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KFB Advisory Committees
Summary Issue

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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS
Volume 16 | No. 9
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Cover photo by: Tim Thornberry
Soybean harvest in Franklin County

Interior graphics by Melissa LaRoche

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It's amazing to me to see how the marketplace has changed thanks to the growth of online shopping and the Internet in general. Many surveys are conducted each year to gauge this growth and study just what products people are purchasing from their computers or smart phones.

You can buy anything from eggs to automobiles, pay your bills or apply for a loan all from the comfort of your own home. Some estimates show half of the country's buying population has done so through these technological means.

With that said, if this trend is expected to continue and grow for our farm families, the issue of broadband coverage gaps must be addressed.

The best way to look at this situation is to think of broadband coverage as part of the overall infrastructure needs in specific areas of the state or across the country. In order to maintain forward progress in rural development efforts, the idea of good roads and solid transportation venues is never in doubt.

Broadband coverage however, should be looked at no differently when recognizing its value to the rural development picture.

From a business prospective, I could not operate my family market nearly as efficiently without adequate broadband connectivity. Most of the local farm markets across the state have made an effort to accommodate their customers as more and more of them use credit and debit cards to make purchases. We must have that optimum connectivity in order to make those transactions safely and efficiently.

Many of our producers also rely on the internet to make sales in other parts of the state, the country and even around the world. As technology has advance to allow us this opportunity, the need for adequate broadband coverage becomes a necessity not a luxury.

From a crop production perspective, it's important to realize how valuable advanced technology is to producers throughout the growing season. The dependence on organized data collected from the use of GPS mapping in precision agriculture and yield monitoring devices, for instance, has grown to the point we really can't do without that technology. Sufficient broadband coverage is critical to collect, analyze and disseminate this information in an efficient manner.

While it may sound simple, gaining dependable broadband service isn't always easy to supply in rural areas. The availability of fast, reliable broadband has been elusive in some of Kentucky's farm communities. There have been several efforts to improve availability and we need these initiatives to keep up with demand.

But any lapse in this much needed accessibility is not just an inconvenience for individuals wanting to utilize the internet, but to all small businesses in rural areas that depend on adequate connectivity to operate.

The bottom line is this, access to adequate, affordable broadband is not only vital to farm families and rural businesses but for overall economic growth and ultimately quality of life. If we had approached the rural electric system like we are approaching rural broadband, a lot of Kentucky would still be in the dark.

Mark Haney
President
Kentucky Farm Bureau



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KFB Advisory Committees:

A summary of the 2017 meetings

Kentucky Farm Bureau (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 farm commodities common in Kentucky, to issues of importance to rural areas including education and transportation, for instance.

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.

The following are summaries from recent meetings:

EDUCATION

The Education Advisory Committee, chaired by Cloyce Hinkle, met at Morehead State University on September 12. Dr. Eric Jerde, Department Chair, Earth and Space Science provided a tour of the university's Space Science Center, which is home to MSU's Program of Distinction, the Bachelor of Science in Space Science. He highlighted their partnership with NASA which includes research in nanosatellite technologies.

The group also took a tour of the Craft Academy for Excellence in Science and Mathematics. The Academy is a dual-credit residential high school for academically exceptional Kentucky students.

The committee reviewed policy relating to education and discussed other topics including pensions, tax reform, and charter schools.

ENERGY AND TRANSPORTATION

The Energy & Transportation Advisory Committee, chaired by David Campbell, met on September 14, at the Clay County Extension Office in Manchester. John-Mark Hack, Commissioner, Department of Vehicle Regulation, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet gave an overview of his department and discussed topics that included the need for new license plates in the state and the REAL ID program.

Rick Bender, Executive Advisor, Department of Energy Development

and Independence, gave a report on the activities of his office while KFB's Jeff Harper, updated the committee on the Kentucky Infrastructure Coalition, which is made up of farmers, manufacturers, engineers, local leaders, and more than 40,000 transportation workers.

The committee reviewed state and national policy then toured the Gabbard Ford Gas Plant before the meeting was adjourned.

FARM LABOR

The Farm Labor Advisory Committee, chaired by Shane Wiseman, met at the Clark County Farm Bureau Office in Winchester, Kentucky September 26.

Tatum Dale, Director of Field Operations, Congressman Andy Barr's Office, updated the committee on immigration reform in Congress and provided an update on the legislation filed by Chairman Goodlatte that would establish a H-2C program for agriculture labor. Dale said she thought Congress would address tax reform and then a border security bill/DACA issue.

Karen Garnett, District Director, U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division provided a federal wage and hour update. She stated the agency participated in ten events this year in association with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) program. She also said the recent hurricanes in Puerto Rico, she wouldn't be surprised to see an uptick from residents coming to the states and employers must consider them as American workers.

The Kentucky Office of Employment and Training provided the committee with H-2A numbers. In 2017, there were 1,211 applications from 843 employers requesting 7,483 workers.

The committee reviewed state and national policies relative to immigration and farm labor.

POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Political Education Advisory Committee, chaired by Victor Rexroat, met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau Frankfort Headquarters on September 12.

KFB's Matt Ingram shared with the committee information about the Campaign Management Seminar and Measure the Candidate meetings. He also mentioned the 2018 Get-Out-the-Vote activities and stated that public service announcements will be a priority for the organization in 2018.

Wilson Stone, State Representative, shared information about pension reform and updated the committee on issues in Frankfort. He also discussed tax reform, ag exemptions and House Bill 44.

Jonathan Shell, House Majority Floor Leader, joined the meeting and credited Garrard County Farm Bureau for encouraging him to become involved. Shell spoke very highly of the KFB Campaign Management Seminar and how it opened his eyes on how to run an effective campaign. He also outlined the priorities of the 2018 Kentucky General Assembly and spoke extensively about tax reform and the pension crisis in state government.

Warren Beeler, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy (GOAP), provided the committee with an overview of GOAP and their recent activities and shared with the group some developments from the benefits of Ag Development Funds.

Corey Ann Howard Jackson, Policy and Constituent Services Liaison, shared an update from the Secretary of State's Office. Jackson also shared with the group her appreciation for farming and agriculture.

The group reviewed the state and national policies relating to political education.

TAX

The Tax Advisory Committee, chaired by Pat Henderson, met September 13 at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office. KFB President Mark Haney welcomed members and thanked them for their service on the committee. House Majority Floor Leader, Jonathan Shell attended the meeting and discussed pension and tax reform. He said Legislative Leadership and the Administration have been meeting to address the pension crisis facing the Commonwealth. He discussed the dire situation the pension is in, and the changes that must be made to sustain pensions long-term. He said there is an agreement for a framework for pension reform and is hopeful this framework will be unveiled relatively soon.

Shell indicated that tax reform could potentially be a part of the 2018 regular session of the Kentucky General Assembly. He stated that it has been clearly communicated to the members of the General Assembly, by Kentucky Farm Bureau how essential the current sales and use tax exemptions are to agriculture and how important it was to maintain the current property tax statutes (HB 44).

The committee also discussed and reviewed state and national policies relating to tax.

DAIRY

The Dairy Advisory Committee, chaired by Terry Rowlett, met September 7, at the E.S. Goodbarn at the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

Mauzy Cox, Kentucky Dairy Development Council, reported the state's dairy farmers ranked first

nationally for increased production per cow over the past five years according to USDA/NASS and discussed the upcoming Young Dairymen's Tour.

Denise Jones, Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, noted there is a lot changing with SUDIA including branding and program emphasis. She also discussed the current school nutrition program and how USDA has made some changes to the program.

Harold Friedly, Milk Market Administration, provided the committee with the forecasted uniform prices and discussion on various factors that would be considered in component pricing.

Dr. Jeffrey Bewley, University of Kentucky (UK), provided the committee an update on the new facilities at the research farm and noted Dr. Joao Costa recently joined the department.

Eunice Schlappi, Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), reported on Commissioner Ryan Quarles' Hunger Initiative and the work going on with the Kentucky Retail Federation on revising the "sell by" coding system.

Dr. Michelle Arnold, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, reported on the caseload the lab has been experiencing lately. She noted there are confirmed cases of EHD by PCR in deer recently and that there is some spillover of the virus to cattle because it is spread by a biting gnat.

Dr. Robert Stout, Kentucky State Veterinarian, suggested Kentucky needs to consider a secure milk supply plan.

The committee considered and made recommendations to Kentucky and AFBF policy.

EMERGING AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES

The Emerging Agricultural Enterprises Advisory Committee meeting, chaired by Glenn Howell, Emerging Agricultural Enterprises Advisory Committee meeting was held at 10:00 a.m. on was held September 19 at the Murray State University Agricultural Exposition Center.

Chad Smith, KDA, discussed the Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program. For 2017, 3000 acres were planted. The group discussed some of hemp's harvesting challenges. Smith also reviewed the Linking Agriculture for Networking & Development (LAND)

forums held in June. It was noted that Kentucky Proud has 6500 members. KDA's Promotion Grant program spent \$400,000 on a 50-percent match to pay expenses promoting agricultural products with direct Kentucky farm impact.

