



VOL. 8, NO. 7

JULY 2008

# KENTUCKY

F A R M B U R E A U N E W S

## VINEYARDS POPPING UP

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## GROUP PURSUES FFA MEETING

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# “COMMENT”

As the issue of global climate change heats up on Capitol Hill, the agriculture industry needs to be front and center during the policy-making deliberations. Farmers and ranchers could be significantly impacted by efforts to restrict greenhouse gas emissions. That is why it's important for lawmakers to recognize agriculture's contributions to reducing these emissions and not approve policy that will adversely affect our ability to provide a safe and abundant food supply.

U.S. agriculture is poised to play a unique role in the climate debate. But, if we don't go about climate change policy the right way, it will be farmers, ranchers and consumers who ultimately pay the price.

A cap on greenhouse gas emissions could be devastating to farm and ranch businesses. Agricultural inputs that rely on natural gas would increase in price. Fertilizer costs, already high due to the soaring price of natural gas, would escalate even more, forcing farmers to make difficult choices. Increased fertilizer demand around the world would drive prices even higher, and could make fertilizer availability even more of a concern than cost.

Climate policy could severely impact farmers and ranchers by raising fuel, fertilizer and energy costs so high that it will no longer be economical to farm. In the end, it's the consumer who will feel the aftereffect of these negative impacts on agricultural production, which would ultimately drive up the cost of food.

It's critical that any climate legislation ensures that farmers and ranchers can continue producing the food and fiber that feeds our nation and the world at an affordable price.

If done right, practical climate policy would provide opportunities for producers to voluntarily reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a number of ways, including removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in the soil, reducing emissions through manure and soil management, and the production of biofuels. Further, livestock greenhouse gas mitigation activities can convert greenhouse gases to energy, a seemingly ideal strategy because it reduces reliance on fossil fuels. Many farmers and ranchers have already adopted these carbon reduction and sequestration practices, which should be recognized in any forthcoming legislation.

Policymakers should reject provisions that would undercut or compromise the ability of U.S. producers to compete in international trade.

Farmers and ranchers have a lot at stake as our nation moves forward in deliberating and formulating climate policy. Keeping our eye on the ball and an iron in the fire is not only important for the agriculture industry, it's critical for the long-term sustainability of stable food production.



**Bob Stallman**

PRESIDENT  
AFBF

### ON THE COVER:

PRODIGY VINEYARD IN WOODFORD COUNTY.  
PHOTO BY ROGER NESBITT

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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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“The Voice of Kentucky Agriculture”

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# IFAL has an eyeful of attractions



The annual Institute for Future Agricultural Leaders (IFAL) was held last month at Murray State University and the University of Kentucky, with 81 outstanding young people participating. The program provides an opportunity for the high school seniors to learn more about career opportunities in agriculture, as well as to develop leadership skills.

Highlights of the five-day event included sessions on leadership and speaking skills, adjusting to college, career opportunities plus some political science discussions with KFB specialists and others involved in that field. There were numerous tours of university facilities and local tourist attractions. And there was time set aside for fun activities like movies and shopping.

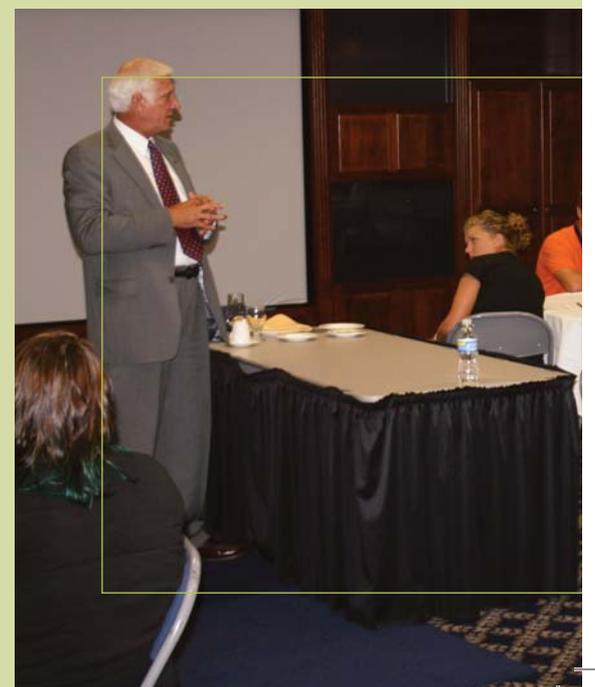
Participants were selected by their respective county Farm Bureaus after having completed their junior years in high school. Many of the participants are in leadership positions with FFA or 4-H.

