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This issue of KFB News focuses on the annual meeting of American Farm Bureau Federation, with reports on various awards bestowed upon KFB and its volunteer leaders, the work of AFBF's federal deficit task force and the policies delegates adopted for 2010.



This month's guest column has AFBF President Bob Stallman addressing our position on health care reform. That's an issue, of course, that's been on our priority list for several years.

While the 369 voting delegates (including 25 from Kentucky) expressed continued frustration about the stalemate on health care reform, their mood turned angry when the topic of climate change legislation came up. This has been mounting for months as information surfaced on the economic impact of the "cap-and-trade" legislation moving through Congress. Thousands of farmers and ranchers from throughout the nation have expressed their opposition by participating in the "Don't Cap Our Future" campaign, signing ball caps that have been delivered to respective members of Congress.

The delegates sent another signal to Washington by unanimously passing a special resolution expressing strong opposition to "cap-and-trade." The resolution asserts that the proposed legislation would result in significantly higher production costs for farmers and that the potential benefits of agricultural offsets are far outweighed by the costs. We also cite how the scientific community is sharply divided over climate change.

Another issue that has farmers and ranchers fired up is the Environmental Protection Administration's authority to regulate greenhouse gases. We unanimously approved a resolution to support any legislative action that would prohibit EPA from doing so under the auspices of the Clean Air Act.

The federal deficit is another critical area of concern. We adopted policy calling for the deficit to be reduced each year to achieve a balanced budget by 2019. We also advocate a reduction in spending on government services and entitlements.

These policies come following recommendations from AFBF's Federal Deficit Task Force. KFB First Vice President John C. Hendricks is a member of that distinguished panel.

Estate taxes, dairy policy and farm bill programs were among other pressing issues on the agenda at AFBF's annual meeting. (More details are provided in the section on the annual meeting.)

Lastly, I would be remiss if I failed to mention that KFB garnered the maximum number of awards for program excellence. That's a good indication that we're on the right track in service to our valued members!

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT

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Ag community mourns death of Mike Ovesen

Kentucky's agricultural community was greatly saddened by the January 3 death of Mike Ovesen, a beloved leader within the state's agriculture industry. During 22 years as Executive Director of the Kentucky Pork Producers Association Ovesen was widely known for his passionate advocacy of common-sense approaches to farm policies and environmental regulations. He possessed a great sense of humor and sincerity that endeared him to many.

Ovesen, 63, had been battling cancer.

The LaRue County native was a champion of the small, family farms that are the backbone of Kentucky agriculture.

Realizing how unwarranted environmental and animal welfare guidelines could threaten farm production, Ovesen worked tirelessly in those policy arenas to ensure fairness. He was involved in fashioning Kentucky's agricultural water quality law and served on committees associated with that highly-acclaimed program. In the late 1990s he worked closely with KFB in a winning court battle with the state over proposed regulations on large-scale hog farms. And he always stood tall against radical animal rights groups.

Ovesen also was involved with the development of the Pork Association's cooking teams that eventually became a key source of revenue by grilling the famous pork chops and pork burgers at events throughout the state.

His status was such that The Farmer's Pride newspaper devoted a page of its January 6 issue to testimonials from two of his good friends, Publisher Sharon Burton and radio broadcaster Jeff Nalley.

Ms. Burton said of Ovesen: "He was blunt. He was funny. He was transparent when it came to his love for his family and his work – in that order. Few people understood the local impact of a changing marketplace like Mike. He was on top of environmental issues and livestock treatment issues and he always looked out for the Kentucky farmer."

She added: "He was as honest as any person I've ever known, passionate about agriculture and had more common sense than he knew what to do with."



Throughout the health care debate Farm Bureau has focused on two issues that are a make-it-or-break-it deal for producers and rural America: reducing health care costs and improving rural access to health care service.



Health insurance costs are an ongoing and significant expense for farmers and ranchers who operate on tight profit margins and whose businesses are cyclical, with unprofitable years nearly as common as profitable ones. It is Farm Bureau's belief that health care reform must not unduly burden farm and ranch businesses with costs that they cannot absorb.

Simply put, it's not that we don't want better health care, we just don't want something we cannot afford.

To help ease the burden on producers and rural America, Farm Bureau policy favors tax credits to help the self-employed purchase health insurance and to help farm and ranch employers afford insurance for their employees. Mandating that individuals purchase health insurance will only work for rural America if costs are brought under control and if tax credits are generous enough to make insurance affordable.

Further, market-based reforms like the proposed "exchange," which is a national insurance marketplace where eligible individuals and small businesses will be able to buy insurance, would benefit rural areas by expanding competition between private insurance providers to reduce the cost of private health care. It is important that the definition of "small employers" who are eligible to use the exchange allow as many farms, ranches and small businesses to have access to the exchanges for purchasing insurance at competitive rates. Ag producers who have seasonal workers shouldn't be automatically disqualified from using the exchange.

It is also vital that rural Americans have access to doctors and hospitals. There continues to be a critical shortage of health care facilities and qualified health care professionals in rural areas. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, 20 percent of Americans live in rural locations while only nine percent of physicians in America practice in those areas.

It doesn't really matter if rural Americans have insurance if there are no doctors or health care facilities where they live. Incentives are needed to increase service to people who live in rural America. Increasing the number of doctors and healthcare providers who will practice in underserved areas is more important now than ever.

The final health care package will have tremendous impact on rural America because rural areas have the highest percentage of people without health insurance, the least access to competitive markets and pay the highest premiums. Because of this, the health care issue is very personal to farmers and ranchers.