Kellie Padgett, representing Kentucky Center for Agriculture & Rural Development, reported KCARD receives about 150-200 inquiries per month, similar to a year ago. She also highlighted their assistance with value-added grant application saying current trending products are anything bourbon-related and snack foods, like beef jerky and cheese snack packs.

Tom Keene, UK, reported on several of the university's programs including the industrial hemp research project and the Center for Grain and Forage Excellence – construction should begin late 2017 or early 2018.

David Gilland, District Director, Kentucky USDA Farm Service Agency, discussed the amounts FSA has distributed in Kentucky in program crop payments and loans; the benefits of the NAP insurance program; the \$62,000 ELAP payment made to honey producers with hive losses; and the growing micro-loan program.

Representative Richard Heath, House Ag Committee Chairman, and Warren Beeler, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Ag Policy, sat in on our committee meeting and shared comments on some legislative matters and current GOAP activities.

The group discussed state and federal tax reform and the upcoming Farm Bill.

Dr. Tony Brannon and Dr. Brian Parr shared information about the growth of Murray State University's (MSU) agricultural program and their research programs related to hemp. MacKenzie Jones, MSU sophomore, described her building of an apiary and the bee research being conducted.

Policy was considered on both the state FB level as well as for AFBF policy.

FEED GRAINS, WHEAT, & SOYBEAN

The joint meeting of the Feed Grains & Wheat and Soybean Advisory Committees, chaired by Tripp Furches and Kim McCoy, was held on August 31, 2017, at the Hardin County Farm Bureau office.

Keith Rogers, KDA, reported that the Commissioner and various commodity groups departing on a trade initiative to Japan. He also noted Kentucky was dealing with 14 official dicamba complaints (probably affecting around 12,000-14,000 acres) and said there are probably another dozen unofficial complaints that are in discussion.

Laura Knoth, KyCGA/KySGGA, updated the committee on projects KyCGA have cooperated with KCA on and the distillery industry to increase the demand for corn. She reported KySGGA funded over \$300,000 of research projects and made another \$250,000 direct donation to the Grain and Forage Center for Excellence.

Debbie Ellis, KSA, reported one of the major projects they are working on is the export of soybeans internationally noting that logistics is the main problem. She also reported they funded over \$600,000 in research projects at the Grain and Forage Center for Excellence.

Dr. Todd Davis, UK, noted there will be an opportunity for Extension to work with groups on future farm bill discussions. He said there is seasonality in the current grain market and expects further adjustments in markets. Penny Fleming, reported for FSA, noting it looks like there will be a good PLC payment going out on wheat sometime in October.

Joe Cain, KFB, provided federal issues update on WOTUS, farm bill and tax reform.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy and made no recommendations to policy.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources Advisory Committee, chaired by Larry Thomas, met August 15 at the Louisville Water Company facility in Louisville.

Karen Woodrich, NRCS, gave a report on Kentucky NRCS and the efforts they are making to obtain additional funding to implement water quantity demonstration projects around Kentucky as well as efforts to try and incorporate more multi-functional projects in Kentucky's EQIP program.

Johnna McHugh, Kentucky Conservation, reported the theme this year of the essay and poster contest is

“Water is Life.” She noted the partnership with Kentucky Farm Bureau.

Bob Finch, Kentucky FSA, reported about the cap on CRP noting the state is so close to the cap that they cannot approve any continuous acres at this time. FSA is still taking applications and once USDA FSA determines if dollars are available they will consider applications.

Dan Figert, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, provided an update on wildlife numbers across Kentucky (elk, deer, bear, turkey, feral hogs, etc.). He noted KYFW is getting more aggressive in deer control in their high population areas and are considering ways to increase doe harvest in areas where populations need to be reduced.

Brent Burchett, KDA, reported they were currently focused on state fair preparations. He noted the voluntary pollinator protection plan is online for producers to utilize. He said legal harvest of wild ginseng in the Daniel Boone National Forest will be closed this year due to ongoing concern of over harvesting. He also reported there have been 10 reported dicamba cases in Kentucky this year.

Peter Goodman, KDOW, reported on actions with the Kentucky Water Resources Board. He is working on dam safety (PL 566 dams). They are trying to secure federal funding to address several dams and levees needing work and leverage local dollars.

Amanda Gumbert, UK, discussed efforts to address what drives various conservation efforts and the Gulf Hypoxia Taskforce plans.

Darwin Newton, WKU, provided an update on the ARS unit located in Bowling Green dealing with forage production and waste management.

Joe Cain, KYFB, provided federal issues update on WOTUS, farm bill, and tax reform. He also updated the group on the KFB Livestock Protection Sub Permit program.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy.

TOBACCO & DARK TOBACCO

The Tobacco Advisory Committee, and Dark Tobacco Advisory Committee, chaired by Scott Travis, held its joint meeting August 10 at the US Smokeless Tobacco facility in Hopkinsville.

Al Pedigo reported on the July 10, Council for Burley Tobacco meeting where various processor representatives reviewed the market outlook for US-produced leaf as well as new and innovative products they plan to bring to the market.

Pat Raines of the Burley Cooperative reported that several states have significantly raised cigarette taxes that are adding to a declining market. He also noted how companies are blending increasing levels of foreign-grown leaf into products with consumers not really noticing the difference in taste.

Dr. Will Snell, UK, said Universal reported that worldwide supply was down about 13 percent and demand may slightly exceed burley supply implying there could a stronger market for quality leaf. Global supply and demand balance has improved slightly.

Dr. Andy Bailey, UK, said overall, the crop looks decent. He said the Research Station is transitioning over the next three years to the Grain and Forage Center of Excellence, and is about a \$30 million project and specifically recognized and thanked Kentucky Farm Bureau for the \$1 million donation made recently.

Dr. Orlando Chambers, UK, reviewed some of the recent FDA research they are doing including the NNN proposed standard and FDA's efforts to reduce nicotine levels to lessen consumer dependence.

Clint Quarles and Brent Burchett provided a report on KDA's activities noting the department is moving forward with checking scales at receiving stations. They reported that Kentucky has not had the degree of dicamba-related problems nearby states are having, and that Kentucky is a leader in the industrial hemp industry.

Greg Baker, USST, provided an overview of the US Smokeless Tobacco operations and gave the committee a short tour of the leaf facilities.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy.

FORAGE

The Forage Advisory Committee meeting, chaired by David McGlone, was held October 5 at the Woodford County Farm Bureau Office in Versailles.

Dr. Ray Smith, UK, introduced

Dr. Jimmy Henning and Dr. Chris Teutsch, both of whom have joined the UK Extension Forage team this year.

Teutsch, based at the UK Grain and Forage Center of Excellence in Princeton, made a presentation showing research results on a variety of forage topics; a future project of his is the integration of forages and livestock back into grain operations. He thanked KFB for its financial support of the Grain and Forage Center of Excellence and noted that the Center is attracting young researchers who are among the best in their field.

Henning discussed five priorities for the UK Forage Program that were identified in a process that he led for the Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council.

Traci Missun, Kentucky Forage and Grassland Council, reminded the group of upcoming forage conferences and thanked Kentucky Farm Bureau and all those involved in getting UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment to fill the second forage extension position which Dr. Teutsch now holds.

Brent Burchett, KDA, spoke about the 17 percent state budget cut and that every KDA program is on the table, including Hay Testing. Producers should express their support for the program.

Travis Chick, Kentucky USDA Farm Service Agency, noted that ARC/PLC payments and CRP rent payments will be made soon, and touched on the Livestock Forage Program, NAP, and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

The committee reviewed state and national policy relative to forage.

ROADSIDE FARM MARKETS

The meeting of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Roadside Markets Advisory Committee, chaired by David Chappell, was held September 6 at the University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm in Lexington.

Sharon Spencer, KDA, reported on branding for the Kentucky Farms are Fun program and asked people to update their information online. She also discussed Commissioner Ryan Quarles' Hunger Initiative and the #KyAg365 campaign.

Angela Blank, Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet, reported the new tourism website will launch on January 1, 2018. She also said there will

be several new initiatives coming in 2018.

Kati Bowman, KCARD, reported that each month they assist 150-200 different businesses across the state to provide specialized assistance increasing the chances for success. Many of the businesses they helped with in 2017 want to do agritourism or are already in agritourism operation.

Dr. Tim Woods, UK Department of Horticulture, said all extension agents just completed training for FSMA compliance. He reported Kentucky has 800 high tunnels, funded by NRCS, but commented that producers need marketing help once they have a high tunnel.

Fran McCall, KFB, reported in the 22 years of the Roadside Farm Market Program, there was a total of 92 markets in 57 counties across the state; 10 of those are new markets. She also provided an overview of the 2017 Roadside Farm Market tour to Ohio and Pennsylvania and announced that the 2018 tour will be to Alaska on June 17-26.