Speaking to the group of 39 at Murray, KFB President Marshall Coyle told the young people “you are here because someone recognized you for your talent and your leadership abilities. We encourage you to take advantage of opportunities to further your leadership skills.”

The Bath County farmer went on to note that the IFAL program has proved to be a valuable means to cultivate interest in agricultural careers and organizations. Farm Bureau, he said, “is always seeking to develop future leaders.”

ABOVE: THE GROUP AT MURRAY TOURED A UNIVERSITY GREENHOUSE WITH HORTICULTURE DIRECTOR DR. PAT WILLIAMS AS THEIR GUIDE.

BELOW: KFB PRESIDENT MARSHALL COYLE SPOKE TO THE GROUP AT MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY.





**THE IFAL  
CLASS AT UK.**

**IFAL**



**THE IFAL GROUP  
AT MURRAY STATE  
UNIVERSITY.**



# LOUISVILLE SEEKS RETURN OF FFA EVENT

**K**FB Executive Vice President David S. Beck is a key player in the effort to bring the National FFA Convention back to Louisville.

Beck, who was a state FFA officer out of the chapter in his native Lyon County, is chairman of the host committee that is trying to win the FFA convention sweepstakes for Kentucky. He also chaired that committee during the convention's seven-year run in Louisville, which concluded in 2005.

The massive event is in the third year of a seven-year commitment to Indianapolis, which is the home of FFA headquarters. A seven-member site selection committee is in the process of choosing between the two cities for the contract period beginning in 2013. A large contingent rolled out the red carpet for the group at a breakfast last month at Freedom Hall.

Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson, Lieutenant Governor Dan Mongiardo, Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer, Commerce Secretary Marcheta Sparrow and Beck were among those who welcomed the committee, which received a standing ovation when it entered the spacious arena, escorted by a line of Kentucky FFA members. That moment gave the event the feel of a White House state dinner. Former Agriculture Commissioner Billy Ray Smith emceed the breakfast in his capaci-



ty as Executive Director of the Kentucky FFA Foundation.

Commissioner Farmer, who was the first featured speaker, exuded the same level of confidence he had as a basketball star when he told the committee: "I think we offer you a package that is not matched by anyone else."

Abramson, the long-time Louisville mayor instrumental in the original recruitment 11 years ago, said the community hasn't lost enthusiasm for hosting the convention. He noted that the breakfast attendees included leaders "from all walks of life" in the community "who are here to show you that we truly care about your organization."

Beck also reaffirmed the commitment from both the community and Kentucky's agriculture industry. "We stand ready and willing to work with you," he said, adding that the host committee knows what it takes to meet the convention's needs for funding, volunteers, workers, security and hospitality.

KFB President Marshall Coyle and First Vice President Mark Haney were at the breakfast along with past president Sam Moore, who was there as a member of the State Fair Board. Executive Vice President Roger Simpson represented KFB Insurance Company, which is among a long list of businesses supporting FFA.

The convention attracted between 50,000 and 55,000 participants while in Louisville and spurred an estimated \$35 million in economic activity in the metro area.

FFA is expected to announce its decision near the end of this year.

TOP: THE MARQUEE AT THE KENTUCKY EXPO CENTER OFFERED A PROMINENT WELCOME TO THE FFA OFFICIALS.

MIDDLE: KFB EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DAVID S. BECK SPOKE AT THE BREAKFAST, FLANKED BY LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR DAN MONGIARDO.

BOTTOM: SEVERAL HUNDRED WERE ON HAND FOR THE BREAKFAST WITH THE SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE.

# C O U N T Y A N N U A L M E E T I N G S

## BELL COUNTY

Date: September 25, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## BOONE COUNTY

Date: September 9, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## BOURBON COUNTY

Date: October 16, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: American Legion Park

## CAMPBELL COUNTY

Date: September 13, 2008 • 5:00 p.m.  
Place: Alexandria Community Center

## CARROLL COUNTY

Date: October 13, 2008 • 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## CLAY COUNTY

Date: October 9, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## DAVISS COUNTY

Date: August 16, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Apollo High School

## FAYETTE COUNTY

Date: October 2, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## FRANKLIN COUNTY

Date: October 7, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## ELLIOTT COUNTY

Date: September 25, 2007 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: High School Cafeteria

## FAYETTE COUNTY

Date: October 11, 2007 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## FRANKLIN COUNTY

Date: October 2, 2007 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## FLEMING COUNTY

Date: August 8, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Industrial Park

## GRANT COUNTY

Date: September 20, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## HOPKINS COUNTY

Date: August 15, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Fairgrounds Activity Bldg.

