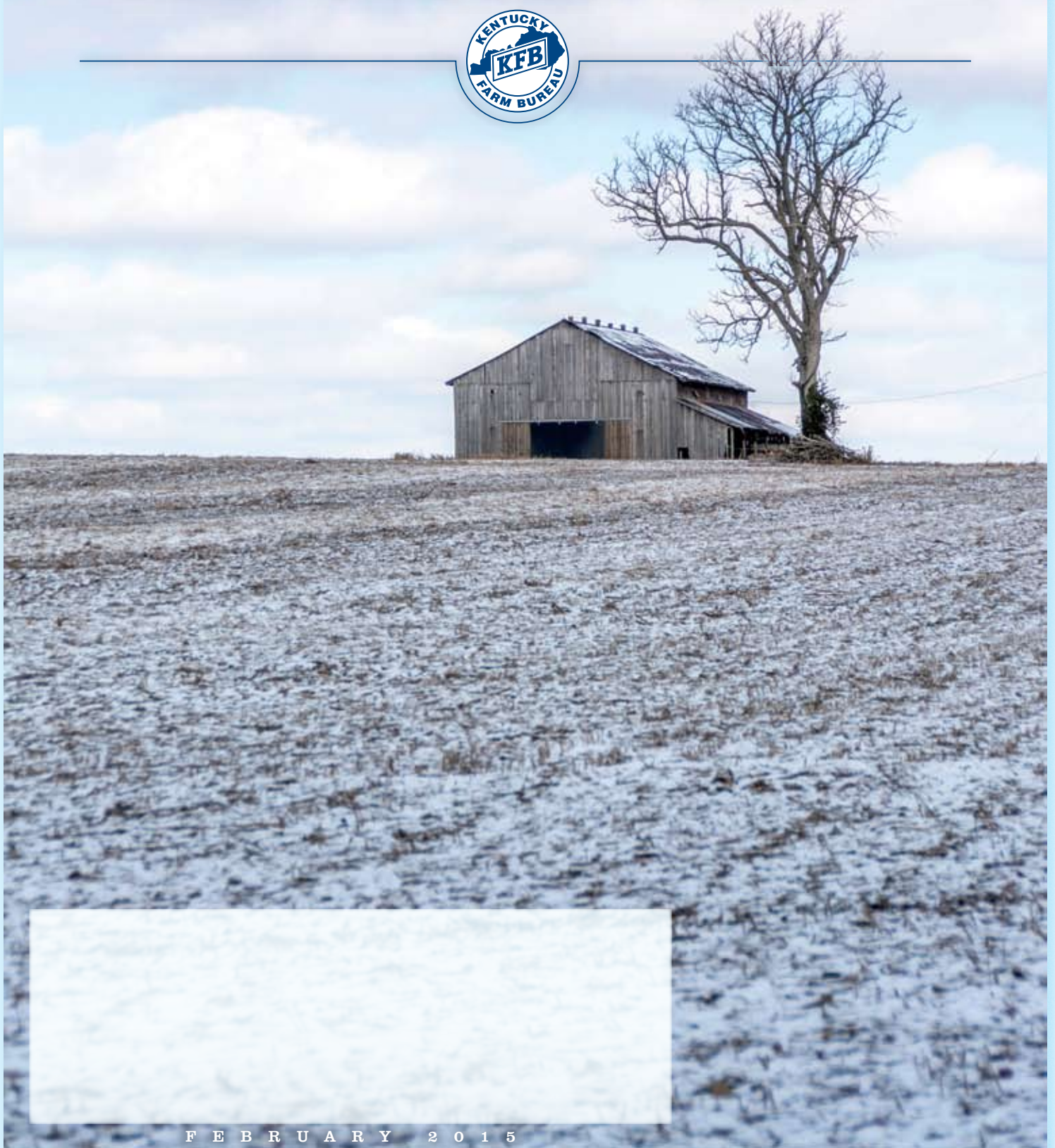


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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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In his keynote address at last month's AFBF Convention, President Bob Stallman repeatedly referred to "Farm Bureau Proud" when citing our organization's purpose, achievements and goals. AFBF has coined that phrase to underscore that farmers and ranchers from throughout the nation have united to preserve their way of life and pave the way for a prosperous future.



I certainly was proud to lead a Kentucky delegation that was 325 members strong and representing an organization that received much recognition on this national level.

Once again, KFB received the maximum number of awards for program excellence. This came for our work in public affairs, communications, leadership development, education, member services and member initiatives.

I often tell our county leaders that I feel our staff is second to none. These awards affirm that, as well as indicating that we are on target in service to our members.

There's no question that our young farmer program is tops. And it's pretty obvious that we have a bounty of outstanding young farm families in Kentucky, because for the fourth time in nine years, a Kentucky family was selected for the prestigious Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award.

I'm especially proud that the winners – Chris and Rebekah Pierce -- come from my home county, Pulaski County.

Kentucky has had the winner or runner-up in this highly competitive program seven times since 2007. That's an incredible accomplishment. Our representatives in the Discussion Meet and Excellence in Agriculture Program also have done well in recent years. It adds up to the combination of smart, innovative young farm families and a well-operated young farmer program.

Public policy, of course, is always priority one; Farm Bureau indeed has much to do. Immigration reforms that improve the farm labor programs and the defeat of some potentially harmful regulatory proposals are high on the list from the 355 delegates to AFBF convention. Other topics of discussion at the business session included energy policy, tax reforms, food labeling and protecting farm production data.