BOB STALLMAN

PRESIDENT AFBF

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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KFB poised to push animal care bill

The General Assembly's effort to address Kentucky's sizeable budget deficit has KFB's legislative team looking to protect agriculture programs from funding cuts and farm families from regressive taxes. Another key issue for this session is Senate Bill 105, the highly-anticipated measure to create a system for establishing livestock care standards in the state.

After the first four weeks of this legislative session the best news for agriculture was widespread support for continuing the bulk of funding for the state's agricultural development initiative and water quality cost share funds.

Among many budgetary issues, KFB is pushing to secure funding for construction of a new Breathitt Veterinary Laboratory in Hopkinsville. That project, which was recommended after a study conducted through the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, has been under consideration for several years.

KFB's Board of Directors came to Frankfort in late January for a two-day meeting that featured visits from Governor Steve Beshear and Senate President David Williams. The KFB leaders also socialized with dozens of state legislators at a reception sponsored by the organization. Coincidentally, that afternoon Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman David Givens filed the bill to establish a 14-member Livestock Care Commission which would include a KFB representative as Vice Chairman.

Senate Bill 105 is patterned after a referendum adopted in Ohio last year. KFB's Animal Care Issues Task Force recommended a state authority to set and oversee livestock care standards as a means to combat the continuing attacks against animal agriculture by some radical "animal rights" groups.

During his remarks to the KFB leaders Senator Williams said Senator Givens had convinced him of the need for a state commission. Governor Beshear later said he was interested in the issue – particularly with how it relates to horses – and wanted to learn more about it. He invited the Executive Committee to meet with him.

House Speaker Greg Stumbo had agreed to meet with the Board but his schedule of legislative business forced him to cancel.

Talk of comprehensive tax reform has filtered through this legislative session, prompting KFB's team to be on guard against proposals that could raise property or sales taxes on farm families. Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper said the team is closely monitoring the situation but didn't feel reforms would be addressed at this session.

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck urged the



TOP: Governor Steve Beshear greets Bige Hensley as fellow KFB Director Fritz Giesecke looks on. Beshear told the KFB leaders he valued his relationship with the organization. BOTTOM: Senate President David Williams makes a point while addressing KFB's Board of Directors.

group to take nothing for granted and remind their lawmakers of how moderate property tax rates and sales tax exemptions benefit farm families.

Governor Beshear and Senator Williams were highly complimentary of KFB. Beshear said he enjoyed "a great working partnership with Farm Bureau." A smiling Williams flashed his KFB membership card and noted that he is largely in tune with the organization's policy, particularly on fiscal issues. He devoted most of his remarks to assailing the issue of expanded gaming. (KFB does not have policy on that issue)

Beshear promised continuing support for the Agricultural Development Fund and said he was very interested in how agriculture could benefit from the development of new sources of energy.

CORRECTION As article in the December-January issue incorrectly reported the party affiliation of State Representative Rick Rand, who is a Democrat and is chairman of the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee. We also incorrectly reported that he is a Senator. He formerly served in the Senate, where he chaired the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. We apologize to Representative Rand, who has been a great ally of KFB and Kentucky agriculture.

KFB not warm to climate change bills

a group of Kentucky Farm Bureau leaders met with Congressman Brett Guthrie to express the organization's opposition to "cap-and-trade" legislation under consideration in congress. The group presented Rep. Guthrie with a signed ball cap asking "Don't Cap Our Future" following an agricultural advisory meeting in Elizabethtown.

The "Don't Cap Our Future" is a grassroots campaign involving Farm Bureau members from across the nation as farmers speak out against climate change legislation. Rep. Guthrie voted against the bill which narrowly passed the house.

In opposition to cap-and-trade climate change bills in the House and Senate, KFB is encouraging members to join together in a unified request to federal lawmakers. The appeal is directed to members of Congress who are addressing restrictive climate change legislation that could hurt agriculture, consumers and the national economy, according to KFB President Mark Haney.

"The House has already passed climate change legislation that is bad for agriculture and now an even worse bill is nearing action in the Senate. Farmers and ranchers must speak out now to keep this legislation from becoming law," said Haney.

As with any traditional grassroots effort, Farm Bureau is also encouraging its members to call, send letters and e-mails



KFB Directors Fritz Giesecke, Larry Thomas and Scott Travis presented Congressman Brett Guthrie with a "Don't Cap our Future" cap.

to their Senators, as well as sign online letters and petitions that voice their opposition to the climate legislation.

Cap-and-trade legislation would impose higher energy and food costs on consumers, raise fuel, fertilizer and energy costs for farmers and ranchers, and shrink the American agricultural sector, resulting in reduced U.S. food production.

"The consequences of climate legislation far outweigh the benefits and aren't worth capping America's future," said Haney.

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LARUE COUNTY COUPLE WIN NATIONAL AWARD

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FB was cited for excellence in a number of areas at the 91st annual AFBF

meeting last month in Seattle. The biggest spotlight shined on LaRue County farmers Aaron and Ashley Reding, who were named the most outstanding young farm family in the nation following judging for the Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award.

The Redings, who have a large-scale row crop operation near Hodgenville, were selected over more than 40 entrants in the prestigious contest. They received a Dodge Truck.

This marks the second time in the past four years that a Kentucky couple won the award. John and Jill Mahan of Fayette County won in 2007.

KFB captured Awards for Excellence in recognition of its outstanding work in policy implementation, member services, public relations and information, leadership development and agriculture education and promotion. KFB President Mark Haney was re-elected to the AFBF Board of Directors. KFB Director Terry Gilbert of Boyle County presided over the women's program as chairperson of the Leadership Committee. She is in her fifth two-year term.

KFB had 275 participants among some 4,800 who attended the annual meeting of the nation's largest farm organization.