Mark Haney, KFB, discussed tax reform and noted he spoke on behalf of AFBF at the Senate Ag Committee this summer. Eddie Melton, KFB, reviewed farm bill discussions.

BEEF CATTLE

The Beef Cattle Advisory Committee, chaired by Fritz Giesecke, was held September 19 at the Breathitt Veterinary Center in Hopkinsville.

Dr. Debbie Reed, director, MSU Breathitt Veterinary Center provided an overview of the facility and gave the committee with a tour.

Ben Conner, KDA, reported on Commissioner Quarles' Hunger Initiative and the recent donation of more than 150 freezers from Farm Credit to local food banks so they can store more fresh, nutritious food donated by Kentucky farmers. He noted the Commissioner wants to focus on more international trade.

Tim Dietrich, KDA, noted the Fall Bred Heifer sales are starting now and the CPA sales in December. He said markets are about 0.10 higher than a year ago.

Dr. Robert Stout, State Veterinary, discussed animal disease traceability in cooperation with USDA regulations and said tagging will now be the responsibility of stockyards owners

and/or cattle owner if a bovine comes to the market place without one. Stout also noted BVD-PI is still an issue and the KDA is working with Tennessee and lawyers and hope to have a regulations draft to have input from beef producers and KFB members.

Dr. Michelle Arnold, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, reminded the committee it is anaplasmosis season and to keep cattle on CTC and how farmers will need a prescription from a veterinarian due to the veterinarian feed directive rule. She also noted pneumonia season is coming up.

Dr. Richard Coffey, UK, reported a record of enrollment in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment of 2,923 students and noted enrollment numbers are creating challenges in terms of adequate faculty numbers for teaching, classroom space and pressure on animal units for course labs.

Dave Maples, and Chuck Crutcher with the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association noted Kentucky has the largest cattlemen's association in the eastern United States with 10,666 members. They discussed the new Beef Solutions program that will provide a way for Kentucky consumers to purchase local ground beef and a way for Kentucky retailers to have a reliable, source verified product from a GFSI certified processing plant. They also noted the new YARDS classroom is now open at the Bluegrass Stockyards in Lexington.

Mark Haney, KFB President, discussed the tax reform and how KFB is taking it very seriously, but does not see a special session this year. Haney also noted he was asked to represent American Farm Bureau and speak at the Senate Agriculture Committee this summer. Some of the points he mentioned included a safety net for crop insurance, NAP program, a strong research component, and broadband internet in rural America.

Eddie Melton, KFB First Vice President, reviewed farm bill discussions and the recent KFB Farm Bill Discussion Working Group.

The committee considered KFB and AFB policy with recommendations for both.

EQUINE

The Equine Advisory Committee, chaired by Alex Barnett, met September 26

at the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Office in Lexington.

Chauncey Morris, Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, discussed the recent success of the Keeneland September Sales where 2,555 yearlings sold for a gross total of \$307,845,400. The Jockey Club recently reported that Kentucky annually leads all states and provinces in terms of Thoroughbred breeding activity.

Robert Coleman, UK, discussed the Equine Science and Management program, noting how it is the second most popular degree program in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment with 315 students. A new Master Horse Owner program will be offered as an extension program starting this fall.

Dr. Robert Stout, KDA, reported a small herpes outbreak occurred earlier this year and 11 cases of West Nile were also reported so far in 2017 in KY. He expressed concern about maintaining funding levels on the federal level for the Equine Disease Monitoring Program. The department also continues to monitor the free roaming horse problem in eastern Kentucky.

Dr. Laura Kennedy, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, discussed the herpes disease. The Laboratory will host its 100th Equine Diagnostic and Research Seminar Series Symposium this month.

Dr. Debbie Reed, MSU Breathitt Veterinary Diagnostic Center, discussed their new facility and reported they have seen several cases of West Nile at their lab this year.

Laura Prewitt, Kentucky Horse Park, discussed the yearlong 100th year birthday celebration for Man O' War. They are planning a new rodeo and concert event November 17-18 and will celebrate the 40th anniversary of Kentucky Horse Park in 2018.

Kathy Ross, Kentucky Horse Council, discussed the recent Livestock Investigation Training offered to animal control officers and the popular Recreational Rider Day program.

Bryan Cassill, Kentucky Thoroughbred Farm Manager's Club, reviewed upcoming an leadership seminar on December 5, and their support of the Kentucky Equine Management Internship Program.

Frank Penn spoke about the 2nd Annual Kentucky Equine Educational

Project Conference and noted equine is now classified as livestock by state legislation.

Fran McCall, KFB, discussed state and federal tax reform. She reviewed the farm bill and the recent KFB Farm Bill Discussion meeting where the working group discussed important items related to livestock.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy with recommendations.

HORTICULTURE

The meeting of the Horticulture Advisory Committee, chaired by David Chappell, was held September 6 at the University of Kentucky Horticulture Research Farm in Lexington.

Fran McCall, KFB, provided a KFB Roadside Farm Market program update and commented on the enrollment process for 2018. She also reviewed the 2017 Roadside tour to Ohio and Pennsylvania and announced the 2018 tour will be June 17-26 to Alaska.

Sharon Spencer, KDA, reported the agency is working on branding for the Kentucky Farms are Fun. She noted anyone that has a sampling certificate will need to have it renewed due to it reaching its two year permit expiration and the Farmers Market Manual is getting updated.

Dana Reed, Kentucky State Horticulture Society, reported on the 2017 Kentucky Fruit and Vegetable Conference that focused on education opportunities and noted the 2018 conference will be January 8-9.

Mac Stone, Kentucky Horticulture Council, reported that group is working with UK Extension to develop new ideas and review programs due to fewer funds and employees.

Joel Wilson, Kentucky Vegetable Growers Association, reported a vegetable check-off was in the works with the proceeds going to fund research for horticulture products at the universities.

Dr. Robert Houtz, UK Department of Horticulture, reported they are hiring a basic science position and UK is in the process of obtaining a wine selling license to sell the wine made at the UK Horticulture Research farm.

Mark Haney, KFB, discussed tax reform and noted he spoke on behalf of AFBF at the Senate Agriculture

Committee this summer. Eddie Melton, KFB, reviewed farm bill discussions.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy making recommendations to both.

MEMBER BENEFITS

The Member Benefits Advisory Committee, chaired by Terry Lawson, met at the Kentucky Farm Bureau State Office July 27.

B. Todd Bright, KFB addressed the committee on the importance of social media within the organization and how the organization uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other media to promote member benefits.

Dwight Greenwell, KFB, gave the committee a membership report and he reviewed the status of several Kentucky Farm Bureau member benefits including the new Ford Program, Florida Fruit, Security Systems (Pro-Security and Modern), Lifeline Screening, Choice Hotels, the Drug Discount Program (Creative Benefit Design), and the Mineral Program (KNS).

Other discussions included how to promote and advertise our member benefits and efforts being made at the local level to promote member benefits.

POULTRY

The meeting of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Poultry Advisory Committee, chaired by Jay Coleman, was held August 29 at the Breathitt Veterinary Center in Hopkinsville.

Dr. Robert Stout, State Veterinarian, KDA, discussed the Low Path Avian Influenza case in Kentucky in March and how the Low Path Avian Influenza Containment Plan worked well. He expects changes to the USDA indemnity program and that USDA is working on ways potential ideas to include payments for farmers' losses due to Low Path Avian Influenza in future farm bills.

Jamie Guffey, Kentucky Poultry Federation, reported they are developing a high school poultry curriculum for the state of Kentucky with funds from the Ag Development Board. They are currently testing this curriculum with 6 FFA teachers and they plan to release it to all teachers in three months. He also noted Tyson is expanding and needing 100 more houses in Kentucky.

Dr. Tony Pescatore, UK, said the university is currently performing research on trying to find natural remedies for Woody Breast, enhancing food products with DHA from various sources, and increasing the number of eggs laid per hen.

Dr. Lynne Cassone, UK Diagnostic Laboratory, stated that most cases the lab is seeing is backyard flock problems due to poor management of the chickens. UK Diagnostic Laboratory is providing more education to veterinarians on how to train to work on chickens like drawing blood and taking samples.

Eddie Melton, KFB, discussed tax reform. He noted how an outside group has been brought in to consult and help make recommendation for the pension reform. He also provided an update on the KFB Farm Bill Discussion Working Group. In addition, Melton noted the Rural Road Fund is a high priority for KFB.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy and made recommendations to both.

SAFETY AND RURAL HEALTH

The KFBF Safety and Rural Health Advisory Committee met September 26, 2017 at the farm of Chairman Randy Chrisman in Lawrenceburg.

Dan Smaldone, Director of Communications, Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company, delivered a presentation on the history, trends, and impact of distracted driving. He then led a discussion on steps Kentucky Farm Bureau can take to heighten public awareness of the dangers of distracted driving.

