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# table of CONTENTS

Legislative Report 4

Presidents/  
VP Conference 8

Congressional Tour 10

Ag Features 12-14

Markets 20

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Attacks on agriculture are coming fast and furious. According to various special interest groups, we are mistreating livestock, poisoning the environment and producing unsafe food.



Unfortunately, this nonsense requires our attention.

In Frankfort, KFB's public affairs team is working hard for legislation needed because a radical organization that wants everyone to be a vegetarian is waging a national campaign to convince people that farmers abuse their animals.

In Washington, American Farm Bureau Federation is busy defending livestock producers after a CBS News report indicated that the use of antibiotics in livestock is a threat to human health.

Many see this stuff for what it really is - rubbish from organizations with an agenda; a TV program seeking better ratings, etc. But others buy into these misinformation campaigns and sometimes that leads to problems in the public policy arena. Just ask any of the egg producers who were forced out of business in California last year.

Anyone with even a casual knowledge of agriculture is aware that farmers are just as interested as city folks in animal husbandry, a clean environment and safe food. But in this age when technology enables the world to watch what we do on our farms with just the touch of a cell phone or digital camera, it might be a good time to rededicate ourselves to "doing it right."

Do not lose sight of the fact that we're facing these challenges because of a few bad actors. A 30-second video posted on the internet can expose the one-in-a-million producer who's not doing it right and tarnish an entire industry. The bad actor that these groups occasionally dig up are bad news for all of us. We pay the price of their mistakes. We need to do a better job of identifying the bad actors and demand that they do it right or find another line of work.

We also should examine our operations to ensure we're doing everything the right way. Make sure that anyone working on your farm handles livestock, chemicals and equipment in a manner that reflects well on our industry. Operate your farm as if the whole world is watching because now, as never before, there's a possibility it is!!

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT  
KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU



## LIVESTOCK CARE BILL PROGRESSING

**M**ore than a hundred farmers from throughout the state came to a Senate Agriculture Committee meeting in Frankfort last month to show support for legislation creating a system for establishing livestock care standards in the state.

Senate Bill 105 sailed through the committee chaired by the bill's sponsor, Senator David Givens of Greensburg. Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer and State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout joined Senator Givens in explaining the measure to the committee.

Dozens of KFB state and county leaders were among those who packed the meeting room and adjacent hallway. Every region of the state was represented.

"We have the biggest show in town today," remarked Givens, "and that's great because it's agriculture."

Farmer began his remarks to the committee by quipping: "We brought reinforcements."

A top priority of KFB for this legislative

session, Senate Bill 105 creates a 14-member Livestock Care Commission which includes a KFB representative as Vice Chairman (the Ag Commissioner would be chairman). The measure gives the committee authority to establish standards for proper livestock care and also would prohibit local governments from enacting ordinances more stringent than the adopted state standards.

The proposal is in response to the continual attacks on animal agriculture from radical "animal rights" groups. Ohio established a commission via a referendum that was mandated by legislation enacted last year. Farm groups in Ohio pursued a commission to preempt the radical groups from influencing the public policy process.

The Kentucky legislation was recommended by a KFB task force chaired by KFB Director Danny Wilkinson of Adair County. In his testimony on the bill Senator Givens praised Wilkinson (who was present) for "helping us to define this issue."

Senate Bill 105 went on to pass the Senate by a 38-0 vote. It was scheduled for a hearing in the House Agriculture Committee in early March. The bill has bipartisan support but has attracted active opposition from several groups, including HSUS and the Sierra Club.

The state budget is another area of special emphasis. KFB's public affairs team continues to monitor the process in hope of gaining approval for building a new Breathitt Veterinary Center in Hopkinsville. KFB also wants to maintain the Phase One monies for agricultural development projects plus the 22.2 percent allocation of state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads.



Top left: Farm interests packed the hearing room in support of Senate Bill 105.

Bottom right: Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman David Givens spoke about his legislation along with (left) State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout and Agriculture Commissioner Richie Farmer.



**D**espite the current economic downturn, gross Kentucky agricultural receipts have either held steady or even set records, indicative of the stable and vital position agriculture holds in Kentucky's overall economy. As I write this during "Food Check-out Week," February 21-27, I want to recognize our Kentucky farmers that enable us to have the most economical food supply in the world.



Because of the importance of agriculture in Kentucky, we in the Senate decided last year to create a separate Agriculture Committee. This allows more effective debate and governance on topics ranging from crops, livestock, poultry, and their marketing, to tobacco, agricultural cooperatives, the State Fair and more. The committee is ably led by Senator David Givens who is both a farmer and a businessman.