Among other Kentucky highlights:

- **Bobby Joe Critchelow of Breckinridge County** won the “most cost-



Aaron and Ashley Reding accepted the prestigious award from AFBF President Bob Stallman.

effective concept” award in the “Farmer Idea Exchange” competition. He developed a streamlined tobacco stripping system.

- **Daniel and Alison Smith of Scott County** were among three runners-up in the “Excellence in Agriculture” program for young farmers. They received a \$6,000 savings bond and a STIHL chainsaw.

- **Union County Farm Bureau** was recognized for innovative programs. Union County’s “Media Blitz for Safety Day” program is a farm and home safety event for fifth graders and their families.

KFB also was among the state lead-

ers in membership growth for 2009.

“This continuing national recognition is a clear indication we’re on the right track,” Haney said. “There’s no question we are widely regarded as one of the top states in terms of the scope and effectiveness of our program of work. It’s a tribute to our staff and our volunteer leaders.”

KFB staff was busy serving samples of Kentucky country ham at its exhibit in the popular trade show. In the nearby section for “idea exchange” participants, Kentucky was represented by Critchelow, Kenny Imel of Greenup County and Glenn Howell of Fulton County.

RIGHT: Daniel and Alison Smith received a chainsaw from STIHL, represented by Roger Phelps (at right).



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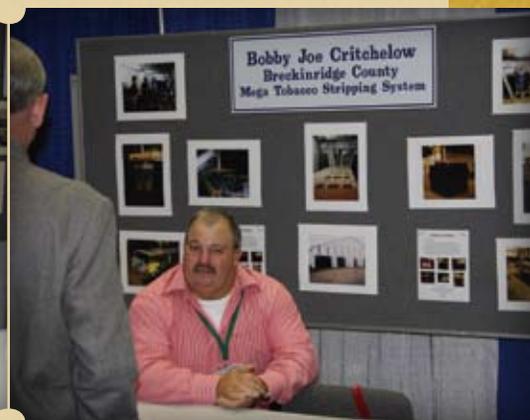


AFBF President Bob Stallman congratulates KFB President Mark Haney for the organization's achievements in 2009.

RIGHT: Union County's Mary Nelle White and Gary Stenger worked at the display of their award-winning farm and home safety program.



FAR RIGHT: At the trade show, Bobby Joe Critchelow of Breckinridge County displayed his award-winning idea for stripping tobacco.



DEFICIT TASK FORCE PRESENTS RECOMMENDATIONS



Task Force Chairman Craig Lang spoke at the conference in a panel discussion that included other members, including KFB First Vice President John C. Hendricks (left).

The nation's current budget deficit and debt levels are a threat to future generations, as well as the country's independence and security.

That was one broad conclusion of the Federal Deficit Task Force created by AFBF. KFB First Vice President John C. Hendricks is a member of the task force.

During months of study the panel focused on the dangers posed by the large projected federal deficits over the next 40 years. It presented its policy recommendations during a conference at the annual meeting. The proposals focused on the twin problems of the growing national debt and budget deficit. Without attention, the problems will become infinitely more difficult or impossible to solve, task force members believe.

The task force identified four major steps for consideration to achieve the ultimate goal of balancing the budget. First, the federal deficit should be reduced incrementally each year, reaching full balance and debt reduction by 2019. Second, the budget process needs to be reformed to require a two-thirds vote majority to waive any budgetary point of order. Third, federal expenditures on government services must be reduced, or and/or taxes must be increased. Lastly, since deficit reduction is so important for America's future, all federal expenditures should be considered for reduction -- including

Agriculture Department programs.

The task force concluded that federal spending is the most critical item that needs to be addressed and must be reined in if the United States is to remain a financially viable country. Federal spending in 2009 has produced a budget deficit of \$1.4 trillion, the largest in American history, contributing to a federal debt level today of about \$12 trillion, which translates into roughly 85 percent of the nation's gross domestic product. Further, because of recent tax cuts and the troubled economic conditions, government revenues are around 15 percent of GDP, which is 3.3 percent below the historic average.

Looking into federal spending, the task force examined three priority areas that members felt would have the greatest impact on the government's ability to reduce the federal deficit -- Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid.

Of the three problems, Social Security seems the easiest to solve, according to the task force. Nevertheless, the solutions will still be politically unpopular. For example, making Social Security self-financing is possible by raising the normal retirement age and indexing it to longevity, lowering benefits and increasing the revenue to the trust fund through removing the cap on taxable earnings.

The problems with Medicare and Medicaid are more complex and politically difficult. Increasing health care costs are a major impediment to balancing the budget because they are rising faster than the traditional rate of economic growth. With no changes to health care spending, Medicare and Medicaid would take up all federal revenues by the year 2070, task force members noted.

The group recommended cutting health care spending by implementing a centralized source to coordinate medical records; utilizing incentives for results (not procedures), increasing preventive care; shortening hospital stays; and limiting government sponsored coverage to only necessary and cost-effective procedures.

DELEGATES STRONGLY OPPOSE CLIMATE CHANGE LEGISLATION

Delegates at the 91st AFBF annual meeting voted to oppose cap-and-trade climate legislation and to support balancing the federal budget over the next eight years.

The delegates approved a special resolution stating that cap-and-trade legislation would raise farmers' and ranchers' production costs, and the potential benefits of agricultural offsets are far outweighed by the costs to producers. Due to these and other concerns, the delegates strongly opposed "cap and trade proposals before Congress" and supported "any legislative action that would suspend EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act."

"As Congress returns to the issue of cap-and-trade this year, the message of Farm Bureau will continue to be: 'Don't Cap Our Future' agricultural productivity and food security," said AFBF President Bob Stallman. "We will now send that message even more strongly."