I'm pleased to report that KFB had a strong presence at our national convention. We should be "Farm Bureau Proud."

**Mark Haney**

President

Kentucky Farm Bureau

# Water committee pursuing drought plan

**KFB**'s "Water Management Working Group" held its second meeting on February 28, with drought mitigation and technical assistance programs on the agenda. Officials from the Kentucky Division of Water (KDW) agreed that Kentucky's agriculture industry needs a drought mitigation plan, plus would benefit greatly from the establishment of a state groundwater monitoring system.

Bill Caldwell, an environmental scientist with KDW, gave a lengthy presentation on agriculture's role in a drought mitigation plan. He complimented the 20-member group for looking at the issue, saying "you are picking up the torch on a huge issue because agriculture stands to be the worst affected for not being prepared (for a drought)."

Caldwell, who was joined by KDW Director Peter Goodmann, noted that there is no defined drought mitigation action for Kentucky agriculture. To pursue that objective, he recommended the

expansion of data collection monitoring, an inventory of water resources, identification of drought vulnerabilities, the pursuit of opportunities to expand water supplies and a public education initiative.

Kentucky's farms are extremely vulnerable to drought because a very small percentage of cropland is irrigated and very little public water is utilized for agricultural purposes. State law (KRS 151.40) allows farmers to use public waters for agricultural purposes; ag water use is exempt from water withdrawal permitting and regulatory requirements.

Farmers should look at its potential sources such as wells and streams, Caldwell said.

"And don't ignore access to public water," added Goodmann.

The KDW officials displayed charts showing that most of the urban water systems, plus several smaller ones in rural communities, have excess capacity that could possibly serve farms. According to state statistics, less than 10 percent of the state's public water supply goes for agriculture purposes.

Caldwell, as well as several working group members, lamented the fact that Kentucky is one of the few states that

does not have a groundwater monitoring system. Working Group Chairman Steve Coleman, a longtime Director of the Kentucky Division of Conservation, suggested the group recommend the development of a system.

During an afternoon session officials from the Natural Resources and Conservation Service gave reports on developing ponds and wells, flood control structures and technical assistance programs. NRCS is a USDA agency charged with providing conservation planning and technical assistance, including helping farmers make more efficient use of their water resources.

At its initial meeting in December, the Water Management Working Group established goals that include identifying financial and regulatory challenges, assessing financial resources and educating farmers on water management strategies. The group includes representatives from KFB, the Kentucky Division of Water, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, UK College of Agriculture, Food & Environment, Kentucky League of Cities, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts and Kentucky Rural Water Association.

The next meeting is February 18.

## Livestock Directory

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For more information go to [www.kydairy.org](http://www.kydairy.org)



## District Meeting Schedule

District 1	March 16	7: p.m.	Graves County FB
District 2	March 3	6:30 p.m.	Ballard Conv. Center, Madisonville
District 3	March 26	6:30 p.m.	Rough River State Park Lodge
District 4	March 31	6:30 p.m.	Barren River State Park Lodge
District 5	March 19	7: p.m.	Spencer County Extension Office
District 6	March 3	7: p.m.	Boone County Extension Office
District 7	March 9	6: p.m.	Russell County Auditorium
District 8	March 2	7: p.m.	Madison County FB, Berea
District 9	March 17	6:30 p.m.	Blue Licks State Park Lodge
District 10	March 9	6:30 p.m.	Carter County Extension Office
District 11	March 16	6:00 p.m.	Pine Mtn. Grill, Whitesburg
(all times are local)			





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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## comment

### C O L U M N

Currently just fewer than 1,600 species of plants or animals are listed as threatened or endangered in the United States under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), with nearly 60 listed for Kentucky. While everyone agrees endangered species should be protected and managed for recovery, the effort needs to be modernized if we are truly going to protect endangered species without jeopardizing private property rights and local economies. Two additional species are now being considered for listing: the northern long-eared bat and the Monarch butterfly, and both could impact Kentucky landowners and farmers.



The northern long-eared bat is being proposed as endangered due to population declines from white-nose syndrome, a fungal disease affecting bats. Kentucky is one of 37 states and the District of Columbia where the bat is known to hibernate in caves or mines with summertime roosts in trees, barns or sheds. The Monarch butterfly has been petitioned for protection under the ESA and is undergoing a status review by the FWS. The species can be found throughout the U.S. with some populations migrating over 3,000 miles between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. Petitioners have claimed that monarch populations are declining due to the use of crop protection chemicals (herbicides) impact on milkweed, the butterfly's sole food source, and habitat loss.

Once a species is listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA, protective measures would apply. Measures include the potential designation of public and private lands as critical habitat, restrictions on certain activities which could lead to "a take" of the species, and the development of a recovery plan. These measures often restrict a farmer or landowner's ability to manage their land and resources.

Farmers and landowners can play a particularly significant role in species recovery as long as federal ESA recovery plans approach the effort in a realistic, science-based and transparent process. Development of strategies that involve farmers in the planning and recovery process, rather than implementation of unrealistic burdens and restrictions on resources and practices, are the best hope any threatened or endangered species has for long-term survival.