This year, we have emphasized food supply safety and protecting quality livestock producer's investments with Senate Bill 105 which creates the Kentucky Livestock Care Standards Commission. The commission is charged with developing guidelines to address animal well-being, agriculture best management practices, and herd health. This legislation protects livestock producers in Kentucky from two extremes - the few bad actors in the industry and the animal-rights extremist groups that wish to dismantle livestock production entirely. This commission will provide common-sense, scientific standards and prevent decisions being driven by emotion.

With dairy farmers spending approximately \$4,500 per cow annually, Kentucky's 86,000 cows represent a direct investment of \$387 million in rural communities. Senate Bill 85 added the Kentucky Farm Bureau as a non-voting member of the Kentucky Milk Commission and reflects the importance of our dairy farm families to Kentucky. Both these bills are now in the House for consideration.

I commend Farm Bureau for its great work among youth and success in highlighting Kentucky products both at local Roadside Markets and outside our borders. The organization is truly the Voice of Kentucky Agriculture.

**DAVID L. WILLIAMS**  
SENATE PRESIDENT

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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# STRENGTH through SERVICE



Handling the session providing an update on state policy issues were (from left) Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper, Executive Vice President David S. Beck and legislative agents Paula Pabon and Bryan Alvey. Ms. Pabon represents KFB Insurance Company. Alvey specializes in labor, rural development and transportation issues.

## Dollars and “change” register at Presidents-VPs Conference

Civility may be in short supply in today’s society, but politeness and respect for others fortunately are still integral to the Farm Bureau culture. And so is common sense, which often is left out of the mix when public policies are crafted.

KFB President Mark Haney made those points in his keynote address at last month’s Presidents and Vice Presidents Conference to underscore why the organization should move full bore to tackle our nation’s long list of problems.

“If we’re going to be the Voice of Agriculture, we’re going to have to be the voice of reason,” he said.

Haney’s remarks concluded the annual conference which attracted some 200 county leaders. Before expressing enthusiasm about how changing preferences for food, fuel and energy present great opportunities for Kentucky farmers, Haney devoted most of his remarks to lamenting how the federal deficit threatens future prosperity.

“This nation cannot continue this spending spree,” said the Pulaski County farmer. “It is a clear threat to this nation’s future; our children and grandchildren will pay a dear price

if we don’t correct this.”

He urged the county leaders to voice their concerns to lawmakers and demand “common sense” solutions contained in a report from an AFBF Task Force. Foremost is reducing government spending, he said.

“You can either raise taxes or reduce services - - and no one wants to talk about raising taxes,” Haney said.

Among many things, the task force report recommends steps to harness “pork barrel” spending and suggests that the government reduce the deficit incrementally. KFB First Vice President John C. Hendricks was on the task force. He shares Haney’s grave concern about the nation’s staggering \$13 trillion deficit.

Ending on a bright note, Haney cited the “buy local” craze, development of biomass and renewable fuels as positive developments for Kentucky agriculture.

“I’m excited about our future,” he said.

The future was the theme of another featured speaker, AFBF Leadership Development Director Bob Wilson. He spoke about how the current generation of Farm Bureau leaders needed to adopt some new approaches to attracting

future leaders.

To make his point, Wilson outlined the significant differences between four generations of Americans: Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. Baby Boomers, those between 45 and 64 years of age, comprise the bulk of Farm Bureau leadership, he noted.

Because of this demographic, “we have a challenge in our organization; there will be a vast change in our leadership in the not-too-distant future,” Wilson said. “We have some bridging to do.”

One key, he said, is to engage the younger members in projects involving the internet or other technologies of their interest.

“There are ways the younger generations can help other than just attending meetings,” said Wilson. “Judge your county Farm Bureau by how many people are doing something – not simply by how many are at your meetings and events. If we don’t challenge these young people, they will go someplace else – to other organizations and groups.”

The relevancy of Wilson’s presentation was quite evident when only one person was standing after he asked for members of Generation Y (under 30) to stand up.

In other conference highlights

- Five KFB Directors were involved in an update on the animal welfare issue, with task force chairman Danny Wilkinson presiding. Wilkinson, who also is chairman of KFB’s Swine Advisory Committee, gave an update on proposed state legislation (Senate Bill 105) to create a Livestock Care Commission, as well as national developments. Presenting reports from their respective commodities were KFB Directors Fritz Giesecke (beef cattle), Alex Barnett (equine), Terry Rowlett (dairy) and Jay Coleman (poultry).