"Congress should focus on renewable energy that is better for the environment and our domestic energy security," he added, "but it should not tie the hands of U.S. producers, whose productivity, historically, has provided the world's food safety net. We should not shrink U.S. agriculture at the very time when many are concerned about how to feed a growing global population."

Stallman was re-elected as AFBF president for a sixth two-year term. He is a cattle and rice producer from Columbus, Texas, and previously served as Texas Farm Bureau president.

The delegates said the federal deficit should be reduced each year, reaching a fully balanced budget by 2019. They said that federal spending on government services and entitlements must be reduced.

The delegates also called for meaningful relief from the estate tax, with no conditions or qualifications. They said that an increase in the overall exemption would be Farm Bureau's main priority. They also reaffirmed

their support for full stepped-up basis at the time of death in order to reduce the capital gains tax burden on farm and ranch heirs. Also on taxes, the delegates opposed the imposition of any health-related taxes on foods or beverages.

The delegates approved policy supporting changes to the Federal Milk Marketing Order structure, formulas and price classes used to compute milk prices, in order for those prices to reflect current market conditions, enhance transparency and account for regional differences in the cost of milk production. However, they rejected dairy supply management as a means to bolster dairy product prices, saying that Farm Bureau remains supportive of a market-oriented dairy program.

On farm policy, the delegates affirmed their support for the current farm program and continued their support for a mandatory country-of-origin labeling program, as enacted in the 2008 farm bill. They also called for a workable ad hoc disaster program and approved a new policy calling for a specialty crops title in future farm bills, along with additional research programs and promotion of U.S. specialty crops.

In response to media mislabeling of the H1N1 virus as "swine flu" and the severe impact that has had on pork demand, the delegates urged the news media to use the correct scientific terminology in referring to animal and plant health issues.

KFB had 25 of the 369 voting delegates.



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A “brand” new day

Kentucky Proud program is sparking agricultural growth

Article and Photos by Walt Reichert

ABOVE; Evans Orchard attracts hundreds of visitors on fall afternoons who buy pumpkins, apples and other Kentucky Proud products, while the children enjoy the corn mazes and other attractions.

Back in the mid-90s, Kevan Evans had an awakening. Like many farmers at the time, the Scott County tobacco grower started to look around for alternatives to burley. In 1994, he put in a large patch of vegetables and let his daughter, Jenny, sell them at a farmers market.

“She made more money than I did that year,” Evans said.

The realization that a farmer could grow vegetables that local consumers would happily pay for led Evans to try other crops that would bring consumers to his farm, which was off the beaten path between Georgetown and Lexington. He settled on apples and put out 1,800 trees.

Marketing the apples eventually snowballed into converting an old tobacco barn into a retail sales area, building a cooling facility, adding a cider press, putting in a certified kitchen to make fudge

and other products and adding a corn maze and playground area to keep the kids happy while the parents shop or pick apples. In short, Evans Orchard became an agritourism venue.

Now, on balmy fall weekends, between 3,000 and 5,000 visitors will come to the farm and be entertained with live music. On fall weekdays, thousands of schoolchildren visit to “pick a pumpkin.”

Savvy marketing by Evans and the trend toward buying locally have made Evans Orchard a destination spot for thousands in the Bluegrass region. Evans also credits his participation in the Kentucky Proud program for the success of Evans Orchard. Kentucky Proud is the premier marketing program of the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

“It gives us brand recognition,” Evans said. “People seem to trust the Kentucky Proud label.”

Wide scope

Over the last several years the Kentucky Proud label has attracted hundreds of thousands not only to agritourism operations such as Evans' but to buy Kentucky-grown products that range from milk to whisky, eggs to flowers, shrubs and trees to mushrooms and shrimp.

"We want to sell our food to anybody who eats," said Roger Snell, staff assistant in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Office of Marketing and Product Promotion.

Kentucky-grown food with the Kentucky Proud label is sold anywhere from farmers markets to restaurants to wholesale distributors to retail outlets.

And the label isn't just limited to food. Locally-made crafts, or crafts made with Kentucky products, as well as flowers, shrubs and nursery products can sport the Kentucky Proud label as long as they meet the qualifications.

Last year, products sold under the Kentucky Proud label accounted for \$100 million in retail sales alone. More than \$250 million in retail sales have been chalked up since the Kentucky Proud program's inception eight years ago.

"We're poised to record much higher sales in 2009," Snell said.

That may also be in part to the opening of the Kentucky Proud Market at the Lexington Convention Center next to Rupp Arena in March of last year. Curtis Segretto, owner of Elk Creek Winery in Owenton, a Kentucky Proud vineyard, opened the store in Lexington as an outlet for his own wine and the Kentucky Proud products of other producers.

"I met a lot of Kentucky Proud producers who want to grow or make things but aren't really salespeople," Segretto said. "I hope this blossoms into more retail outlets."

Packed into the 5,000 square foot retail space of the Kentucky Proud Market are wines, jams, salsas, cheese and candy, as well as non-food items. Of the 140 vendors selling products in the market, 60 are

Kentucky Proud producers, and all of the food items are Kentucky Proud products, said Kentucky Proud Market manager Sue Tack.

Retail sales numbers do not include sales through other outlets. Snell said the KDA estimates that \$10 million worth of products were sold through Kentucky Farm Bureau's Roadside Market program last year. And an untold number of sales take place on-farm, in restaurants or through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).



"Once they realized the department was going to stick with the promotion and push the label, they started signing on"

The Kentucky Proud Market in the Lexington Convention Center boasts 5,000 square feet of space and sells the products of 140 vendors, 60 of whom belong to the Kentucky Proud program.