**L. Joe Cain**

Director

KFB Commodity Division

# Pulaski County couple win national young farmer award



Above, Chris and Rebekah Pierce posed with their plaque and a GM truck.

Below, AFBF President Bob Stallman presented KFB's Terry Gilbert with a plaque honoring her service on the Women's Leadership Committee. Mrs. Gilbert stepped down from the committee after serving for 15 years, including 14 years as chairperson. The Boyle County farmer also served many years on KFB's Board of Directors.



Pulaski County's Chris and Rebekah Pierce were selected for the prestigious "Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award" during AFBF's 96th annual convention last month in San Diego. The award recognizes young farmers and ranchers who have excelled in their farming or ranching operations and exhibited superior leadership abilities. Participants are evaluated on a combination of their agricultural operation's growth and financial progress, Farm Bureau leadership and leadership outside of the organization.

"We were very excited to win this award and truly honored even be on the stage with so many other good producers from around the country," said Chris. "We are very fortunate to have excellent support from our community and the staff of Kentucky Farm Bureau."

The Pierces were in the national contest as winners of KFB's "Outstanding Young Farm Family" award. They grow row crops on more than 3,000 acres in Pulaski County. They are the fourth Kentucky couple to win the award since 2007, following John and Jill Mahan of Fayette County (2007), Aaron and Ashley Reding of LaRue County (2010) and Ryan and Misty Bivens of LaRue County (2013).

Chris and Rebekah are active members of the KFB Young Farmer program. Chris is also a graduate of KFB's Leadership Enhancement for Agricultural Development (LEAD) class, has an off-farm job teaching young farmer classes at a community college, has served on several of KFB's state advisory committees and is in a leadership role other agriculture organizations.

They were presented with their choice of either a 2015 Chevrolet Silverado or a 2015 GMC Sierra, courtesy of GM.

KFB also received recognition via six awards of excellence for its program of work in Communications, Policy Development, Leadership Development, Education, Member Services and Member Initiatives. That represents awards in every category.

More than 300 KFB members attended.



# Data security is high on 2015 policy agenda



KFB delegates (rows three and four) at the business session.

**F**armer and rancher delegates to AFBF's 96th Annual Convention approved resolutions that will provide the organization grassroots authority to ask Congress to finish many measures that remain unsettled at the start of 2015.

"Our delegates are the men and women growing the food and fiber for our nation and much of the rest of the world every day," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "They have made great strides over the last decades in improving their environmental performance, in adopting cutting edge technologies and taking actions to make sure they can pass their farms and ranches on to the next generation."

According to Stallman, however, these same producers recognize that many of the challenges they face are derived from the federal government's attempt to over-reach in its regulation of land use.

"This is particularly true with respect to improper application of federal water

rules," Stallman said. "Our members also want us to continue our effort to secure a stable and reliable supply of agricultural labor."

## Regarding other policy matters, delegates:

- Reaffirmed that farmers' proprietary data remain strictly the property of the farmer or rancher when submitted to third parties for analysis and processing;
- Agreed that farmers and ranchers must have the right to remove their data permanently from the systems of agricultural technology providers. Members feel especially strongly about this point given the exponential growth of agricultural data systems and the double-digit productivity gains they have generated in just a few short growing seasons;
- Opposed state efforts to dictate out-of-state, farm-level production practices;
- Reaffirmed support for producer-led and -approved checkoff programs;
- Reaffirmed support for country-of-

origin labeling provisions consistent with World Trade Organization rules;

- Called for a state-led, voluntary pollinator stewardship program to address concerns over recent declines in the populations of honey bees and butterflies;

- Supported the production, processing, commercialization and use of industrial hemp;

- Called for an end to the Environmental Protection Agency's attempts to require permits for farmers to repair erosion damage on their property;

- Opposed the current cap on agricultural labor visas under the H2-B program; and

- Called for common-sense reform in endangered species protection legislation.

A total of 355 voting delegates representing every crop and livestock sector in the United States deliberated on policies affecting farmers' and ranchers' productivity and profitability. KFB had 24 delegates.

# Young Farmer Conference

The Young Farmer Leadership Conference was held in Bowling Green last month, attracting another large group of young farm families from throughout the state. The two-day event featured workshops, tours of local attractions, guest speakers and plenty of fellowship. Presiding was Alan Hubble of Lincoln County, the new chairman of the young farmer committee.

KFB President Mark Haney addressed the group at a luncheon and was quick to note that Kentucky's young farmer program continues to shine with national recognition and an impressive level of participation in its programs and events.

"Our young farmer program is alive and well," Haney said. "We have made a national presence. What we do is amazing."

He was referencing the fact that in seven of the past nine years Kentucky has had either the winner or runner-up in the national young farmer achievement program, plus consistently has finalists in the Discussion Meet and "Excellence in Agriculture" programs.

Chris and Rebekah Pierce of Pulaski County won this year's national young farmer achievement award.

Keynote speaker at the closing luncheon was State Representative Wilson Stone, a long-time Farm Bureau leader in Allen County. He told the young farmers that after many years of farming and various degrees of public service, he'd like to offer some advice. He went on to advocate family, devotion to farming, church, public service and to "be an encouragement to those around you."

"Find your place to be involved in your community," Stone added. "Make a difference in



A large group of young farm families were on hand in Bowling Green.



Kids could milk a mechanical cow at the "Ag Adventures" workshop.

your community."