- A session on rural development programs featured Tom Fern, State Director of USDA’s Rural Development Department; and Sabrina Matteson, AFBF’s Director of Rural Affairs.

- A discussion of national issues included Larry Cox, the state director for Senator Mitch McConnell; Tod Griffin, Executive Director of the Agribusiness Association of Kentucky; and L. Joe Cain, KFB’s Director of National Affairs.

- KFB legislative agents Jeff Harper, Bryan Alvey and Paula Pabon gave updates on the organization’s agenda at this legislative session.

“This nation cannot continue this spending spree. It is a clear threat to this nation’s future; our children and grandchildren will pay a dear price if we don’t correct this.”



About 200 county leaders attended the 2010 conference.



The panel discussion on animal welfare issues involved (from left) Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper and KFB Directors Terry Rowlett, Danny Wilkinson, Fritz Giesecke and Jay Coleman. Wilkinson, who is chairman of KFB’s Animal Care Issues Task Force, presided.

# CONGRESSIONAL TOUR

**K**FB brought a group of about 190 members to the nation's capital for this year's Congressional Tour. The annual event afforded the opportunity to meet with the state's Congressional delegation to discuss such pressing issues as health care reform, the federal deficit, immigration reform, energy policy and environmental regulations.

Besides the legislative meetings a full agenda included a series of issues briefings plus tours of national landmarks. As always, the highlight was the annual breakfast with the Kentucky delegation. This year's renewal provided a forum to salute Senator Jim Bunning, who is retiring at the end of the year following 24 years in Congress.

Bunning's Republican colleagues made tributes and he received two standing ovations from the KFB members. His comments were spirited as usual as he criticized the Obama administration and urged the audience to take a stand against its policies on health care, energy and the economy.

"The federal government is into every aspect of your life," Bunning said sternly. "I don't think that's a healthy United States of America."

Before closing with thanks for his long friendship with the Farm Bureau family, Bunning pleaded: "Don't give America away to Washington D.C. Please, don't



Senator Jim Bunning received a standing ovation following his remarks at the breakfast. He was flanked by Senator Mitch McConnell, KFB President Mark Haney and Executive VP David S. Beck. Bunning will retire at the end of this year.

do it!"

Senator Mitch McConnell was equally adamant about the battle involving conservative and liberal positions, saying: "What's going on now is a battle for the heart and soul of this country."

House Democrats Ben Chandler and John Yarmuth weren't present for the Republican remarks to the group. Yarmuth arrived early to greet and have breakfast with his constituents but had to depart prior to the program for a meeting. Chandler had a previous commitment. Both, however, met with KFB constituents later in the day and were very gracious with their time.

Hal Rogers, the senior member of Kentucky's House delegation, was the opening speaker and set the stage for the

tribute to Bunning, whom he described as "a Kentuckian through and through."

First District Congressman Ed Whitfield singled out health care and immigration reform. He said he would file a bill to lower farmers' cost for hiring migrant labor under the H-2A guest worker program.

Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis focused on the cap-and-trade issue. Noting how it would be costly to farmers, Davis described cap-and-trade as "an economic colonization of the heartland." Both he and Second District Representative Brett Guthrie were critical of the Environmental Protection Agency's attempt to expand its authority to regulate farms under the Clean Water Act.



ABOVE: Larry Butler of Jefferson County enjoyed a lighter moment during a group visit to the office of Third District Congressman John Yarmuth (right). Also pictured, from the right of Butler, are George Deutsch of Jefferson County, Gary McGruder of Bullitt County and Jeanine and Guy Raymond of Jefferson County.



LEFT: KFB Director J. Fritz Giesecke of Hart County presented a policy manual to Second District Congressman Brett Guthrie.

BOTTOM LEFT: First District Congressman Ed Whitfield speaks with a constituent following the breakfast.

BOTTOM CENTER: KFB Director Randy Chrisman of Anderson County presented Sixth District Congressman Ben Chandler with a policy book during a constituents' meeting.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Congressman Hal Rogers noted that he has participated in nearly 30 KFB Congressional tours. "Thanks for the courtesies for all these years," he said to nearly 200 KFB members at the breakfast. He also gave a stirring tribute to retiring Senator Jim Bunning, plus continued his annual tradition of taking a group on a capitol tour.