## LEWIS COUNTY

Date: August 3, 2008 • 12:30 p.m.  
Place: Ruggles Campground

## LOGAN COUNTY

Date: September 20, 2008 • 5:30 p.m.  
Place: Logan County HS Cafeteria

## MADISON COUNTY

Date: July 28, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Fairgrounds

## MCCRACKEN COUNTY

Date: September 20, 2008 • 5:00 p.m.  
Place: Knights of Columbus Hall

## NICHOLAS COUNTY

Date: July 24, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Vice's Community Center

## OHIO COUNTY

Date: August 7, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## OLDHAM COUNTY

Date: August 12, 2008 • 7:00 p.m.  
Place: LaGrange Farm Bureau Office

## OWEN COUNTY

Date: October 6, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## PENDLETON COUNTY

Date: September 20, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## ROBERTSON COUNTY

Date: September 20, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Deming High School

## ROCKCASTLE COUNTY

Date: September 19, 2008 • 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Roundstone Elementary School

## SHELBY COUNTY

Date: October 2, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Extension Office

## SIMPSON COUNTY

Date: August 19, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Community Park

## TRIMBLE COUNTY

Date: August 28, 2008 • 7:00 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## UNION COUNTY

Date: July 31, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: Farm Bureau Office

## WOODFORD COUNTY

Date: October 4, 2008 • 6:30 p.m.  
Place: 1st Christian Church Life Center

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FARM PRODUCTION NEWS

# VINEYARD ACREAGE EXPLODING

BY AIMEE NIELSON  
UK COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

**K**entucky has been experiencing somewhat of a grape revival over the past decade. Vineyard acreage has exploded to roughly 800 acres with more springing up all the time. Most producers are new to the industry and depend on the research and expertise of UK College of Agriculture specialists to get their vines growing and thriving and then decide what to do with the harvest.

Nearly three years ago, Kaan Kurtural and Tom Cottrell arrived at UK to be the institution's first viticulturist and enologist respectively. Since then,



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they and their graduate students/research assistants have delved into a whirlwind of projects to help the Kentucky grape and wine industry gain ground and earn respect for its practices and products.

With a little more than three acres of grapes planted at UK's Horticulture Research Farm in south Lexington, researchers have a lot of irons in the fire focusing on multiple areas of study.

"Our main focus areas are helping producers decide where to plant vineyards and why," Kurtural said. "They want to know what kind of cultivars to plant and how to crop those cultivars sustainably so they can produce a marketable crop. The other thing we are looking at is reducing the pesticide input into the vineyards and reducing the carbon footprint of some of these vineyards."

Kurtural and his team played a leading role in creating a multi-state mapping project, using Global Positioning System technology to help producers select potential vineyard locations on their land. Kurtural simply inputs latitude and longitude information into the program and the computer generates a map of the location and areas in that location best suited for grape production.

UK graduate student and full-time research assistant Brandon O'Daniel spends a lot of time in the field managing UK's vineyard. He's experimenting with different grape varieties, cropping and pest management systems.

O'Daniel believes Kentucky's grape and wine industry can have a solid future with proper education and management tools.

"It's takes a lot of up-front investment, but as far as actually being an

alternative for the farmer, I do think it has a lot of promise," he said.

Patsy Wilson is also a graduate student and full-time research assistant with grape and wine industry aspirations after graduation. She spent a lot of time in the vineyard studying different grape varieties but focused on Vidal Blanc as a potential, cold-hardy variety for Kentucky producers. She spends a lot of time now in the lab researching Vidal Blanc and its potential as a premier wine grape for the state.

Research in the vineyard often involves other disciplines such as entomology. The Japanese beetle is an enemy of grapevines. UK entomology graduate student and research assistant Derrick Hammons is studying environmentally responsible ways to combat the beetle in the vineyard.

"We are looking at the effects of defoliation on vine growth development, and this year we will be looking at crop yield. The idea is to convince growers that even though they see Japanese beetles, they don't have to spray as much as they think they do," he emphasized. "They can cut back their sprays and their use of sprays. That's going to be more and more important, especially as fuel costs increase, and pesticide safety is always a concern."

All in all, research in the vineyard and the lab is helping Kentucky grape producers increase the quantity and quality of their businesses. Producers continually are looking to UK to provide answers to tough questions, and thanks to a team of dedicated scientists and students UK is responding with solid, science-based solutions.





FARM PRODUCTION NEWS

# NEW CONSERVATION PROGRAM ON TAP

BY DANNY HUGHES  
DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Do you have cropland that stays wet, floods often, is too small for your equipment or is marginal in production? Would you like to earn a guaranteed cash rental payment for the next 10-15 years on those marginal areas while “farming for wildlife” by planting vegetation such as native grasses, shrubs and/or trees? Kentucky landowners and operators of certain cropland in designated geographic areas may enroll eligible land in a new continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) conservation practice titled State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), also known as CP38.