“When people see the label in the store they are definitely interested because the trend today is to buy local.”

Alternative to tobacco

The Kentucky Proud marketing plan had humble beginnings eight years ago, said Mac Stone, executive director of KDA's Office of Agriculture Marketing and Product Promotion.

“It was literally a blank slate, people sitting around an empty table,” Stone said. “We were looking to find an alternative to tobacco because 84,000 Kentucky farm families were going through a historic transition.”

But in the early days, interested producers were hard to find.

“At first, we were begging people to sign up,” Stone said.

Stone credits Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer's willingness to stick with the program and branding for bringing producers on board.

“Once they realized the department was going to stick with the promotion and push the label, they started signing on,” Stone said.

Farmer has used his celebrity status as a UK basketball star to effectively promote the program. He has enlisted coaches Rick Pitino and Tubby Smith and some of his famous ex-teammates to assist in that effort.

The Kentucky Proud program also gets a boost from the Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy, which has funded promotions to the tune of \$1.2 million per year for the last four years. The money comes from Kentucky's share of Tobacco Settlement dollars.

Among the Kentucky Proud initiatives the KDA funds is a Restaurant Rewards Program that can reimburse participating restaurants up to \$12,000 per year for featuring Kentucky Proud products on the menu.

“We understand that, at least initially, it is more expensive for restaurants to participate in the Kentucky Proud program, so this helps them,” Stone said. About 60 restaurants, from Ashland to Louisville to Paducah, participate in the program.

KDA also funds a Farm Food Safety Program that teaches producers how to grow food safely through a program of Good Agricultural Practices. The KDA has also teamed up with the University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Department

of Health to teach producers food safety and how to get nutrition labeling.

The KDA also funds an office to help the state's growing number of aquaculture producers raise and market catfish, shrimp, tilapia and paddlefish caviar.

Angela Caporelli, director of the aquaculture program, said one thrust of her office is to get consumers and restaurants to look for Kentucky-grown fish in the marketplace and on their menus.

“We want to let buyers know this is supporting your neighborhood,” she said.

A recent Kentucky Proud initiative is aimed at livestock producers. The Kentucky Proud Livestock Tag program will make exhibitors of show animals eligible for additional premiums in livestock shows and at the state fair. Producers may enroll in the program and purchase Kentucky Proud tags for their show quality animals for \$5 per tag.

Stone said the Kentucky Proud program no longer has to go begging. As of late 2009, just over 1,800 producers were signed on to the marketing program and more applications were coming in.

Buy local

Bill Gallrein, Jr., owns, with his family, Gallrein Farms in Shelby County. Gallrein Farms is enrolled in KFB's Roadside Market program and sells Kentucky Proud products from a combination farmers market, agritourism and traditional row crop farm. Gallrein said it is sometimes difficult to measure how much effect any one promotion has on sales, but he said the Kentucky Proud program's incentives to end-users “definitely helps.”

“When you do TV, newspaper or other promotions, you never know what is helping, but it's all good,” he said. He also said the media coverage of the “buy local, eat local” has boosted sales at his market.

Segretto agreed, saying the trend to buy local has boosted the sales of Kentucky Proud products.

“The Ag department spent a lot of money getting the name out there,” Segretto said. “When people see the label in the store they are definitely interested because the trend today is to buy local.”

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Russell Poore appointed to USDA panel

KFB Director Russell Poore of Logan County was appointed by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to the new Fruit and Vegetable Industry Advisory Committee. The 25 committee members were selected from individuals nominated by their peers. Committee members represent fresh fruit and vegetable growers/shippers, fresh fruit and vegetable wholesalers, retailers, industry trade associations, importers, fruit and vegetable processors, foodservice suppliers, fresh-cut processors, brokers and state departments of agriculture. Each member is appointed to a two-year term.

Originally chartered in 2001, the advisory committee advises the Secretary of Agriculture on issues affecting the fruit and vegetable industry. In May 2009, USDA approved a new two-year charter for this committee.

KFB nominated Poore for the position. He farms 375 acres, including about 30 acres of produce. He has a road-side market and greenhouses.

Poore said the committee is “very diverse” and includes the largest strawberry producer in California, a small-scale organic producer and the head of a large raisin company. He said one of his primary issues of concern is federal food inspection programs.

“The inspection programs can be costly and have a big effect on smaller-scale operations,” he said. “I want to make



sure those programs are cost-effective.”

Poore said the committee was re-established because the last farm bill included horticulture in farm income support programs, plus due to growing concerns about food safety. The group will meet at least twice annually, he said.

DISTRICT MEASURE-THE-CANDIDATE MEETINGS

The schedule (all times are local):

District 1	March 15	7:00 p.m.	McCracken County FB Office
District 2	March 1	6:30 p.m.	Ballard Conv. Center, Madisonville
District 3	March 9	6:30 p.m.	Rough River State Park Lodge
District 4	March 29	6:30 p.m.	Barren River State Park Lodge
District 5	March 18	7:00 p.m.	Washington County Extension Office
District 6	March 15	7:00 p.m.	Florence Baptist Church
District 7	March 23	6:00 p.m.	Russell County Auditorium
District 8	March 1	7:00 p.m.	Madison County Fairgrounds
District 9	March 10	6:30 p.m.	Blue Licks State Park Lodge
District 10	March 22	6:30 p.m.	Grayson Conference Center
District 11	March 16	6:30 p.m.	Shiloh Roadhouse, London



Marion Howard (left) received the award from Morris Horn, Chairman of the Taylor County Conservation District.