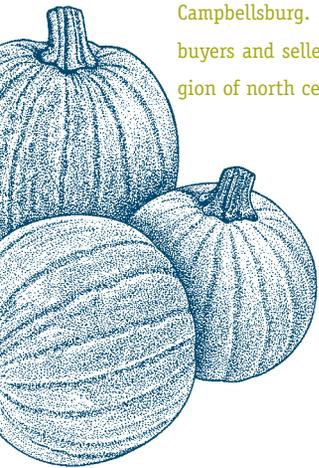
# CAP(STONE) AND TRADE

## New produce market in Henry County has lofty goals

Article and Photos By Walt Reichert



The Capstone Produce Market opened in November of last year on U. S. 421 in Campbellsburg. The auction will serve buyers and sellers in an 18-county region of north central Kentucky.



**S**hane and Mary Courtney of Bagdad are young tobacco farmers looking for other sources of income from their farm.

“We want to be diversified and not rely solely on tobacco,” said Mary. “We want to remain full-time farmers but we don’t want our future to be in the hands of the tobacco industry.”

So the Courtneys are researching their options and have chosen to put some of their eggs into the produce basket. The couple plan to start a small CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), but are also happy that this year they will have another outlet for their vegetables – Capstone Produce Market in Campbellsburg.

Capstone Produce Market – the brain-child of farmer and auctioneer David Neville – opened in November of last year with the sale of hay, straw and firewood. This spring, the auction will go full force, selling flowers in March, flowers and bedding plants in April and a full line of produce from May through October.

Neville expects to offer a market outlet for producers in an 18-county area surrounding Shelby and Henry counties and lure wholesale and retail buyers from Louisville, Lexington and northern Kentucky. Neville said the auction will offer a marketing alternative to those pro-

ducers in the area looking to diversify from tobacco.

“This area of roughly 18 counties represents only 15 percent of the counties in the state, but the farmers account for about 40 percent of tobacco production in Kentucky,” Neville said.

### Forces coming together

Neville’s Capstone Produce Market is named for his Capstone Farms, a pure-bred Angus operation in Shelby and Henry counties. Neville also has a background in sales, from running a technology business in Shelbyville in partnership with his brother, Chuck. And a couple of years ago, Neville got his auctioneers license and started an auctioneering firm, also with the Capstone name.

“I’ve been doing my homework and have seen the enormous potential of the trend to buying local produce and the forces just came together to start the produce auction,” Neville said.

He opened the auction in the former Southern States store on U. S. 421 in Campbellsburg and late last fall started selling hay, straw and firewood. Neville also spent last fall talking to potential producers and, using the Internet, making buyers aware of the market and the products that will be available. Neville has also drawn heavily on the experiences of the successful produce markets around the state, including the Lincoln County Produce Auction, which last year did \$1.7 million in sales, according to produce manager Lloyd Shrock. The auction calendar at Capstone will roughly follow the calendar of the auction in Lincoln County (see box for more information).

Neville said Capstone will train potential producers. He has had several meetings with producers, where extension agents, experts from the University of Kentucky and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, and experienced growers have offered advice about everything from what to grow, how to grow it, and

what to put it in

Neville said producers who grow locally will also be able to brand their products with the market's GroLocal label.

"Buyers who use the stamp can tell consumers, if they open a menu, that the product they order was grown locally," Neville said.

Neville said the market will also educate producers about growing food safely. At a meeting in Shelbyville in December, Adam Watson, with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, told producers cost-share money is available to help them implement the department's Good Agricultural Practices program. The program is intended to assess a participant's efforts to minimize the risk of contamination of fresh fruits, vegetables and other commodities.

Neville expects many of the producers for the Capstone Produce Market will come from the nearby Amish community that also supplies some of the labor on the auction floor.

"I don't believe they will be the biggest producers but they will be the most committed," Neville said.

### Ups and downs

Though the Courtneys see the produce market as an alternative to tobacco, they know that growing vegetables will have its ups and downs.

"We were told that safety comes from having a variety of products and a variety of markets," Courtney said.

Mike Lewis of Carroll County said he sees the Capstone auction both as an outlet for his own eight acres of vegetables but also as a place to buy locally-grown products for the farmers market in Carroll County, where he is the manager.

Jill Bishop of Harrodsburg said her two sons, Wyatt, 17, and Landon, 15, hope to expand on the successful 2009 season they had growing and selling corn, cantaloupes, watermelons, green beans and tomatoes. They look to Capstone as another option to selling at the local farmers market and at a roadside stand.