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is now conducting sign-up for SAFE on a continuous basis, in all or portions of the following counties: Allen, Ballard, Barren, Breckinridge, Bullitt, Butler, Caldwell, Calloway, Carlisle, Christian, Crittenden, Daviess, Edmonson, Fulton, Graves, Grayson, Green, Hancock, Hardin, Hart, Henderson, Hickman, Hopkins, LaRue, Livingston, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, McCracken, McLean, Meade, Metcalfe, Monroe, Muhlenberg, Nelson, Ohio, Simpson, Taylor, Todd, Trigg, Union, Warren, and Webster.

Land that has cropping history reported to FSA (four years during 1996-2001) and is currently legally and physically capable of being cropped is eligible, so long as the producer has owned/operated it for 12 months. Additionally land that has expired from CRP that was enrolled during 1996-2001 may be eligible.

Practices that are available include: CP-38E Early Successional Habitat will allow producers to plant native shrubs and/or native warm season grasses/forbs to maximize wildlife habitat. CP-38E Early Successional Rare & Declining Habitat will allow producers to plant a diverse mix of native warm

season grasses/forbs.

In addition to CRP rental rates (based on the three predominate soils) for 10-15 years, the Farm Service Agency will provide 50 percent cost

share plus a Practice Incentive Payment for installing planted native vegetation and a Signup Incentive Payment (\$100/acre) to the producer.

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# A FEMALE FIRST . . .

*Monroe County woman selected to represent state in top farmer contest*

**BY LINDSEY COBLENTZ  
KFB COMMUNICATIONS INTERN**

Loretta Baxter Lyons of Monroe County has become the first woman to be selected as a state champion in the annual Southeastern Farmer of the Year program. Lyons, who raises dairy heifers and row crops, will represent Kentucky in the finals set for the Sunbelt Agricultural Expo this fall at Moultrie, Georgia.

Nine other states are involved in the 18-year-old program sponsored by Swisher International and the Sunbelt Expo.

The contest recognizes farmers for their dedication to excellence. Contestants are judged based on their efficiency in farming practices, the quality of their financial management, and leadership in community organizations. KFB Federation awards \$1,000 to the state winner and coordinates the program for Kentucky.

Two other finalists, Steve Bolinger of Christian County and Bill Payne of Lincoln County, each received \$300.

Lyons had a modest response to the honor. "Not too many women farm, I guess," she said with a chuckle.

The Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest was established in 1990. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia take part in the contest. To date, more than \$724,000 has been presented to state and overall winners of the competition.

The winner will receive a \$14,000 prize at a ceremony on October 14.

Lyons sees the Sunbelt Expo as an opportunity to meet farmers from across the South. "I'm looking forward to meeting all the other contestants and hearing their stories."

Lyons' and her late husband, Hade, purchased their first property of 150

acres from a neighbor in their Sand Lick community in 1961. They bought their first tractor for \$3,100 and borrowed their family's equipment to raise their first crops of tobacco and hay. At the same time, both were pursuing their college degrees to become teachers.



LORETTA BAXTER LYONS NAMED HER BUSINESS "TRIPLE K" TO SIGNIFY HER CHILDREN, KERRY, KEVIN AND KELA.

*"At age 34, I was faced with a major decision: whether to sell the farm and continue my teaching career or become a full time farmer."*

In 1965, they built a dairy farm and began milking 30 to 40 Holstein cows. The operation had grown to 120 cows

when Lyons decided to sell the herd in 1999.

The road became more difficult in 1976 when Hade passed away from a massive heart attack. "At age 34, I was faced with a major decision: whether to sell the farm and continue my teaching career or become a full time farmer."

Something Hade had said in the past played a large part in her decision to remain on the farm. "He had made a statement or two saying that he didn't want me to sell any land if anything happened to him... I kind of had that in the back of my head."

Lyons said the hardest part about managing the farm on her own was making all the decisions herself. "We had always discussed all the major decisions that we made," she said. "I would go to bed at night and wonder what I was going to do."

Lyons persevered and today, she manages a contract dairy heifer program named "Hade's Triple K Dairy, Inc." after their three children, Kerry, Kevin and Kela. Kerry, a former KFB Director, is the president of the operation. Kevin is the county's agricultural extension agent.

They purchase Holstein calves from a farm and sell them back to the same farm about 20 months later when each cow is seven months pregnant, weighing in at about 1,150 pounds. The operation began with a load of about 110 calves and is now up to 800 to 900 calves.