As for farming, he said: "Make sure your farming operation is secure so you can provide for your family."

Stone is well known as a champion of education, having served for many years on his local school board and also

working with the Kentucky School Board. He urged the audience to support their schools.

"Nothing is more important to the vitality of rural communities than its schools," he said.

Stone had kind words for Farm Bureau.

"I'm so proud of Farm Bureau for many reasons, but one is that they are willing to step into other rural issues besides agriculture. They are interested in all issues that impact rural life."

The conference offered a good variety of workshops, including one for children. Other topics





Committee Chairman Alan Hubble of Lincoln County presided over the conference.

State Representative Wilson Stone of Allen County was a keynote speaker.

included agriculture advocacy, emerging technologies, policy development, ag economic update and two choices aimed at the farm wives – self defense and time management strategies.

The agriculture advocacy workshop was handled by Andrew Walmsley, AFBF's Director of Congressional Relations. He spoke about the need for farmers to speak up on the GMO-food safety issue.

"There's a realization that we have to do a better job of communicating to consumers," he said.

To illustrate that point, Walmsley showed a video of "man-on-the-street" interviews at a California farmers market. People were asked "Do you avoid GMOs?" followed by "What is a GMO?"

The typical response was "yes" but then the person could not articulate what a GMO is. One young lady said a GMO was "some kind of corn that's contaminated."

None of the respondents (there were around 8 people shown) in the video knew what GMO stood for, and only one had an accurate explanation of a GMO.

The bottom line was that consumers think GMO products are harmful, but don't really know anything about the issue.

AFBF has useful information for agriculture advocates on its web site under "GMO answers."

The Young Farmer Summer Outing is set for July 10-11 in Pikeville.

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# Ag proposal develop



Yvonne Scott of AmericorpsVista and Morgan County Extension Agent Daniel Wilson are bullish on the SOAR project.

**A**ccess to capital, availability of land and developing local food systems are among the key issues for agriculture contained in a committee report for the Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) initiative. Those recommendations will be among those from 10 committees reporting at a February 16 “summit” meeting in Pikeville.

Governor Steve Beshear and Congressman Hal Rogers launched SOAR in 2013 in response to coal’s downturn. They called for a large group of “stakeholders” (organizations, businesses, academia, etc.) to work cooperatively on a plan of action to create jobs and improve the quality of life in the 53 Appalachian counties. That charge was taken quite seriously:

More than 1,700 – including several KFB leaders -- attended the initial “summit” meeting for the project.

Entering 2015, the next step is the February 16 summit in Pikeville, where 10 committees will present recommendations developed over a course of many meetings throughout the region. The areas of emphasis include agriculture, education, health, business recruitment, infrastructure and tourism.

Wolfe County Extension Agent Daniel Wilson is chairman of the SOAR Agricultural, Local and Regional Foods and Natural Resources Committee. He said he realized this was serious business when Governor Beshear called him to request his service as chairman. And that

was reinforced, he said, by the participation of Republican and Democratic political leaders at the initial summit.

“That brought a lot of energy and commitment to this,” said Wilson, a Jackson County native in his eighth year at the Wolfe County extension service.

During 10 “listening sessions” at sites ranging from Greensburg to Pikeville to Morehead, the agriculture committee surfaced some primary recommendations that it will present at the February 16 summit. Surfacing from the discussions involving more than 300 Kentuckians were primary issues of concern such as access to capital, availability of land, developing local food systems, encouraging partnerships, creating a planning and



# ed for SOAR project

development fund and promoting existing facilities.

## Recommendations include the following:

- A small loan program whereby low or no-interest loans of up to \$5,000 are available.
- Provide tax incentives for mine land owners and others to lease property for agricultural purposes.
- Fund and showcase model efforts of product development, regional cooperation and marketing endeavors.
- Work with USDA and the private sector to establish “food hubs” and other infrastructure beneficial to agriculture.
- Utilize institutions of higher education for agriculture development, primarily by expanding curriculum.
- Continuing support for entrepreneurial development programs.

“We discussed many things,” said Wilson, “but the main one we heard about was regional food hubs; places where producers can sell vegetables to wholesalers

and others. Traditionally, farmers in the region had tobacco and cattle, which are easily sold. It’s not that way for vegetables. They’d like a reliable venue to say, load up a truck of tomatoes or whatever and have a buyer.”

The committee also heard repeated calls for programs to enhance access to land and capital.

“This is a good time to get into farming; the agriculture economy is good and there are a lot of resources out there,” said Wilson. “Being able to lease good land, and obtain affordable loans are important elements for growth.”

The agriculture group has representatives from extension, academia, the Governor’s Office of Agricultural Policy, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Regional Development plus farm commodity and advocacy organizations.

While coal country is a primary focus, the counties involved actually stretch as far west as Edmonson County. Several traditionally strong agricultural areas are included.

The SOAR project also involves dozens of volunteers from AmericorpsVista. Working in the Wolfe County office is

Yvonne Scott, who came from the mountains of western North Carolina for a one-year commitment to SOAR. Her role is to recruit support and facilitate action. She said the program’s response to SOAR “shows how important this is; that there’s a lot of potential.”

Ms. Scott and Wilson both voiced disappointment in the underutilization of several facilities in the region, most notably the Jackson County Regional Food Center in Annville.

“That’s a good model for other parts of the region,” said Ms. Scott.