Tom Miller, Kentucky Office of Highway Safety, conducted distracted driver training in the D2 Driving Simulator which provided a safe and realistic environment for advisory committee members to experience the effects of texting, eating, and other distractions have on driving ability.

Officer Robert Purdy, Kentucky State Police, gave a presentation on distracted driving and law enforcement. He also outlined current state law and its enforcement emphasizing laws against distracted driving will not stop unsafe behaviors and emphasized the importance of personal responsibility.

Dale Dobson, Safety Program Director at the Kentucky Department of

Agriculture, provided an update on the Turtle Tube rescue sleeve and discussed the importance of farmers taking the lead on the "Share the Road" initiative.

Dr. Joan Mazur, University of Kentucky, highlighted her organization's focus on youth safety and the need for community based solutions for farmers.

The committee reviewed state policy on food quality and safety, health, courts and law enforcement, crime prevention and drug control.

SWINE

The meeting of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Swine Advisory Committee, chaired by Larry Clark, was held September 21 at the Kentucky Pork Producers Association Office in Elizabethtown.

Dr. Robert Stout, State Veterinary, KDA, discussed animal disease surveillance efforts by USDA and the KDA for diseases like PED, Vesicular disease and Porcine Influenza.

John Chism, KDA, reported the junior swine exhibitors have been very strong and that 477 market hogs and 168 gilts were exhibited by 305 exhibitors at the 2017 Kentucky State Fair.

Bonnie Jolly, Kentucky Pork Producers Association, discussed the recent National Pork Board Fly-In to D.C. Major topics discussed on their trip included labor, the need of a yearlong guest worker program, expanding trade in other countries, and the Animal Disease bank.

Dr. Richard Coffey, UK, reported the only open position in the Animal and Food Science department is the Swine Extension Specialist position. The College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is undergoing a program review which involved completing a self-study and having an outside review team evaluate the effectiveness of the college's research, teaching and extension programs.

Dr. Alan Loynachan, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, reported the lab handles 60,000 cases each year, of which on to two percent are swine related.

Dr. Debbie Reed, MSU Breathitt Veterinary Center, reported their new facility was complete and only a small amount of cases they see are for the swine industry.

Fran McCall, KFB, discussed state and federal tax reform. She also reviewed the farm bill and the recent KFB Farm Bill Discussion meeting

where the working group discussed important items related to livestock.

Committee member, Ray Allan Mackey, provided an overview of his recent Heartland Trip to Japan with United States Meat Export Federation.

Warren Beeler, GOAP, reported on the pension and tax reform issues and discussed the idea of farmers using a card system for tax ID for the farm tax exemption to streamline and prevent fraud issues at retailers.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy and made recommendations.

ECONOMIC AND MARKET

The Economic and Market Development Advisory Committee, chaired by Mary Kate Kordes, met at Blue Grass Regional Marketplace, Lexington, Kentucky on September 26, 2017.

Warren Beeler, Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, reported that Kentucky received \$6.5 million dollars more than was expected from the tobacco companies. The Kentucky Ag Development Fund is not subject to the sharp cuts to be made in the budgets of other state agencies. He said the Kentucky Ag Development Board is reviewing the type of approved projects with the goal of making the KADF money more impactful and identified two growth areas for agriculture – international trade and value-added products.

Melanie Blandford, KDA, reviewed several of their programs, including the Industrial Hemp Pilot Program which had 3000 planted acres of which 64 percent were for CBD oil, 31 percent for grain and 5 percent for fiber. A new program for 2017 is Linking Agriculture for Networking & Development (LAND) which is a partnership with manufacturers and the Cabinet for Economic Development to spur exports and value-added products.

Brent Lackey, KY Center for Agriculture & Rural Development, provided a brief update on KCARD's activities. He stressed their work is dependent upon funding from the KY Ag Development Board and USDA Rural Development.

Kylie Palmer, KY Cabinet for Economic Development, provided some statistics on new business announcements and job creation in the past year.

Jeff Jones, USDA Rural Development, reviewed many of their programs

including a variety of loan programs and rural energy assistance grants.

Commissioner Ryan Quarles stressed two points: 1) agriculture is in a strong position with the KADB and KAFC, and 2) Kentucky agriculture has strong leaders. He also highlighted the importance of international trade and trade agreements.

Darrell Link, KY Council of Area Development Districts, described their services which foster economic development and improve the overall quality of life for Kentuckians by working with local and regional governments. KCADD is in its 50th year of existence.

Marshall Coyle, Committee Vice Chair, and KY State Fair Board member, provided an update on the State Fair and the North American International Livestock Exposition.

The group discussed state and federal tax reform and the upcoming Farm Bill and reviewed state and national policies relative to economic and market development.

FORESTRY

The Forestry Advisory Committee meeting, chaired by Bige Hensley, was held September 28 at the Clay County Cooperative Extension Service office in Manchester.

Will Bowling, a Clay County Farm Bureau member, introduced a new program he will be promoting for The Nature Conservancy beginning this fall which will pay woodland owners for carbon sequestered during the term of the agreement.

Steve Kull, Kentucky Division of Forestry, reported that KDF has a new State Director, James Wright, who comes from within the agency. He said KDF sent employees to help with firefighting in the West and to Texas to assist in the hurricane response.

Dan Olsen, the new Forest Supervisor at Daniel Boone National Forest, spoke about the importance of partnering with adjacent landowners and the Kentucky Division of Forestry. He also discussed USFS activity on white oak restoration, short leaf pine, eastern hemlock and the American Chestnut.

Bobby Claybrook, USFS, reported on activity in the Red Bird District noting tree theft, especially white oak, is very bad.

Frank Hicks, Kentucky Woodland Owners Association, reported on their activities in a variety of areas including invasive species, taxation, and timber theft.

Tim Hughes, KDA, discussed a new program, Linking Agriculture for Networking & Development (LAND), which is a partnership with manufacturers and the Cabinet for Economic Development to spur exports and value-added products. Kentucky has 50,000 manufacturing jobs related to agriculture products.

Bob Bauer, Kentucky Forest Industries Association, explained how the timber theft law was improved by removing “intent”. Also, county road bonding continues to be a concern.

The committee reviewed state and national policy relative to forestry.

SHEEP AND GOAT

The meeting of the Kentucky Farm Bureau Sheep and Goat Advisory Committee, chaired by Carroll Amyx, was held September 28 at the Kentucky State University Harold R. Benson Research and Demonstration Farm in Frankfort.

John Chism, KDA, discussed the success of the sheep and goat marketing program led by Tess Caudill. According to the 2016 USDA report, 12,000 head of sheep and 7,500 goats were marketed through the grading sales at Kentucky stockyards last year.

Evan Davis, KDA, reported the KDA sponsored sheep shows continue to have strong youth participation. He noted there was an increase in the number of Kentucky Proud animals tagged for the small animal species this year.

Dr. Beth Johnson, Office of State Veterinarian, KDA, reported they saw an increased number of flocks of sheep and goats coming to stockyards without scrapie tags.

Due to this problem and concern over traceability in Kentucky, KDA will post signs stating, “As of January 1, 2018, all sheep and goats must be identified with official scrapie ID before unloading” at all stockyards. She also discussed the Kentucky Small Ruminant Herd Assessment Program, a new program designed to help producers.

Kelley Yates, Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office, discussed the new Kentucky Fiber Trail program.

Dr. Richard Coffey, UK, reviewed the importance of the UK Sheep Unit and the hands on student learning and producer programs it provides.

Dr. Kenneth Andries, KSU, reported KSU has a new president and provost.

Dr. Michelle Arnold, UK Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, reported they are hiring a new pathologist and looking to create some learning modules for future education for veterinarians.

Dr. Debbie Reed, MSU Breathitt Veterinary Center, reported they moved into their new facility in February and thanked everyone for their continued support.

Fran McCall, KFB, discussed state and federal tax reform and Terry Rowlett reviewed the farm bill.

The committee considered Kentucky and AFBF policy and made recommendations.

COMMUNICATION

The KFBF Communication Advisory Committee, chaired by Joe Paul Mattingly, met October 3 at the state office in Louisville.

David S. Beck, KFB, expressed appreciation for the partnership between Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation and Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company and emphasized the importance of being able to effectively communicate with elected officials, members and non-members.

B. Todd Bright, KFB, presented an overview of the Communication Division and provided a history of media and outlined its current and future state pointing out social media is the most important component of communications moving forward.