The farm also recently started a cash grain enterprise after leasing a 300-acre grain farm in the spring of 2007. Today, Lyons and her family operate a total of 1,140 acres, owning 695.

When Lyons isn't busy managing the farm, she enjoys playing the piano at her church and listening to gospel music. She is also a charter board member of the Kentucky Agriculture Heritage Center and involved with Kentucky Women in Agriculture.

# AG COMMISSIONERS CONCERNED ABOUT SOARING FARM INPUT COSTS

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture was host for the annual conference of the Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture. KFB was among the sponsors for the four-day meeting in Lexington. SASDA involves 15 southeastern states and Puerto Rico.

One of the primary issues of concern was how skyrocketing input costs are straining farm families. Many farmers could go out of business if solutions aren't found, forcing the nation to import more food, the state agriculture commissioners warned.

"I've had farmers in my state come to me in tears because they don't know what they're going to do," Commissioner Ron Sparks of Alabama said.



KENTUCKY COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE RICHIE FARMER CHATS WITH MISSISSIPPI'S LESTER SPELL DURING A POLICY SESSION.

Costs of fuel, fertilizer and livestock feed are wiping out gains in crop prices. Livestock and poultry prices generally are flat, so higher input costs are eating into producers' bottom lines.

Record oil prices are driving up the cost of virtually all farm inputs.

"Everybody feels squeezed when they have to pay more to put gas in their cars,"

Commissioner Terry Peach of Oklahoma said. "They have to cut back on eating out or going to the movies. But for farmers, this raises their costs to run a business, and some people are at the breaking point."

Rising expenses could

put some farmers in danger of losing their homes, the agriculture commissioners said. The pressure is especially intense for young farmers who are pay-

ing for land and equipment.

"If we lose very many family farms, we'll end up importing food the way we import oil," Commissioner Steve Troxler of North Carolina said. "America has the highest food safety standards in the world, yet we already import food from countries with less stringent food safety rules. If we end up importing most of our food, American consumers could suffer."

The pressures on farmers have been intensified by other events beyond their control such as recent flooding in the Midwest and the deep drought in the southeastern United States last summer.

Higher producer input costs, production and transportation disruptions, and increasing demand in developing countries have combined to raise prices for food in American supermarkets.

"That hurts everyone, but it's especially hard on the poor and on our children," Kentucky Ag Commissioner Richie Farmer said. "The financial strain on American farmers is an issue of public health and safety for all Americans. The federal government needs to help us find solutions that will enable family farmers to make a living while maintaining this country's food supply."

## Entries are encouraged for "innovations" programs

Farm members and County Farm Bureaus are encouraged to submit their innovative ideas for the Farmer Idea Exchange and the County Activities of Excellence contests. KFB will recognize the state's best entries during its annual meeting on December 4. These ideas and programs will compete nationally for the opportunity to be presented at the AFBF Convention next January.

Ideas may be entered in the following categories: Ag Equipment, Workshop, Buildings, Cropping Systems, Marketing/Management, Livestock/Equine, Conservation/Improved Efficiencies, and Safety/Health/Accessibility. Nationally, up to 15 ideas may be selected for display as posters.

The County Activities of Excellence (CAE) program's purpose is to recognize and share successful county Farm Bureau programs and activities. Fifteen county Farm Bureaus from across the nation will be invited to display their program at the AFBF convention. A county Farm Bureau may enter one of these five CAE Program categories: Education and Ag Promotion, Leadership Development, Member Services, Policy Implementation, and Public Relations and Information.

All entries must be submitted by September 5. For more information, call Ed McQueen, Director of Market Information, at 502/495-5000, extension 7243. Contest rules and entry forms are available online at [www.fb.org/programs/](http://www.fb.org/programs/).



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# MARKETS

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## SORGHUM CHECKOFF BEGINS

Collection of the national sorghum checkoff began July 1. Within three years of the start of collections, a referendum must be held for producers to vote on the checkoff. Sorghum is holding a delayed referendum because, at this point, there is no credible list of U.S. sorghum growers. Although no refunds will be made unless a referendum fails, requests for potential refunds must be made within 60 calendar days after each and every assessment is paid. The assessment is based on 0.6% of the crop's value. A 13-member National Sorghum Board will be named.

Besides grain sorghum, the checkoff is due on sorghum forage, hay or haylage, billets or silage totaling 5,000 tons or more.

In 2007, Kentucky produced grain sorghum valued at \$4.17 million dollars on 12,000 harvested acres. USDA forecasts 10,000 acres will be harvested in 2008.