Wilson said participants are optimistic because of the involvement of a powerhouse political team of the governor and the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. Moreover, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and a bipartisan group of state legislative leaders from the region have voiced support.

The committee recommendations will go to the project’s executive board, which will determine a course of action.

The Chop Shop is a meat processor with potential.





# Home cooking

## Test kitchen aids development of local foods

By Ray Bowman

**W**hen Agriculture Commissioner James Comer announced a partnership between the Kentucky Proud program and grocery giant Kroger in November of 2014, Joey and Gina Farmer's Lucky Clover Farm was one of the beneficiaries with the jams and jellies they make. They had been selling at farmers' markets

and festivals, but took their business to the higher retail level with some training and the use of a handy commercial food testing facility not far from their Madison County farm.

"After starting with micro processing, we took the Farm Start classes and that spurred us on to commercial food manufacturing and we formed an LLC," Joey explained while sterilizing jelly jars at the Jackson County Regional Food Center near Annville. The KYFarm Start program is an intensive education program targeting those individuals who have ten years or less farming experience.

It's roughly an hour for the Farmers to get from their farm to the Jackson County facility. They say the facility is especially attractive because it has a "hot bath" needed for the canning process they prefer.

"We still use two-part lids that have to be hot-bathed," Joey explained. Many commercial canners prefer a one-piece lid, but the Farmers like the old-fashioned jars and are willing to take the extra steps necessary to use them. Personal touches, like hand applying the two-part lids, make a difference. About 600 jars constitutes a day's output, heading for the shelves at Kroger.

Diversification is an important element of the work at Lucky Clover Farms and the Jackson County Regional Food Center accommodates some







Top facing page, Joey Farmer measures sugar for the jam he was testing at the Jackson County Regional Food Center.

Left, Rebekah Adkins (left) and Food Center Manager Mary Carpenter prep apples for use in Lucky Clover Farms' caramel apple jam.

of that diversity. Canning and preserving may be done in one part of the facility while Gina's custom bake goods, featured at festivals, fairs and farmers' markets, is done in another part of the plant.

The Regional Food Center is a shared-use facility that allows a variety of producers to process, package and label their goods and have a market-ready product when they walk out the door. The Center has its own reputation for diversity, assisting a variety of producers with a variety of products, including (but certainly not limited to) salsa, salad dressing and barbecue sauce. The fully licensed and equipped facility allows smaller producers to prepare and market products that wouldn't be economically feasible on their own.

Lucky Clover Farms is also part of another project from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, called Appalachian Proud. The program, a subset of Kentucky Proud, provides a designation for products created in the 37 counties of Eastern Kentucky and was created about a year ago to spur economic development in an area that, according to the project motto, has "Mountains of Potential."

Two Appalachian Proud producers are included in the current Kroger promotion; Lucky Clover Farms and Rock Bottom Stable and Soap Company from Laurel County, which makes goat's milk soaps and lotions.


In all, 125 products from 34 Kentucky Proud producers will be featured in 88 stores throughout the state.

Lucky Clover Farm can be reached at (859) 779-8522 or [LuckyCloverFarm@gmail.com](mailto:LuckyCloverFarm@gmail.com).

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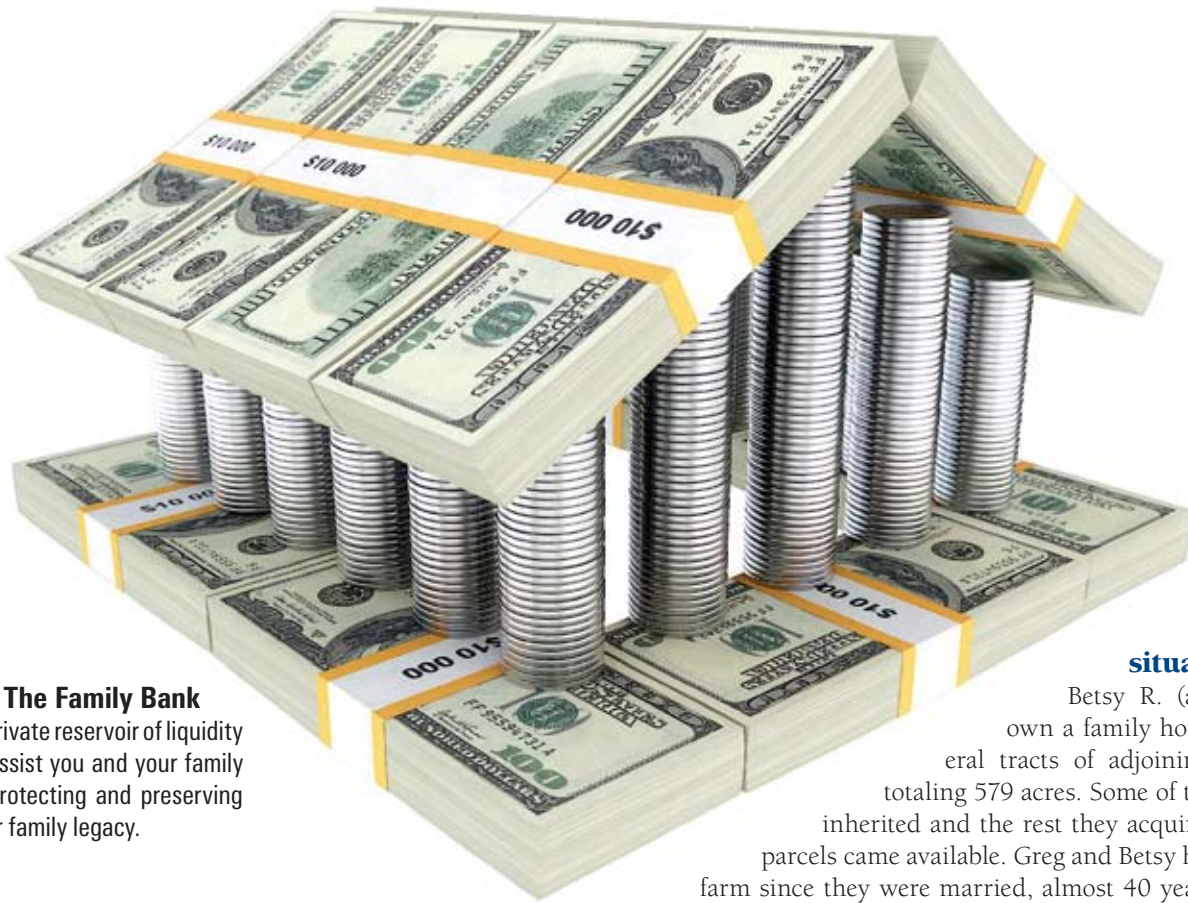
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# Create Your own