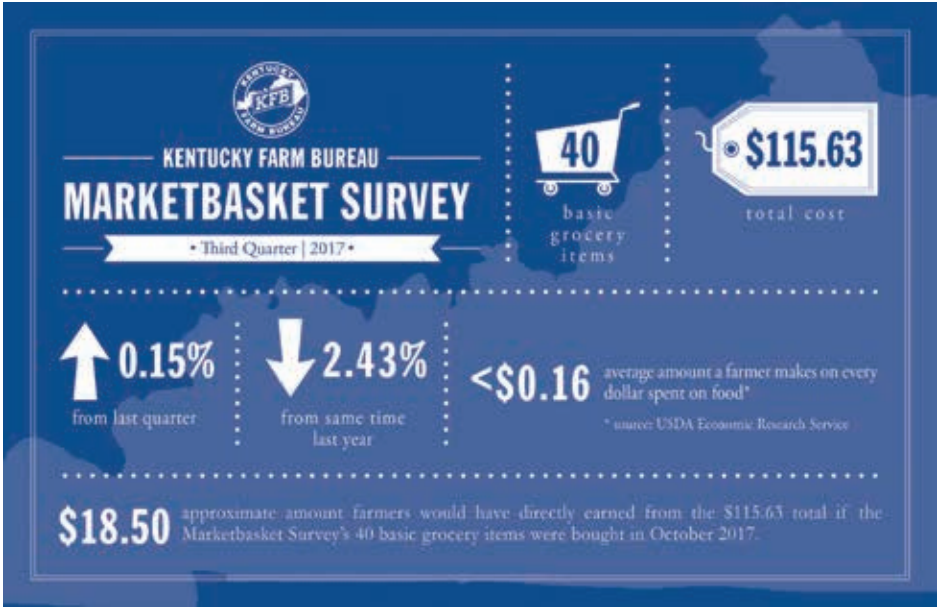
Matt Hilton, KFB, introduced the committee to the newly-created Kentucky Farm Bureau Studios and shared a vision of creating high-quality, impactful video that generates excitement, interest, and invites audience action.

Dan Smaldone, KFB, provided an update on insurance advertising, including its advertising campaigns which are implemented year-round, seasonally, and situationally on multiple media platforms.

The committee reviewed KFBF policy on Public Relations and Radio and Television.

Latest Marketbasket Survey

Indicates Food Prices have Remained Steady Since the Beginning of the Year



Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) latest Marketbasket Survey indicates food prices have remained steady since the beginning of the year. This is in contrast to what was seen throughout 2016. Quarterly measures indicated decreases in the 40 basic food items which make up the survey throughout most of last year and carried over into the first quarter of 2017.

A third quarter increase of just .15 percent or \$.17 is a minimum rise especially compared to the 1.76 percent drop in prices realized during that first quarter of this year. The total cost of the 40 surveyed items was \$115.63.

Nationally, the American Farm Bureau Federation's Fall Harvest Marketbasket Survey indicated a much higher rise in food prices to the tune of three percent or \$1.43 for its 16 surveyed food items. The latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) showed a small, overall food index increase of 0.1 percent in August, this after a 0.2 percent increase last July.

With that said, the food-at-home CPI index saw a 0.2 percent decrease in August, with five of the six major grocery store food group indexes falling. Those

included the index for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs fell which dropped 0.2 percent. The index for fruits and vegetables also declined slightly.

Leading the way in Kentucky food price increases were beef with a 4.43 percent jump; pork, which increased by 0.90 percent; and poultry which saw a rise in price of 3.78 percent.

Notable price decreases came by way of the fruit and vegetable sector with a decline of 3.56 percent and grains which posted a drop of 7.13 percent.

Marketbasket Survey Specifics:

The price for T-bone steaks increased by \$1.26 per pound; bacon prices increased by \$0.36 per pound; large eggs increased by \$0.10 per dozen; and a pound package of pork chops increased by \$0.45.

Milk prices fell in the third quarter by \$0.32 per gallon for whole milk and \$0.26 for two percent milk; a 32 ounce bottle of corn oil dropped by \$0.41 while a loaf of wheat bread fell by \$0.18.

Agricultural Economics in Food Prices: Whether or not U.S. grocery prices fluctuate from one quarterly survey to

the next, Kentuckians and all Americans continue to enjoy some of the lowest food prices in the world. Shoppers in the U.S. spend only about seven percent of their disposable income on food each year. Those costs remain far lower than any other country in the world thanks to many of the agricultural efficiencies utilized in America. Today the average U.S. farmer produces enough food and fiber to provide for about 154 people – a significant jump from an average of 19 people per farmer back in 1940.

Yet while more food is now being produced on less land, the farmer's share of the retail food dollar in America is down. According to the USDA's Food Dollar Series, a farmer earns less than 17 cents per dollar spent on food, down significantly from the 31 cents earned in 1980.

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Thanksgiving Day Meal Prices

Expected to Stay Consistent or Less than Last Year's Prices

It is arguably the biggest meal of the year for most families and fortunately, from a food-cost perspective, the Thanksgiving feast for 2017 doesn't look as though it will be any more expensive than what it was in 2016, according to information from the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF).

Last year, the average cost for a gathering of 10 was \$49.87. This year, prices are expected to be steady to slightly lower mainly due to lower whole bird turkey prices.

The latest Market Intel report from AFBF noted, "Whole bird prices...have been well below average for most of year. At the end of September whole hens were 35 cents per pound below last year on the same week."

Dr. John Newton, Director of Market Intelligence for AFBF said the biggest price item in the Thanksgiving Day food basket is usually the turkey.



"The fundamental supply and demand indicators right now suggest it will be at or below last year's prices for turkey," he said. "The other fixings; the stuffing, the potatoes and other ingredients; we're not seeing any type of market disruptions that would suggest a large price spike."

Newton noted that dairy prices are stable as well as egg prices, which

are stable to lower, causing him to anticipate that prices for the total upcoming holiday basket would be nearly the same as last Thanksgiving.

Newton said in looking at turkey prices, there are current market conditions creating these lower prices.

"We have fully recovered from (an

outbreak) of bird flu from a few years ago and inventory levels are continuing to build," he said. "We've got good egg laying rates for birds so there is a plentiful supply of the fresh birds available and there are plenty of cold storage birds available, as well."

With all those situations working in favor of the consumer, Newton said there is no reason to think that Thanksgiving dinner this year will cost more.

"I would anticipate it actually being a little bit lower because other commodity prices are in line with what we saw last year," he said.

Newton did point out that the most recent AFBF Fall Harvest Marketbasket Survey indicated some food prices had increased.

"We did see pork belly prices elevate earlier this fall and that was reflected in retail bacon prices but none of the (Fall Harvest) items are included in our Thanksgiving survey," he said.

Each year AFBF conducts a food survey specifically for Thanksgiving meal items. This year's survey is set to release in mid-November.

In looking at broader numbers via the Consumer Price Index, Newton said those indicators show food prices steady throughout the entire year thus far.

"We are in a situation where we have an abundant supply of livestock feed; we're continuing to increase production of livestock animals so there is nothing to indicate food prices would increase for consumers at this point in time," he said.



MSU Student MacKenzie Jones work with bees in the school's apiary. (Photo courtesy of MSU)

Honey Bees: Livestock with Wings

The word "livestock" usually conjures up visions of perhaps cattle, horses, pigs, goats or lambs, to name a few, but honey bees may not be one species that is thought of along those lines. However, Merriam-Webster defines the word livestock as, "animals kept or raised for use or pleasure; especially: farm animals kept for use and profit."

The question then becomes, are bees animals or insects? The beekeeping population says they are technically both. Regardless, the federal government sees bees as animals. In fact, according to information from the American Veterinarian Medical Association, "Honey bees are classified as livestock/food-producing animals by the federal government because products from apiculture enter the human food chain, including honey, propolis, pollen, and royal jelly."

Looking at bees as more than insects or as the all-important pollinators they are may help more people understand their continued importance to not only the ecosystem but as food providers, as well.

MacKenzie Jones, an agriculture education undergraduate at Murray State University (MSU), has led the way

to get an apiary or bee yard constructed at the college to do just that: teach people the importance of bees in all they do including food production.

"In working as an intern at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and in the State Veterinarian's office two summers ago, I got my first experience with bees helping with the USDA Honey Bee Health Survey across the state," she said. "From there, I started thinking about research and what I could do at Murray as part of my requirement in MSU's Hutson School of Agriculture."

As a Presidential Scholar, Jones is required to participate in some type of research project and with that initial interest through her internship, she made the decision to begin the process of starting an apiary at MSU's Pullen Farm.

But first, a fenced area would be needed. With funding somewhat of an issue, Jones travelled to her Franklin County home where, with the help of family took timber from their family farm, milled it into planks and brought back to Murray to construct the fenced area. The bee yard had its start.

From there, Jones, known now as the official University Beekeeper, got her first hives and since then, the project has grown somewhat exponentially to the

point of having fourteen hives presently and the hope for more in the future.

Recently, the first honey from the hives was harvested and marketed as Racer Honey with the first jar being auctioned at the recent Hutson Harvest Gala. Thanks to a generous bidder, that first jar sold for \$250.

In her efforts to get the apiary at Murray started, Jones recognizes how important it is to educate the public about honey bees, not only as pollinators but as food producers.

State Apiarist Tammy Horn Potter agrees and has made a career out of teaching the public about bees. She said it's good to see a younger generation like Jones picking up the torch and carry on a tradition that has been around for centuries.