## MILK PRODUCTION IS CLIMBING

Despite higher feed costs, USDA expects milk production to increase in 2008 about two percent, to 189.3 billion pounds. The effect of this year's soaring feed costs will not be apparent until 2009. Milk production is forecast to rise about 0.5 percent in 2009 to 190.3 billion pounds. The milk cow inventory in 2009 is expected to be about 9.23 million head, down fractionally from the 2008 forecast of 9.26 million.

## PORK SUPPLY COULD BE PEAKING

The recent USDA Quarterly Hogs and Pigs report indicates the U.S. will have record hog slaughter in the fourth quarter, but supplies will shrink in 2009 due to a reduction in the breeding herd in response to high feed costs.

Breeding inventory, at 6.07 million head, was down one percent from last year, and down one percent from the previous quarter. Market hog inventory, at 61.6 million head, was up 7 percent from last year. The March-May 2008 pig crop, at 29.0 million head, was up four percent from 2007.

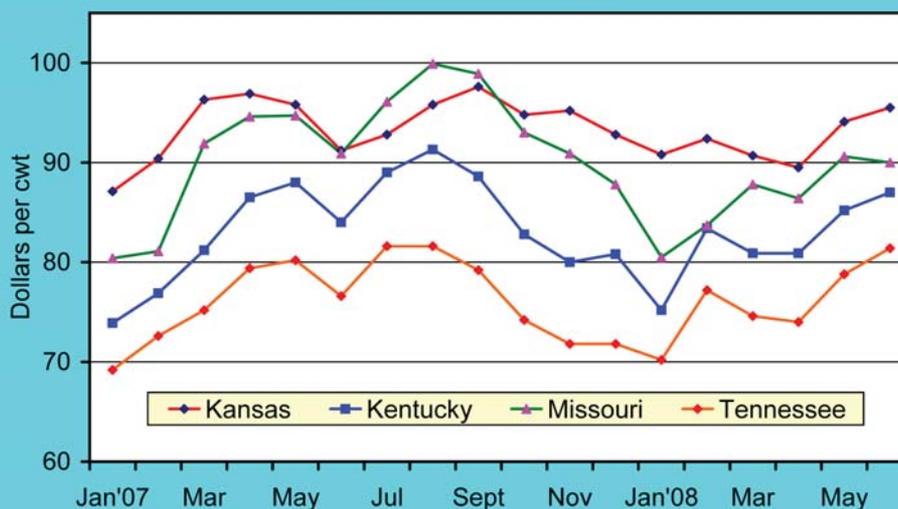
## BEEF EXPORTS GROWING STRONGLY

Despite high beef prices and delays in opening South Korea to U.S. beef, exports this year are expected to be 1.650 billion pounds, a 15 percent increase from 2007. First-quarter exports were already strong at 360 million pounds, a 34 percent increase from the first quarter in 2007. Exports increased 29 percent year-over-year in

April as well. Exports to Canada and Mexico, the two largest export markets, are expected to be higher than in 2007 and expand further in 2009. U.S. exports are forecast by USDA to increase 13 percent to 1.87 billion pounds in 2009.

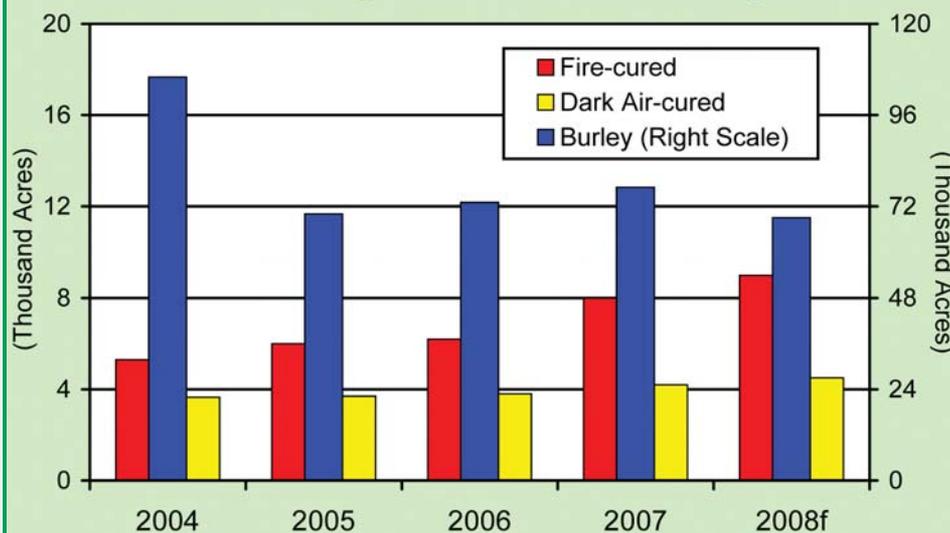
Beef imported into the United States is expected to fall nine percent in 2008, to 2.755 billion pounds.