## The Family Bank

A private reservoir of liquidity to assist you and your family in protecting and preserving your family legacy.

**T**he concept of creating your own Family Bank is an exciting opportunity available to almost every Kentucky Farm Bureau ("KYFB") member to assist in protecting your Family Legacy and to enhance the accumulation of wealth for you and your family.

We call it a "Family Bank" because it is a reservoir of cash that almost anyone can create, and which will provide a source of funding for your cash needs, just like the bricks-and-mortar bank on the town square -- only easier because now you can be your own loan committee. And, with your own Family Bank you control a source of liquidity that enables you to preserve your farm or business, and enhance the wealth you pass to your family.

## Consider the following situation:

Greg and Betsy R. (ages 61 and 58) own a family homestead and several tracts of adjoining farm acreage, totaling 579 acres. Some of the property Greg inherited and the rest they acquired, as additional parcels came available. Greg and Betsy have worked their farm since they were married, almost 40 years ago, and have made a good living from their grain and dairy operation. They raised four children on the farm, three daughters (Eleanor, Katie and Marcella) and a son (Henry). Although all of their children still live in the state, only Marcella, the youngest, has chosen to become involved in the day-to-day operation of the farm. Greg and Betsy are concerned that if anything should happen to them, either disability or death, how would they protect the value of their family farm for all of their children – and in particular for Marcella, who has chosen to make farming her livelihood. And further, how could they protect the legacy they would be passing to their children from creditors, divorce and predators.

Although Greg and Betsy have never considered themselves wealthy, the value of their land, livestock and farm equipment alone is worth well over Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000). Yet, with less than \$90,000 cash in checking and savings accounts, some stocks and \$55,000 in several certificates of deposit accumulated over the years, money has always seemed short. Consequently, Greg and Betsy are concerned about the cost of nursing home care, if one or both of them should become incapacitated. How could they afford to pay the \$6,000+ monthly



# Family Bank

By Rob Pittman, Estate Planning Specialist,  
and Michael Pitt, Attorney

cost for long-term care without losing their farm? And, if they should die, how could all four of their children share equitably in the value of the farm?

Betsy talked to a local lawyer, who could only suggest they provide in their Wills that Marcella could purchase the farm from her brother and sisters. But Greg still worries about where Marcella could borrow the money to purchase her sisters' and brother's interests. And, even if a bank would lend her the money, Greg worries about burdening Marcella with so much debt, that she could not make a decent living operating the farm -- or worse, that she might be forced to sell off part of the farm.

Greg and Betsy shared their concerns with their KYFB Agency Manager, who told them KYFB offers members free consultation with Kentucky Farm Bureau's Estate Planning Specialist to find solutions for their concerns – the very same concerns other farm families in the state face every day. Within a week, the KYFB Estate Planning Specialist met them in the KYFB office in their town.

The KYFB Estate Planning Specialist, working with their attorney, was able to help Greg and Betsy design a simple, but effective plan to protect their assets so those assets will be available for their own needs for the rest of their lives, and to preserve their legacy for their children after their deaths. In addition, through KYFB, Greg and Betsy re-positioned existing assets to create a reservoir of cash (their own Family Bank) that became a pool of cash available at their death to facilitate Marcella's purchase of the farm, so she could operate it without being burdened with a huge debt.

And their own Family Bank also created a source of cash available to Greg for operational needs in the operation of the farm.

Greg was especially delighted that he wouldn't have to finance the purchase of his next tractor, or wait on pins and needles for a decision from the dreaded "loan committee."

The above example is hypothetical. Obviously, confidentiality would prohibit sharing real facts involving actual Kentucky Farm Bureau members. But Greg and Betsy's concerns are typical of the real life fears faced every day by KYFB members across the state – how to preserve and protect your farm, how to provide for your needs during your life, and thereafter how to protect your legacy for your children, undiminished by debt and taxes.