TAYLOR COUNTY FB LEADER WINS CONSERVATION AWARD

Taylor County FB Vice President Marion Howard of Campbellsville was selected as the No-till Hero in the Frankfort NRCS Area in Central Kentucky. The award comes from the Kentucky Division of Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Howard also is Taylor County Conservation District Vice President and a member of the Kentucky Soybean Board.

Howard farms 850 acres in Taylor County. His operation consists of a continuous no-till rotation of corn, wheat, and soybeans. His father began no-tilling the family farm in 1971 and Howard followed suit when he purchased his first farm in 1978. Fifteen years later, when Howard began farming full time, he followed in his father's footsteps and continued using no-till. This was not only for the feasibility but he recognized early on the importance of preserving soil moisture and protecting the land by maintaining ground cover.

Soil types on his farm are made up primarily of Frankstown and Frederick silt loam, with areas of Mountainview and Nolin silt loam. Soil slopes range between 1-18 percent. "The slopes are not a problem to no-till", Howard said, "It's actually the knolls where the topsoil eroded away after years and years of plowing." Howard has devoted his farming career to improving the soil through conservation practices that include no tillage of the soil. He has also installed practices to control surface water such as diversions and waterways, as well as approximately two miles of underground tile.

He has a five-year average corn yield of 172 bushels per acre and has produced as high as 256. He has received production awards for high yields using no-till.

Jeff Harper named Director of KFB's Public Affairs Division; Susan Tanner gets new position

Jeff Harper is KFB's new Director of the Public Affairs Division and Susan Tanner is now Director of the Commodity Division.

Harper, a Mercer County native, served as Commodities Director for six years prior to becoming Interim Public Affairs Director last month. He also served as Assistant Director of Public Affairs. He came to Farm Bureau from the Governor's Office on Agricultural Policy, where he was a project analyst, following twelve years with the Revenue Cabinet.

Ms. Tanner, a Spencer County native, has been KFB's Director of Youth Development for five years. She first joined the organization 10 years ago as an intern. She holds a Degree in Public Service and Leadership from the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture.

The Public Affairs Division handles legislative and regulatory agencies, political education, policy development, and local governmental affairs work for the state's largest farm organization. The division is active on the federal, state and

local levels.

The Commodity Division was formed last year to expand services to farmers and agribusinesses, particularly with marketing and promotions. This division serves as the liaison to the various agricultural commodity groups and state and federal agriculture agencies. KFB disseminates markets information and coordinates a popular certified roadside farm markets program through the Commodity Division.

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck noted that Harper's extensive experience with state government made him an obvious choice to lead the organization's Public Affairs Division.

"Jeff knows how to work effectively in Frankfort, plus he has an extensive background in dealing with agricultural issues. That's the perfect mix," Beck said.

Ms. Tanner has a proven record of success with KFB's education, leadership and scholarship programs, he added.

"She is well suited to meet the challenges of enhancing our service to farmers and agribusinesses as the organization strives to improve net farm income."



Saying "thanks" . . .

Union County Farm Bureau held its annual Legislative Appreciation event at the home of Margaret Holt Chapman. Pictured left to right are State Senator Dorsey Ridley, State Representative John Arnold, County Vice President Gary Stenger, KFB Local Affairs Director Bryan Alvey and Communications Director B. Todd Bright.

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Beef exports continue growth

USDA forecasts the United States in 2009 will have exported 1.861 billion pounds of beef, a one-percent decrease from 2008. This is due in part to the South Korean market being closed to U.S. beef for some of the year. Higher sales to Asia continue to boost U.S. beef exports. Exports to Japan increased 19 percent year-over-year through November as U.S. beef continued to recover market share. Export growth to Vietnam (+19%) and Hong Kong (+153%) also continued. Offsetting Asian market growth has been decreased exports to the largest U.S. beef export markets, Mexico (-15%) and Canada (-6%). In 2010, exports are expected to resume growth, increasing almost ten percent over 2009.

The U.S. is expected to import 2.703 billion pounds of beef in 2009, a seven-percent increase from 2008. Most of the growth occurred in the earlier part of the year, when the U.S. dollar was relatively strong. In 2010, the U.S. is expected to import 2.795 billion pounds of beef, a three-percent increase, because of lower U.S. cow beef production.