Average Price Received for Steers & Heifers  
500 Pounds and Over



Source: Agricultural Prices, USDA-NASS

Kentucky Tobacco Acreage



Source: USDA-NASS

# Animal issues program comes to KFB

**A** national Farm Bureau program developing media spokespersons to address animal welfare issues came to Kentucky last month with a training session involving some KFB leaders and staff members.

AFBF's Board of Directors authorized the "Agricultural Challenges Initiative" in response to growing attacks against the animal agriculture industry. Groups like the Humane Society of the United States and PETA have been causing problems for farmers and ranchers in both the public policy and public relations arenas, chiefly with allegations about animal confinement practices. The Farm Bureau program, which has KFB among its many supporters, is aimed at helping the farm community tell the story from its point of view.

Specialists from the St. Louis-based public relations firm Osborn-Barr joined with AFBF PR Division staffers Don Lipton, Mace Thornton and Johnna Miller, plus Missouri swine producer and past AFBF Young Farmer Committee Chairperson Chris Chinn, to conduct the workshop at the KFB office. The agenda involved identifying the challenge and the opponents, discussing effective talking points and mediums for communicating those messages and then "practicing" via mock TV and radio interviews.

Goals of the overall campaign are (1) influencing animal agriculture policies to ensure laws passed support the livestock and poultry industries rather than restrict them, and (2) moving consumer opinions to neutral or positive about animal production practices.

Research supports the need for farmers and ranchers to be concerned about public perceptions. A January survey of 3,464 adults throughout the U.S. showed that nine percent believe farmers do not treat their animals well,

HSUS, which is typically confused with the Humane Society but has no connection to animal shelters or caring for stray animals, has a \$120 million budget. PETA's budget is \$28 million and a third troublesome group, Farm

Sanctuary, has emerged with a \$5 million bankroll, according to AFBF.

Additionally, radical environmental groups have been teaming up with HSUS and PETA to attack animal agriculture based on the global warming issue.

Among the key messages are:

\*For animals to produce meat, milk and eggs, producers must take all possible steps to ensure that animals are well cared for around the clock.

\*Farmers and ranchers recognize that superior animal welfare practices

lead to the production of high-quality, safe and wholesome products and are constantly seeking ways to improve the well-being and comfort of animals. To do otherwise would be bad business.

\*Quality assurance programs at the national and state levels provide farmers and ranchers with guidelines for the production of safe, wholesome animals, including recommendations on necessary animal handling and facilities.

The PR specialists stressed to the KFB members the importance of delivering positive messages, rather than attacking the opponent. Surveys consistently affirm that positive messaging is effective when dealing with public issues, they said.

Among the KFB contingent taking the class were President Marshall Coyle, First Vice President Mark Haney and Directors Larry Thomas, Danny Wilkinson, Pat Henderson, Ryan Bivens and Frieda Heath.



KFB DIRECTOR LARRY THOMAS OF HARDIN COUNTY GIVES A "MOCK" INTERVIEW ON ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES WITH AFBF'S JOHNNA MILLER.

with another 34 percent saying they were unsure. While the majority (57 percent) feel farmers do a good job, it's the "unsure" 34 percent that could present problems if not properly informed about the issue.

The biggest "positive" in the survey was 91 percent saying farmers and ranchers are credible spokespersons (84 percent agreed that Farm Bureau is credible). And veterinarians, the true "experts" on the issue, received a 96 percent favorable rating.

Lipton told the group a Colorado survey underscored why farmers need to speak up. In that instance, only five percent originally believed farmers do a poor job with their animals – but the percentage doubled after the same group was given the point of view from the Humane Society of the United States.

"One of the key things is to put a face on this issue," Lipton explained. Opponents cannot be taken likely:

# FARM FILE



## PREDICTION MARKET LAUNCHED FOR STUDENTS

Farmetrics<sup>SM</sup>, the first prediction market tailored for U.S. agriculture, introduced the Farmetrics<sup>SM</sup> Prediction Market Educational Program and a new Web site for agricultural education teachers and students, [www.farmetrics.com/Scholar](http://www.farmetrics.com/Scholar).

Classes that win weekly contests with the accuracy of their predictions benefit their schools by earning Reward Points that can be redeemed for award cards.