You are not alone. Kentucky Farm Bureau is here to help and we have assisted hundreds of Kentucky farm families over the years. Maybe a Family Bank is right for you; maybe it's not. But there are solutions to your concerns, solutions other KYFB families have discovered, solutions that will allow you to sleep more soundly at night, confident that whatever arises, your family farming legacy is safe and secure for your children. Contact your Kentucky Farm Bureau Agent today to schedule a free consultation with our Estate Planning Specialist.

## About the Authors:

Rob Pittman, is the Farm Bureau Estate Planning Specialist for Kentucky. KYFB offers consultations with Rob, as a free benefit for KYFB members across the Commonwealth. And, he is happy to meet with you in your home county.

Michael Pitt, is an Attorney practicing in Louisville, Kentucky, and a member of WealthCounsel. Mike assists KYFB farm families and small business owners across the state to preserve and protect their assets for their benefit for their lives, and thereafter preserve their legacy.

# Agritourism workshop

## KFB

joined with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) and the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KARDA) to sponsor a workshop for operators of agritourism businesses. About 25 participants heard presentations on topics such as business planning, legal implications, taxes, health standards requirements, grants programs, KDA programs, social media and marketing.

Carilynn Coombs, KFB's social media coordinator, spoke about that topic and the organization's 19-year-old certified roadside farm markets program. She urged the group to utilize social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

"Consumers want to get to know you," she said. "It's not just about your products; it's personal. They want the inside scoop because everyone feels like an insider on social media."

Public Relations specialist Jennifer Elwell agreed, saying "everybody wants to have that connection."



KFB's Carilynn Coombs gave a presentation on social media.

Ms. Coombs showed example of some popular Kentucky agritourism sites.

Executive Director Aleta Botts spoke about KARDA's role in helping small businesses throughout the state. The Elizabethtown-based agency was established in 2001 and is primarily funded

through the agriculture development fund.

KARDA specializes in developing business plans and marketing strategies but also is available to help with problem solving and seeking financial assistance from both grants programs and lenders, Ms. Botts said.

"Knowledge about your own business is powerful," she advised. "Know what's working and what's not."

Of agribusinesses, she said "we're not building pyramids here. What we build won't last centuries. What we are trying to do is build businesses that meet current challenges, and then are constantly adjusting."

KDA's Amelia Wilson said the department currently lists around 480 agritourism businesses in the state. (For 2014, 106 businesses were in KFB's roadside markets program.)



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# County Corner

## Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



Lisa Osborne (left) and Stacy Collier (right) of Greenup County Farm Bureau's Women's Committee delivered donated "delivery steps" to a local elementary school.



Christian County FB hosted a retirement celebration for agent John Burman, who received numerous awards during his 55-year career with the company. He was named Master Agent for over 20 years. Here, John and Ellen Burman chat with KFB President Mark Haney. A large crowd was on hand at the Convention Center to honor Mr. Burman.



Harlan County FB donated Thanksgiving turkeys to the Cumberland Hope Community Center, a residential addiction recovery center for adult women. Pictured from left are community center staff members Bobby Thomas, Alex Pennington and Elma Taylor; Harlan County FB Secretary Nathan Boggs and President Don Miniard.



Bourbon County FB partnered with Paris Church of Christ to conduct a drive to collect and distribute winter clothing for the needy. Here, agency manager Micah Campbell (right) and Paris Church of Christ Minister Clay Leonard unload items. In one week alone, 108 families received items such as coats, gloves and blankets.

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Lawrence Hurst,  
Plymouth, Ohio



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## Larger hay supplies increased use

All hay production for 2014 is estimated at 139.8 million tons, up 4.8 million tons or four percent from 2013. The 2014 average all hay yield is estimated at 2.45 tons per acre, a 0.12-ton-per-acre increase over 2013. The all hay production increase came mostly from a 4.2 million ton increase in alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures for hay, for a total crop of 61.4 million tons. Increased acreage and average yields contributed to the larger crop.

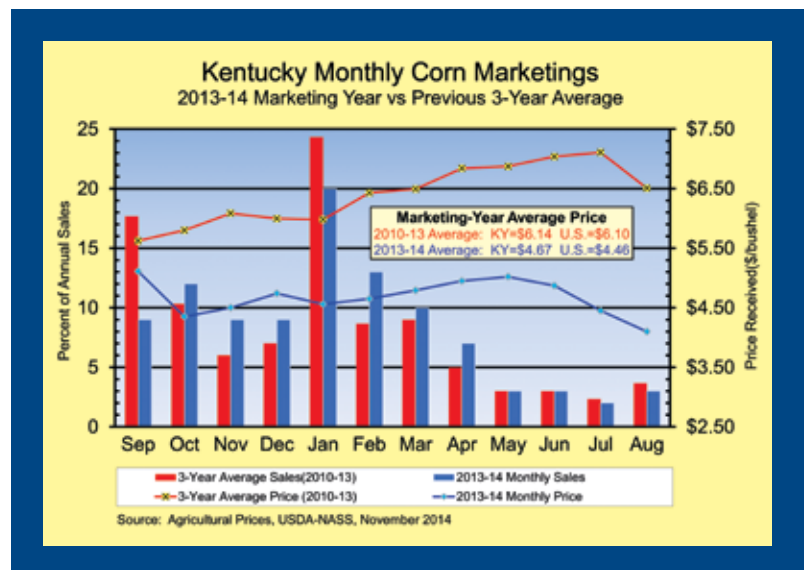
Nationally, disappearance from May 1, 2014, to December 1, 2014, totaled 66.9 million tons, a 7.0 million ton or 12-percent increase over the same period in 2013. This increased use of hay during the first half of the crop year was made possible in part by the 9.8 million ton increase in hay supplies compared to 2013. This added supply consisted of an additional 5.0 million tons of beginning stocks on May 1 and the 4.8 million ton larger hay crop. As of December 1, 2014, hay stocks on farms totaled 92.1 million tons, up 2.7 million tons from a year earlier. In Kentucky, December 1 hay stocks totaled 3.30 million tons, down from 4.20 million a year earlier. The drop in stocks resulted from a 0.74 million ton, or 13.4 percent, smaller hay crop. Kentucky's harvested area shrunk 5.6 percent and the average yield fell 8.3 percent.