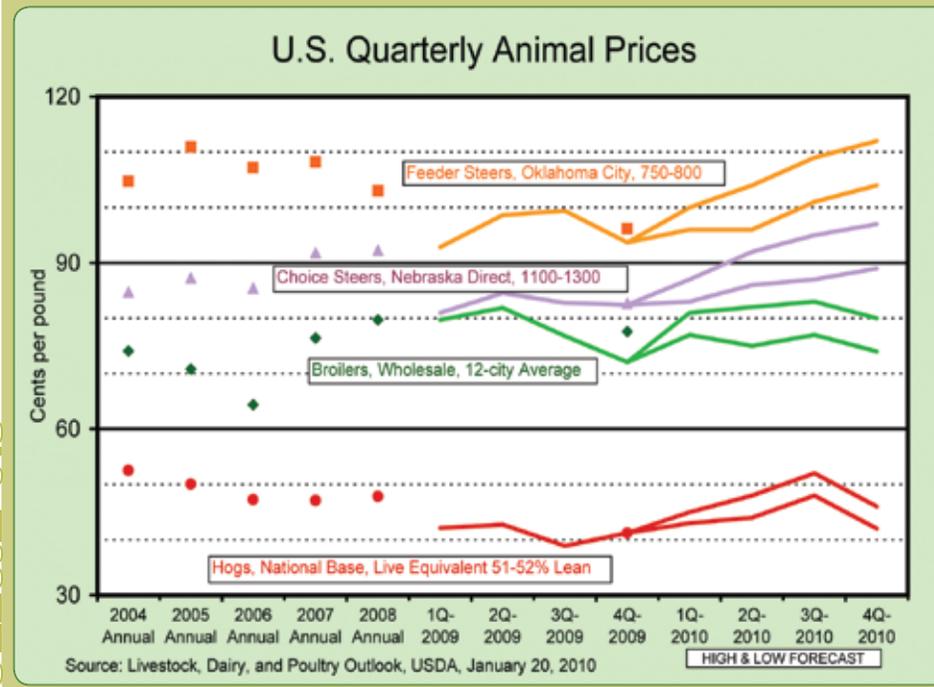
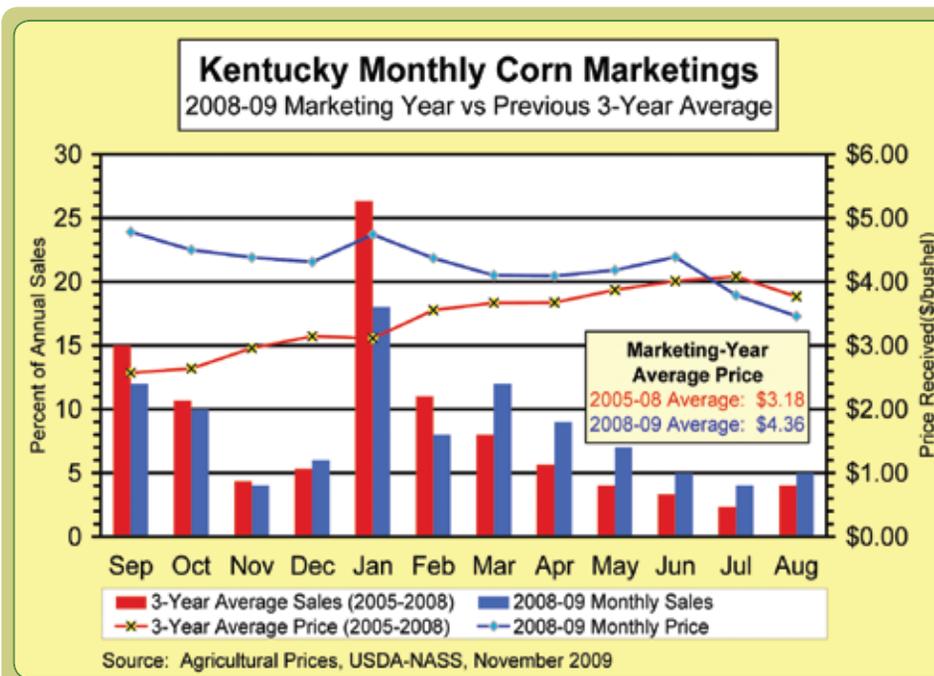
Soybean stocks are up

USDA estimated December 1 soybean stocks at 2.337 billion bushels, compared to 2.275 billion a year ago, and 2.70 billion in 2007. This manageable stocks level, in a year with record soybean production, can be attributed to record-breaking first-quarter demand for soybeans, totaling 1.16 billion bushels. Exports are leading the way as last fall's foreign trade has swelled 2009/10 shipments far above any previous year's level. 2009/10 soybean exports are forecast at a record 1.375 billion.

Export demand has also been vigorous for soybean meal and soybean oil.

Productivity gains in hogs

According to USDA, the hog industry's efforts to reduce the breeding herd have been mostly offset by larger-than-expected fall farrowings and productivity gains. After seven consecutive quarters of reduced breeding inventory, the U.S. pork industry has lowered its productive capacity by 6.1 percent. However, the fall pig crop implies a litter rate of 9.7 pigs-per-litter, significantly above 2008's rate of 9.5 pigs. U.S. pork production in 2010 is forecast at 22.6 billion lbs, 1.6 percent lower than last year. 2010 hog prices are expected to average \$44-\$48 per cwt, almost 12 percent above 2009. USDA estimated producer break-even hog prices in the mid-\$40 per cwt range.



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Scott County couple appointed to AFBF young farmer group

Daniel and Alison Smith of Scott County, winners of KFB's 2009 Excellence in Agriculture Award for young farmers, have been appointed to AFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee. This committee helps plan the YF&R competitive events at the Annual Meeting and the group's Leadership Conference. It also meets regularly to review issues of importance to young farm families.

Ag Development program is changed

The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board (KADB) approved changes to the County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP).

"The modifications are the result of input from stakeholders throughout Kentucky," stated Roger Thomas, CEO for the KADB. "The program continues to evolve as we reach the 10-year anniversary of the Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund."

CAIP was adopted in 2009 and was designed to provide farmers with incentives to encourage investments that improve current production practices and assist in diversifying farming operations. CAIP provides producers eleven investment areas from which to choose.

Changes were made to all investment areas and the program's general guidelines. The most significant changes are related to fertilizer, labor, transport equipment and the annual producer maximum. All changes were effective January 1 with all new CAIP applications.

A complete listing of the approved program changes is available at agpolicy.ky.gov.

Roadside Markets program invites participants

KFB is now enrolling participants in the 2010 Certified Roadside Farm Market program.

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

Applications for membership are available on the KFB web site kyfb.com/roadside or by calling or e-mailing to the information below. The enrollment fee for applications post-marked by December 31, 2009 is \$225; by January 15, 2010 is \$275; and by February 15, 2010 is \$300. Enrollment applications must be post-marked February 15 to guarantee a spot in the Membership Directory.

For questions please contact Kara Keeton, Director of Commodity Marketing, at (502) 495-5106 or by e-mail at kkeeton@kyfb.com.