At the Web site classroom participants submit predictions for yield, acres planted and acres harvested for crops such as corn and soybeans. Schools determine in which of these weekly contests their classes will participate. Class performance is measured against that of other classes around the country by the accuracy of predictions, as determined by official U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics. The schools with winning classes earn Reward Points that can be redeemed for award cards that can be used by the school to purchase necessary goods and services.

In addition to class performance, individual student performance is also reported, although it is not calculated for purposes of awarding Reward Points. As an added educational tool, in many counties, the class predictions are compared against the predictions of local farmers.

School representatives directly register students for the school's participation, and Farmetrics does not gather or record any student information beyond anonymous screen names. Reward Points are awarded to the schools and may be redeemed for award cards.

The Farmetrics Prediction Market is sponsored by Bunge Global Markets, Inc.

## BLUE GRASS STOCKYARDS TO HOLD SEMINAR

"Stockmanship & Stewardship" clinicians Curt Pate, Dr. Ron Gill and Todd McCartney will conduct a unique educational program during Blue Grass Stockyards CPH-45 Kickoff/ Customer Appreciation Event, August 21.

A complimentary meal opens the evening at 6 p.m. followed by the special presentation, Stockmanship & Stewardship, at 7 p.m. Speakers will use cattle to illustrate proven stockmanship methods and techniques to benefit everyday livestock work. Renowned Montana horseman, rancher and stockmanship

instructor Curt Pate is joined by lifelong cattleman Dr. Ron Gill, Texas A&M Livestock Specialist and cattle handling expert. Third team member is Texas ranch cowboy, Todd McCartney, a seasoned presenter on beef industry topics and RFD-TV host.

The event will be held indoors at the Blue Grass Stockyards' facility and will include instruction for improved gathering, penning, and chute work, loading and hauling. The facility is located at 375 Lisle Industrial Rd., in Lexington, KY. For more information call 800-621-3972.

## TWO NAMED TO AGRITOURISM COUNCIL

The Kentucky Agritourism Council has elected Farm Bureau leaders Carl Chaney of Bowling Green and Jeremy Hinton of Hodgenville to serve as council chairman and vice chairman, respectively. The Council was formed to make recommendations for a statewide plan for agritourism and provide guidance to the Office of Agritourism.

Chaney and his wife, Debra, have operated Chaney's Dairy Barn in Warren County since 2003. The Chaney's provide an on-farm experience and a café where customers can enjoy local foods, including sandwiches and soups, along with the Chaney's famous homemade ice cream. Chaney's Dairy Barn has a gift shop focused on Kentucky products. The Chaney's offer educational tours on the farm to groups, showing kids of all ages

where milk comes from and giving them a taste of farm life. They serve on the board for Warren County FB and their market is enrolled in KFB's Certified Roadside Farm Markets program.

Hinton and his wife, Joanna, operate Hinton's Orchard and Farm Market in LaRue County. The couple started their agritourism business in 2002 when they leased the farm known as Tommy Bennett Orchards. In 2006 they purchased a new farm on Ky. 210 outside Hodgenville, and Hinton's Orchard and Farm Market was created. Hinton's Orchard offers a variety of fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables as well as activities for the entire family at the farm. They serve on the board of LaRue County FB and their business is involved with the KFB program.

## CROP REPORTING DEADLINE EXTENDED

Because of a delay in announcing the provisions of the 2008 farm bill and extreme weather conditions, the Farm Service Agency has extended the final reporting date to August 15 for certifying the planting of all other crops, except small grain and value loss crops. An exception is crops insured through NAP, which must

report the earlier of 15 days before the onset of harvest or grazing or August 15.

Acreage reports are required for program eligibility and are mandatory for producers who participate in FSA programs. Producers also are urged to report on prevented or failed acreage as soon as possible to the local FSA office.

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Winchester · (859) 749-0484
- Benton Farms U-Pick**  
Walton · (859) 485-7000
- Bi-Water Farm & Greenhouse**  
Georgetown · (502) 863-3676
- Blue Ribbon Market**  
Union · (859) 393-4357
- Boyd Orchards**  
Versailles · (859) 873-3097
- Bray Fruit**  
Bedford · (502) 255-7296
- Bray Orchard & Roadside Market**  
Bedford · (502) 255-3607
- Callis Orchards**  
Bedford · (502) 255-3316
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**Dennison's Roadside Market**  
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**Frenchvalley Farms**  
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**Shell Farms Greenhouses**  
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**The Country Barn**  
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**Trunnell's Farm Market**  
Utica · (270) 733-2222

**Turner Valley Produce**  
Russellville · (270) 726-3983

**Zook's Produce**  
Hopkinsville · no number

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