"One of the things we say in the beekeeping world is, a healthy hive is one with overlapping generations. For me, to see MacKenzie taking the lead on this, I began to see a younger generation answering the need," she said. "We have so many challenges in the apiculture world, we don't always know how to handle those challenges and certainly we need young leaders to pick up the mantle and she has done that admirably."

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As it is, the beekeeping here is still a cottage industry making it difficult to compete with the lower prices of imported honey, emphasized Potter.

Despite these challenges and those of keeping bee hives healthy, Potter and Jones feel like recognizing bees as great food producers as well as pollinators can lead to a bigger industry and a more informed consumer.

Potter noted one other positive attribute of our honey bee population in that 70 percent of all wildflowers depend on honey bees for pollination.

“That seems to get left off of people’s radars but flowers, to me, are food for the soul,” she said.



The first jar of Racer Honey (Photo courtesy of MSU)

In meeting these challenges, there also comes opportunity. Potter said that there is a huge demand for honey in this country, one that far exceeds production levels.

“The U.S. consumes more honey than any place else in the world. We consume on average 400 million pounds of honey and we can only produce 150 million pounds each year,” she said.

With the recent hurricanes and wildfires in other parts of the country, Potter said honey is likely to become more difficult to get and more expensive in the short term.

This demand for honey can mean opportunities for small and larger producers alike to supply a market short of domestically produced honey. But Potter also sees it as a chance to educate beekeepers on ways to keep their hives healthy so the honey keeps flowing and the bees keep doing all they do for the environment and the food chain.

Potter also reminds the consumer that this imported honey comes from places that don’t have to adhere to federal FDA guidelines as do food producers in this country.

“It’s a concern for me, as the state apiarist, that our country imports so much honey, in particularly because I think Kentucky has unique honey of its own,” she said. *“If we did more education and outreach, then we could meet that gap in the market. Kentucky could have more of a good, marketable product that would be healthy for consumers and also help set up a beekeeping industry here in our state.”*



Down the Backroads

By Tim Thornberry

Food has always been a favorite subject of mine; not only from a growing-it perspective but from an eating-it standpoint, as well. I credit my mother with that love for food. She could create some of the most delicious meals ever to grace my taste buds. And she made it a habit to watch the family eat just to make sure we were all enjoying each meal.

“It does my heart good to see you eat,” she would say. I’m not sure if growing up in the Depression had any basis for those words or if it was just the fact that she wanted her family to enjoy each meal as if it would be our last.

With this everyday kind of mindset, when it came to her preparing our daily nourishment, you can only imagine what holiday meals were like. Granted we had extra family visiting so more food was necessary, but these meals were massive and beyond comparison to anything else we had all year.

Thanksgiving was arguably the biggest meal-day of all for her. It actually began two or three days prior to the holiday. She made cakes and pies and salads. She bought the best looking turkey in the grocery examining each one carefully until she found, what she deemed the perfect one. She made sure everything that was needed to prepare this feast was on hand for the big day.

I do believe she would get up in the early, early hours of Thanksgiving Day to begin the task that would ultimately end up being the biggest and best meal ever. All I remember was waking to the great smells coming from the kitchen.

By the time mealtime would arrive, my hunger was at a fever pitch. I just couldn’t wait to fill my plate with that

perfect turkey, the yams, the stuffing, the salads and desserts. It was overkill to say the least when thinking back on how much food we were blessed to have on that day.

I’m not sure, but I believe this mild obsession my mother had with making each meal special came from the fact that she and my father grew up in an era when “plenty” and “food” never came in the same sentence.

Those days with my folks have long since passed but my love for the meal

and the memories of Thanksgiving remain forever imbedded in my brain. I’m lucky to have a wife who is making memories for our children in much the same way.

No matter how far away the years take me from those early Thanksgiving feasts, I’m reminded each November of how fortunate we’ve been, how blessed we are, and the good it does my heart to remember my mother’s meals as I move further and further down the backroads.

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Markets

APPLE CROP DOWN 7 PERCENT

This year's USDA forecast for total U.S. apple production is 10.4 billion pounds, down seven percent from last year's near-record harvest but still the sixth largest crop since 2000. The dip in production could boost apple prices, but plentiful supplies will limit gains. Over 90 percent of domestic fresh apple consumption is supplied by U.S. producers. Nearly one-third of the fresh market crop is exported. While USDA does not publish a production estimate for Kentucky, we have many apple growers to provide you with locally-produced apples and products. Many of these orchards are members of the KFB Certified Roadside Farm Market Program; learn more at kyfb.com/roadside.

U.S. HAY CROP IS DOWN DUE TO LOWER YIELDS

In its October Crop Production report, USDA-NASS forecast all U.S. hay production in 2017 at 131.9 million tons, down two percent from 2016 as lower yields more than offset a slight increase in area. The all-hay yield is expected to be 2.46 tons per acre, down from 2.52 tons per acre in 2016. Harvested acres are forecast at 53.5 million acres, just 0.1 percent above last year. Production of alfalfa hay and mixtures is forecast at 56.0 million tons, down four percent

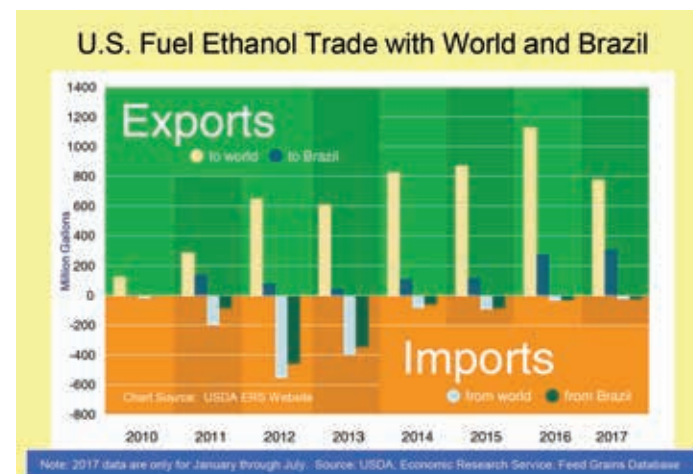
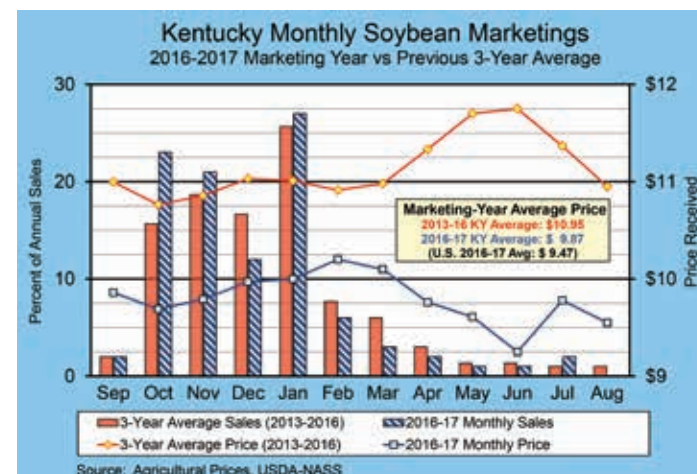
from 2016. Yields are forecast to average 3.27 tons per acre, down from 3.45 tons harvested in 2016. Other hay area harvested of 36.4 million acres is 0.5 percent lower than last year. Other hay production of 75.9 million tons is down 632,000 tons from 2016. Average yield is down 0.01 tons per acre to 2.08 tons. In contrast to U.S. hay yields, Kentucky's average yields are forecast higher than last year's yields. Kentucky's alfalfa hay yield is forecast at 3.90 tons per acre, up 0.30 tons from 2016. The state's average yield of all other hay is expected to be 2.50 tons per acre, up 0.10 tons from last year. Harvested acreage for 2017 is equal to 2016's acreage.

KENTUCKY AG STATISTICS ANNUAL BULLETIN RELEASED

The Kentucky Agricultural Statistics 2017 Annual Bulletin was issued recently by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. This is the go-to source for information on Kentucky's 2016 crop and livestock production, farm numbers, cash receipts, cash rents and more – much of it detailed at the county level. The Annual Bulletin was compiled by the USDA-NASS Kentucky Field Office and can be downloaded from its web site at nass.usda.gov/statistics_by_state/Kentucky.