## Domestic soybean processing share drops

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service highlighted in its "Oilseeds: World Markets and Trade" report an interesting development. Traditionally, domestic crush has been the primary component of U.S. soybean disappearance. A decade ago, over 50 percent more soybeans were crushed as were exported. This crop year is radically different, with forecasted soybean exports of 1.77 billion bushels essentially matching the forecasted crush amount of 1.78 billion bushels. Key factors in the declining share of soybean crush are increased production and strong export demand. Over the last ten years, U.S. soybean production has risen about 27 percent while crush only gained about five percent as plant capacity changed little. But soybean exports soared over 60 percent in this period. If exports of soybeans as meal and soybean oil are considered, nearly 6 of every 10 soybeans produced enters the export channel. Thus, the U.S. soybean market is highly dependent upon circumstances in China and South America. This contrasts to the U.S. corn market where exports, including DDGS, are forecast to account for less than 20 percent of total supply.

## Retail beef value hits record high

December 2014's all-fresh beef retail value was a record \$6 per lb., up nearly a dollar from a year earlier. Retail Choice beef prices in December reached a new record of \$6.31 per lb., up \$0.95 from a year earlier. Estimated average monthly Choice retail beef price for January 2014 through December 2014 was \$5.97 per pound, nearly 13 percent above the same-period average of \$5.29 for 2013. According to USDA-ERS economists, average retail beef prices in 2015 are expected to be slightly higher than they were in 2014. While lower gas prices may give consumers some additional spending power, increased supplies of pork and poultry may limit beef price increases. In 2014, there was a very tight cattle supply and relatively strong demand, allowing the cattle market to reach record prices. USDA data shows the five-market monthly average steer price peaked in November at \$1.71/pound, nearly 40 cents above the year earlier price. With the cattle supply remaining tight during 2015, USDA expects the annual average five-market Choice steer price to be between \$1.59 and \$1.71 per pound, compared to 2014's \$1.55 per pound.







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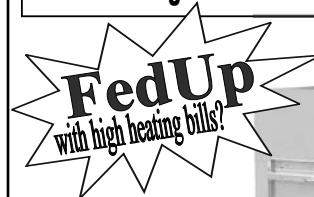
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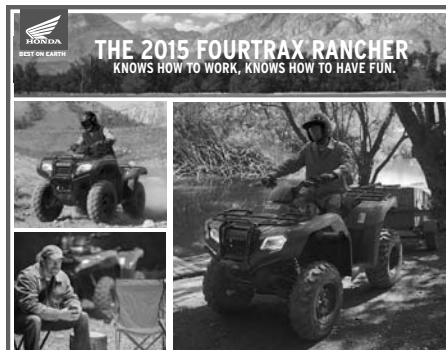


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## 2014 INDEPENDENT **CORN TEST RESULTS**

	Brand	Test/Location	Bu./A.	Rank
<b>Wheat Tech</b>	Beck 6347VR	Warren County summary	158.0	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 6175AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Todd County summary	218.8	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 6626AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Todd County summary	214.6	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> out of 86</b>
	Phoenix 6542A4 <sup>**</sup>	Todd County summary	214.2	<b>4<sup>th</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 6175AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Gibson County, TN summary	200.2	<b>4<sup>th</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 5828AMX <sup>TM*</sup>	Gibson County, TN summary	196.4	<b>5<sup>th</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 6948A3	Gibson County, TN summary	194.9	<b>6<sup>th</sup> out of 86</b>
	Beck 5828AMX <sup>TM*</sup>	Five Location Average, Early Group	170.6	<b>1<sup>st</sup> out of 19</b>
	Beck 6175AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Five Location Average, Medium Group	184.7	<b>1<sup>st</sup> out of 22</b>
	Phoenix 6542A4 <sup>**</sup>	Five Location Average, Late Group	162.0	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> out of 20</b>
<b>University of Kentucky</b>	Beck 5828AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Early Season Summary	210.6	<b>5<sup>th</sup> out of 44</b>
	Beck 6626AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Mid Season Summary	222.7	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> out of 91</b>
	Beck 6175AM <sup>TM*</sup>	Mid Season Summary	210.4	<b>8<sup>th</sup> out of 91</b>

\*XL is a registered trademark of Pioneer. XL brand seed is distributed by Beck's Superior Hybrids, Inc.

\*\*Phoenix® is a trademark of a Syngenta Group Company. Phoenix® brand seed is distributed by Beck's Superior Hybrids, Inc.



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