New program adds a premium for livestock exhibitors

A new program will add value to Kentucky-bred livestock exhibited at Kentucky Department of Agriculture-sponsored livestock shows and the Kentucky State Fair.

The Kentucky Proud Livestock Tag Program will make exhibitors eligible for additional premiums in livestock shows and the state fair. The program is expected to increase sale prices for participating producers.

Producers may enroll in the program and purchase Kentucky Proud tags for their show-quality animals for \$5 per tag. The tags will make it easy to identify animals enrolled in the program and issue Kentucky Proud premiums to youth livestock exhibitors. Each tag bears the Kentucky Proud logo and an identifying number. Any animals not identified by a Kentucky Proud tag at a KDA-sponsored youth livestock show will be eligible for non-Kentucky premiums only.

The program has been launched with Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund money through the Kentucky Proud program. Proceeds from the sales of the tags will cover the Department's cost for the tags and fund the additional premiums. The KDA is conducting the program in partnership with the Kentucky Beef Network with the cooperation of the Kentucky Dairy Development Council, the Kentucky Pork Producers Association and the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office.

For more information, or to enroll in the program and purchase tags, contact the Division of Show and Fair Promotion at (502) 564-4983 or go to www.kyagr.com/marketing/fair/index.htm.

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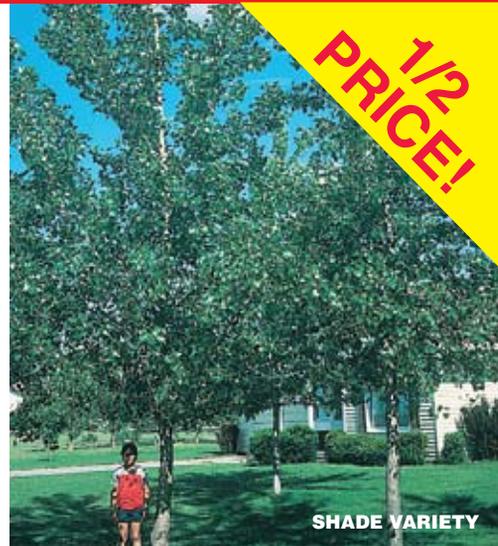
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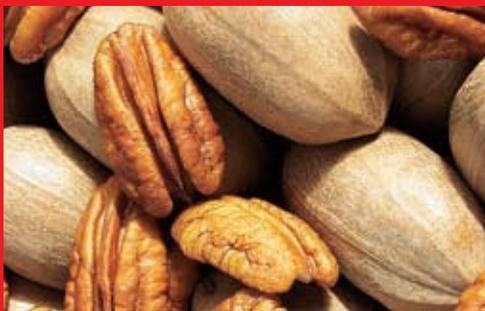


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If any item you purchased from us does not live, for a free replacement just return the original shipping label along with your written request within 1 year of receipt. Replacement guarantee is void unless the original shipping label is returned. For a refund of the purchase price, return the item and the original shipping label with correct postage affixed within 14 days of receipt.

FOUR SEASONS NURSERY
1706 Morrissey Drive DEPT. 912-5032
Bloomington, Illinois 61704

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone (____) _____
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PLEASE SEND ITEMS CHECKED BELOW:

FREE TREE

N5246 SHADE N5247 SCREEN
(Indicate variety)

(Plant Screen trees 9' apart.) One Hybrid Poplar Tree sent at no charge when you send us a paid order (any size) for Hybrid Poplars below. Only one FREE tree per customer.

HOW MANY	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	COST
	N5103	WALK ON ME	
	N5246	SHADE HYBRID POPLAR	
	N5247	SCREEN HYBRID POPLAR	
	N6214	HARDY PECANS	
	N6492	MIXED HYBRID LILIES	
	N6607	QUINAULT STRAWBERRY	

Packing & Processing \$ **2.95**
SUBTOTAL \$ _____

IL Residents add 6.25% Sales Tax \$ _____
MN Residents add 6.875% Sales Tax \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED OR CHARGED \$ _____

Check or Money Order enclosed.
 Mastercard VISA

Credit Card #: _____
Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

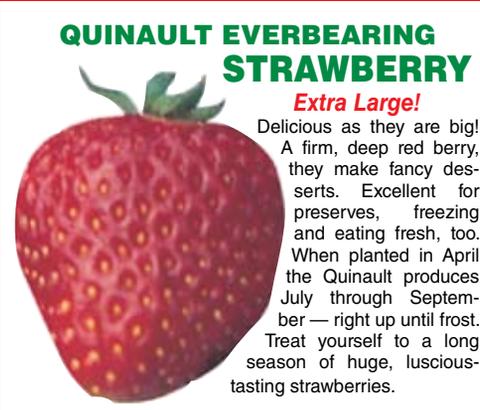


MIXED HYBRID LILIES

Create a dazzling spot of beauty!

Hardy naturalizer. Spreads quickly. Produces bigger stems and more blooms each year! Easy to grow. Plant 6-8" deep and apart in full to partial sun. We send our choice of mixed colors. 10-12 cm bulbs. Zones 3-9.

N6492 10 for \$7.98 10 for \$3.99
20 for \$14.98 20 for \$7.49



QUINAULT EVERBEARING STRAWBERRY

Extra Large!

Delicious as they are big! A firm, deep red berry, they make fancy desserts. Excellent for preserves, freezing and eating fresh, too. When planted in April the Quinault produces July through September — right up until frost. Treat yourself to a long season of huge, luscious-tasting strawberries.

N6607 25 for \$6.99
50 for \$12.99 100 for \$23.99

Order on-line at www.4SeasonsNurseries.com/quickorder.asp