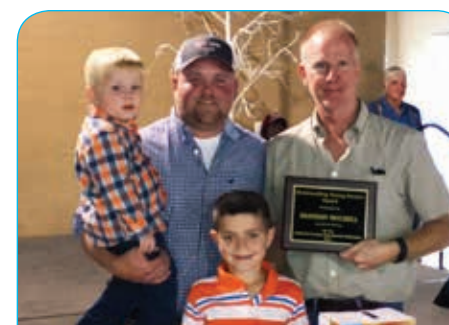
GLOBAL BEEF PRODUCTION TO GROW IN 2018

Global beef and veal production is forecast to grow nearly two percent in 2018 to 62.6 million tons with the U.S. and Brazil accounting for about half of the growth, according to USDA-FAS's "Livestock and Poultry: World Markets and Trade" report. Brazil will be encouraged by expanding exports but may face headwinds from domestic industry issues. Argentina's production will be boosted by favorable policy developments and herd expansion. Having recovered from drought-induced herd liquidation, Australia's beef production is rebounding. U.S. production is expected up nearly three percent in 2018 to a record 12.4 million tons, as the U.S. enters the fourth year of herd expansion. Elevated supplies and lower U.S. beef prices will boost exports to Mexico, Canada, and major East Asia markets. The U.S. will face renewed competition in Asian markets from Australia's herd expansion and widening tariff advantage in Japan. However, a relatively weaker U.S. dollar in 2018 could further buoy U.S. beef exports. Global exports in 2018 are forecast nearly three percent higher to 10.1 million tons. China will continue to drive trade, as domestic production cannot meet growing consumption.



COUNTY CORNER

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



ANDERSON COUNTY

Brandon Mitchell was chosen Farmer of the Year in Anderson County during their FB annual meeting. Pictured with Mitchell are his children and Anderson County FB President Tim Dietrich.



BOONE COUNTY

Boone County Farm Bureau Member Appreciation Picnic brought over 500 members together to enjoy a wonderful time of food, fun and fellowship.



BOURBON COUNTY

Pictured is the Bourbon County FB Outstanding Young Farm Family 2017. From left: Ben Robin –Secretary, Jeff Carter –County President, Kayla Rankin and John Rankin.



GALLATIN COUNTY

Gallatin County Member Appreciation Day. Pictured from left are: April Wainscott –CSR; Joe Etris – Adjuster; Ashley Smith and Bobby Smith –Agency Manager. Shelly Moore is also a CSR at the agency. She was not available for the photo.



HART COUNTY

Hart County FB held a Member Appreciation Day on October 11. Pictured from left: Hayley McDowell –CSR; Lara Beth Hodges –CSR; Daris Spencer –Agent; Joe Rogan –KFB Area Program Director; Laura Day –CSR; Elaine Wright –CSR; Fritz Giesecke –KFB 2nd Vice President and Hart County Farm Bureau Director; Brad Whitlow – Avizion Glass; Tammy Milby –CSR; Michael Davis –Agency Manager; and Brad Smith –Agent.



PENDLETON COUNTY

Eli And Jaime Mann were named at the Pendleton County Outstanding Young Farm Family at the county's annual meeting. Pictured are Pendleton County FB President Rob McClanahan with the Mann's.



PIKE COUNTY

J.B. Gilliam –Pike County FB Vice President, presented a check to the University of Pikeville for the Ron Damron Endowment Scholarship Fund.



LINCOLN COUNTY

The Lincoln County FB Safety Committee purchased a safety tube which can assist in grain bin rescues. Dale Dobson –KDA Farm Safety Coordinator led a presentation to demonstrate how the tube is used. The official presentation was made at the Lincoln County annual meeting to local fire department personnel and first responders. Pictured from left: Billy Goodin, John Hastie, Patricia O'Quin, Donnie Gilliam, David Campbell, Dale Dobson, and Thelma Blair.

CANDID CONVERSATION

KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton

KFB Candid Conversation presents a discussion about the topical issues facing the agricultural industry in a question and answer format with a member of the agricultural community. In this column, KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton talks about his duties as the organization’s Resolutions Committee Chair and how important developing policy recommendations is to the organization that stands as the “Voice of Kentucky Agriculture.”



What exactly is the Resolutions Committee and what is its purpose?
In our policy book, we have recommendations from county Farm Bureaus. The members in these counties all have the opportunity to present resolutions concerning local, state and national issues. The Resolutions Committee is comprised of members elected from each of the 11 Farm Bureau districts across the state, along with the Women’s Committee Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Young Farmer Committee. There are two members from each district. As the resolutions come in from all the counties and our 26 advisory committees, those recommendations are categorized and compiled into a binder for each of the committee members to study. There

are approximately 1,000 resolution recommendations each year that are reviewed during a two and a half day session. In going over each one, members decide if the resolution already exist in some way in the KFB policy book or if something needs to be changed in that existing policy or if something new needs to be added. The committee will then make these recommendations to voting delegates at the KFB Annual Meeting.

How important is this resolutions process to the overall mission of KFB?
I think our resolutions process is what makes KFB what it is. It is probably the single most important thing that we do throughout the year. As we get policies in from all these groups, it demonstrates the process of coming from the grassroots level. It comes from our regular membership and it is specific as to what is important to them as it relates to commodities, and issues on the farm, in their communities, and in our state and nation. Our state officials, legislators and our Congressional delegation knows how our process works and I believe that is why they listen to what KFB has to say because they know we represent our membership. Once our members have voted on their resolutions, the KFB Board bases their annual priority issues on what those members deem as important to them. From that grass roots effort, these recommendations can ultimately become a law that affects not only our members or our farming communities, but all of the citizens in the state. And we have seen this many times.

How do you make sure all these resolutions have a chance to make it to the point of being voted on at the annual meeting?
In considering policy recommendations at the Resolutions Committee level, we

discuss every one of those presented to the committee. Some of those make it through and some don’t but that is what the committee has been elected to do and it is a democratic process. If the committee chooses not to send it on, that particular resolution can still be brought up to voting delegates at the annual meeting. There again, it is given every chance to go through that process.

For those who don’t know about Farm Bureau’s advocacy efforts, explain the diversity in the kinds of policy adopted by KFB.
There are many things in our policy book that aren’t tied directly to agriculture although those policies are directly related to our rural communities. For instance, one of our largest sections in the KFB state policy book is related to education which is important to all of us and very important to our membership. Healthcare is another issue very important to our members and really to everyone. It is a big topic right now and we have policy about that issue, such as Associated Health Plans. Make no mistake, we have policies about agriculture and that is who we are, but we also care about other things that not only affect all of our members, but every citizen in Kentucky. We talk a lot about our rural communities because that is where most of our membership lives and it’s important that we represent them and serve as their voice.

This grassroots type of advocacy has lasted for nearly a century at KFB. Do you think other organizations take notice of how the organization develops it priority issues?
I definitely think other organizations look at KFB and see that we can get it done when it comes to adopting policy and

moving it forward. Our membership depends on us and the meaningful thing is, those members give us ideas to go through that process which we will ultimately advocate for. Other organizations may only utilize a few people to make the decisions on what policies to promote but that is not how we do it. It is our membership that sets our policy. We know that our members will make the phone calls to our lawmakers at all levels when it comes to supporting these policies. They talk to their local officials about what’s important to them and don’t sit back and wait for someone else to do it.

I think our resolutions process is what makes KFB what it is. It is probably the single most important thing that we do throughout the year.

I think that is what makes us effective. Our membership votes and they know their elected officials and those elected officials know most of them.

While the Resolutions Committee always meets in the late fall, doesn’t this process really take place throughout the year in some ways?
The county Farm Bureau meetings consist of regular members coming together monthly throughout the year to discuss issues going on in their communities or in the state and at the national level. It is through those discussions that one idea can come through and be carried to policy development district meetings held in July across the state, then on to advisory committee meetings, to the Resolutions committee, to the voting delegates and ultimately into our policy and priority issues. Often these issues prompted legislation action and become law. Our membership knows that KFB is noted as the Voice of Agriculture and they want their voices heard to insure this process and the success of the organization continues for another 100 years.



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KFB President Mark Haney introduced Sen. McConnell and Administrator Pruitt to the more than 300 KFB members attending the event.

Advocacy at Work

Kentucky Farm Bureau members hear from Governor Bevin, Senator McConnell and Administrator Pruitt

It is rare that an organization would have an opportunity to hear from a sitting governor, a Senate majority leader and an administrator with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), within the span of a week. But KFB members experienced just that as Governor Matt Bevin paid a visit to the KFB Board during their most recent meeting. Three days later, more than 300 KFB members, local officials and legislators from across the state heard from Senator Mitch McConnell and EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt at a meeting in Bourbon County on Mahan Farms.

Both McConnell and Pruitt spoke to the issues that are facing farm families and spent much of their time answering questions and listening to what members had to say.

KFB President Mark Haney said such an occurrence is indicative of current leadership who want to hear from constituents, and an organization that is highly involved and recognized for its engagement with local, state and national leaders to discuss topics that affect their members' farms, their families, and their rural way of life.

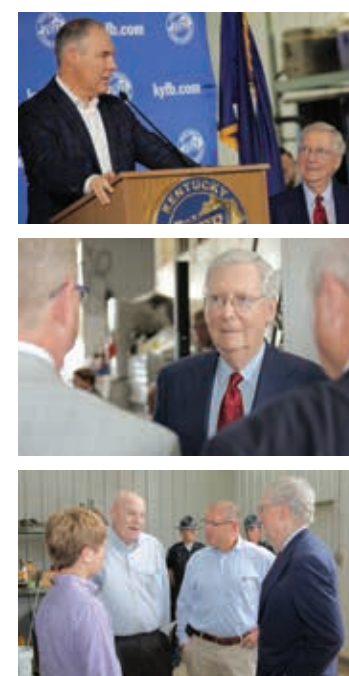
"Being able to meet face to face with these high level officials speaks well to the efforts they are making to hear what we have to say as an organization, while giving us the opportunity to get our message out to these leaders," he said. "This demonstrates how effective our grassroots approach is to issues facing our agriculture industry. We get our policy from this grassroots advocacy and take pride in our

efforts to be engaged in conversations with these leaders."

Haney added that whether on the state or national levels, when Farm Bureau members show up, they are speaking with a collective voice on the issues that are affecting them.

During his visit, McConnell first thanked the Mahan Family for allowing the meeting to take place on their farm and emphasized how Kentucky is still a place that is primarily made up of rural communities.

"Mark Haney, you and the entire Farm Bureau team do such a fabulous job of representing all of us in our state because we are still one of the state's that's mostly rural and small town, which is becoming increasingly unusual in our country," he said. "But we are



McConnell and Pruitt visited with many of the KFB members including the Mahan family pictured in the bottom right photo.



Pictured from left: KFB 2nd Vice President Fritz Giesecke, KFB 1st Vice President Eddie Melton, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, KFB President Mark Haney, and KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck.

still one of those states anchored in rural areas."

From an issues standpoint, McConnell noted that with coupling coming tax reform legislation and regulatory rationality, America can live up to its potential.

In referring to Pruitt, McConnell said he had tried for eight years to get the EPA director to come to Kentucky, something that did not happen until the current Administrator, a Kentucky native himself, was appointed. When introducing him, McConnell said of Pruitt, "he's got courage, he's got guts, and he's got smarts."

Upon taking the podium, Pruitt said the agency is in the process of repealing the Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) rule, which drew a large applause from the crowd.

"You know that rule well. The 2015 (WOTUS) rule truly sent shock waves across this country. Let me tell you something, we are on the path to get rid of that," he said.

Pruitt added that with the repeal will also begin a process to redefine the rule and doing so in a way that will inform farmers of exactly what is contained in the regulation.

"We've heard from Farm Bureaus all over the country with respect to this issue...so I'm hopeful it's something

you can provide us (with) insight and information," he said. "We've been working with Governor Bevin, who has been a great help to us, as well as his Cabinet and I really feel good about where we are with WOTUS."

In talking about the value of being a part of the meeting in Bourbon County, Pruitt said it was a blessing.

"It's a blessing actually to be in these kinds of meetings because we spend a lot of time, across the country, meeting with stakeholders, farmers and ranchers, and hearing from them," he said. "These things matter to me a great deal to make sure we're able to do our job and do it well."

During Governor Bevin's visit with KFB Board members, he emphasized he is trying to move this state forward; to make it everything he knows it is. Bevin spoke on a number of subjects including the state's pension fund but he relayed to board members more than anything, how great this state is and how much better it can become through progressive initiatives.

"My vision for the state is to make Kentucky the engineering and manufacturing hub of American. But you all are in the engineering and manufacturing business every day," said Bevin. "Look at how technology has changed your industry with GPS,

wiring systems and automation, among other things. And we will get this accomplished. I want this to be a place where any one of our children could pursue whatever they want to do in the ag community or the tech community or anything else."

The Governor also took questions from the board members during his stop at the KFB State Office Building. KFB Executive Vice President David Beck said it is this one-on-one interaction with members that not only allows the Governor and other officials an opportunity to hear about issues that face farm families but it demonstrates the organization's ability to advocate effectively.

"Our Farm Bureau members are not shy when it comes to asking questions and voicing their opinions on the issues they face every day on the farm and in their rural communities," he said. "And each year, as we develop our priority issues, these members look forward to working with their local, state and national leaders to make these priorities known, heard and acted upon. We are fortunate to have many elected officials in office, including Governor Bevin, Administrator Pruitt and Senator McConnell who will listen and meet us where we live and work to help move our industry and our state forward."

Steve Wilson and Laura Lee Brown

Receive the 'Linda Bruckheimer Excellence in Rural Preservation Award' from Preservation Kentucky

By Lauren Cox

The Annual Excellence in Preservation Awards Ceremony was held on Saturday, October 7th at the Historic John Dale House (Hosted by John David & Mary Helen Myles) near Simpsonville, Kentucky.

The Excellence in Rural Preservation Award is committed to preservation leaders, projects, or programming devoted to preserving Kentucky's important rural heritage. This includes small town preservation, barn and farmland preservation, rural

heritage-based education projects, and historic architectural or archaeological survey and National Register of Historic Places work intended to preserve rural properties.

Together, Steve Wilson and Laura Lee Brown purchased 700 acres of land named Hermitage Farm in 2010 to ensure it would not be turned into a housing development. Over the past 14 years, they have successfully transformed



the farm into a world-renowned Thoroughbred horse operation and a scenic location for weddings and events. They are also in the process of creating a full bourbon experience, as well as farm to table dining options.

Upon receiving the award, Laura Lee Brown stated, "Steve and I are very honored to receive this recognition. We were surprised when we found out that this award was going to be given to us. It

seems a little strange to be honored for doing what seems right and natural... Together, we realized land conservation is one of our core values. Kentucky's beautiful, wide open green spaces are its most valuable asset!"

Hermitage Farm, owned by Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson, is a legendary 700-acre horse farm in Goshen, KY. In addition to the renowned Thoroughbred operation, Hermitage is home to a world-class Sport Horse training facility and the Main House at Hermitage, a unique venue for special events. For more information, visit www.hermitagefarm.com.

In the above picture, Laura Lee Brown (second from right) receives Preservation Kentucky's Linda Bruckheimer Excellence in Rural Preservation from Christina (Christy) Lee Brown (second from left). Also pictured are Betsy Hatfield, Preservation Kentucky Executive Director (right) and Grady Walter, Preservation Kentucky Board of Directors Chair

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OPEN LINES OF COMMUNICATION ARE KEY TO DEVELOPING THE BEST CROP RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

By Chris Coffey, Assistant Vice President-Crop Insurance, Farm Credit Mid-America

CROP INSURANCE PLANNING IN FIVE STEPS

With a successful harvest completed, it's time to start thinking about next season's crop insurance plan.

As we've discussed in the past, it's important to partner with a team of experts to make sure you're well informed during this process. We suggest enlisting a diverse group that includes a loan officer, a crop insurance specialist, and outside experts such as a grain marketer and insurance provider. The added visibility from such a team is crucial in attaining operational profitability. Follow these five steps in partnership with your team to help you secure the right amount of coverage to position your business for success, no matter what 2018 brings.

1: Report your 2017 production numbers

An updated and accurate balance sheet is critical to your operation's success, especially when it comes to crop insurance planning. The sooner you provide 2017 production numbers to your crop insurance specialist and loan officer, the sooner you can have an accurate picture of your coverage options.

Production numbers are added to your farm's 10-year production history to calculate accurate crop insurance quotes. They also help your loan officer understand your lending needs and renew your operating line, if necessary.

2: Estimate 2017 crop input costs

From seed and chemicals to fertilizer and fuel, every farmer should know expected input costs in detail. This is perhaps the single most important part of crop insurance planning, yet many farmers are satisfied with the general lump sum they keep in their heads.

An accurate understanding of your expected cost of production gives you two pieces of critical information: how much money is required to grow your crops and how much insurance is needed to cover that amount

in the case of a crop failure. Poor record keeping can lead to borrowing too much (or too little) and insuring too much (or too little). At best, unnecessary expenses subtract from your bottom line. At worst, your business has greater exposure to risk and may not be covered adequately.

3: Understand your guarantees

With input costs accurately estimated, your crop insurance plan should focus on risk. In the past, farmers could often guarantee more than their total input cost. With low grain prices, this is usually no longer the case. The difference between your total cost of inputs and your guarantee depends on how much risk you and your team feel is best.

This is where good communication is key. By providing accurate information about your operation and your plans, your team can develop more accurate estimates for spring guarantees. Your team can run you through several scenarios, estimating future crop prices and providing estimates for various coverage levels.

4: Set planting strategies

Getting rough estimates of spring guarantees can help you maximize profit potential for years to come. It's crucial to be informed and use that information to make better decisions regarding crop input costs and cash rents, crop selections and grain marketing.

5: Finalize spring plans

No doubt you'll be working through 2018 planning decisions and making adjustments based on the market throughout the winter. When spring arrives, it will be time to catch up with your team and finalize decisions with respect to spring market prices and your planting decisions. Some farmers have daily risk management discussions with their crop insurance specialists prior to planting, working to get guarantees to a comfortable level.

The information in the report is derived from Farm Credit Mid-America's experience in rural and agricultural lending, and does not take into account the financial needs of particular individuals. This content is intended to be informational and is not a substitute for detailed advice on your specific situation.

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