"Having an outlet for our produce will

allow us to experiment and see which direction our sons will pursue," Bishop said. "The produce auction gives us that avenue like the tobacco auction floor had in previous years. We can take our product and know that the buyers will be there and that we can take a check to the bank."

Shelby County Extension Agent for Agriculture Brett Reese warned producers that sometimes that check may be smaller than they would like.

"Produce is one of the commodities that sells on a truly open market," Reese said. "Prices can go up and down. And

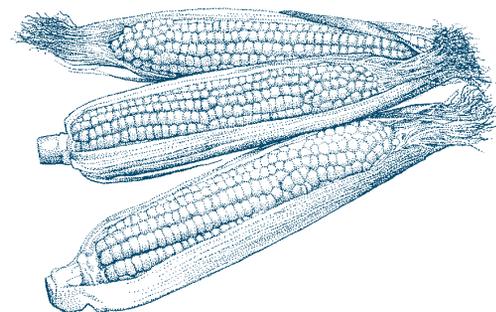


Jim O'Donoghue and his son, Clayton, watched David Neville attach a forage analysis to a load of hay before the auction got underway at Capstone Produce Market.

the problem is when you have too many tomatoes, everybody else has too many tomatoes too. And, like any business, the producers may have to take lower prices for awhile before the market catches on."

But Reese also said that the potential is there for good returns to produce growers in the state of Kentucky and that the auction can be a good place to sell quality produce.

"If they're a good manager, a good farmer, they will do well because there's not nearly enough produce grown to meet the demand," Reese said. "They have to understand that it's a lot of work. But it's the only other crop with the potential to meet or exceed the income from tobacco."





# G

## uiding the flock

Ray Bowman's office is promoting sheep and goats

It's lambing time on Diana Anson's farm in northern Shelby County. Three Border Leicester lambs are on the ground already and a dozen or more are due within the next few days.

And if she has an orphan lamb, she has a readily available food source – goat's milk from her herd of six does.

"They do so much better on goat's milk than they do the artificial stuff," Anson said. "And I've taught myself to make cheese; I love goat cheese."

Anson is one of about 1,000 sheep producers in the state and one of about 4,000 goat producers. Though goat production – for meat, not milk – has expanded dramatically in the last two decades to meet the demand from the growing ethnic population in the state, sheep numbers are a fraction of what they were during the peak production years just after World War II. And even though the goat herd has expanded steadily, the state produces only about half of the goat meat needed to meet demand.

In a state where farming has traditionally meant tobacco, cattle and horses,

sheep and goat production remains something of a stepchild. Ray Bowman wants to change that.

Bowman is executive director of the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office, based in Frankfort. The mission of the office is to educate farmers about the advantages of sheep and goat production and help current producers turn a profit.

"Traditionally, Kentucky agriculture was never thought of except in terms of tobacco, horses and maybe cattle," Bowman said. "The potential of sheep and goats has not been recognized. We exist for the two industries that previously didn't have a voice."

The Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office opened in 2007 with initial funding through the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy. The office is overseen by the Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers and the Kentucky Goat Producers organizations. Bowman, retired from state government, was hired as executive director.

Bowman has walked the walk. He has raised meat goats on his farm and held

Article and Photos by Walt Reichert

ABOVE: Shepherd Diana Anson watches her Border Leicester ewes clean up alfalfa hay. Anson shows sheep and sells the wool to a processor in Missouri.

FAR RIGHT: Dr. Ken Andries and Ray Bowman (with hat) look over the flock of goats on the Kentucky State University research farm near Frankfort.

offices in state and national goat producer organizations.

"I was goaty when goaty wasn't cool," Bowman said.

These days, Bowman's family raises Katahdin hair sheep.

Bowman and staff developed a website, [www.kysheepandgoat.org](http://www.kysheepandgoat.org) and is in the process of creating a quarterly publication aimed at sheep and goat producers in the southeast region. Tentatively called "Hoofbeats," the publication will offer producers educational materials and a chance to advertise their flocks and products. Regional associations can advertise upcoming events.

Bowman is also on worldwide radio promoting sheep and goats. Since September of 2009, he has hosted a radio show through a company in Atlanta that broadcasts via Internet. Bowman interviews experts in the sheep and goat industries and occasionally broadcasts live from national and regional sheep and goat conferences. The show, which broadcasts on Thursdays at noon and again on Saturday mornings, can be accessed at [www.radiosandysprings.com/showpages/sheepandgoatphp](http://www.radiosandysprings.com/showpages/sheepandgoatphp).

"It requires a little bit of organization and time, but it's an opportunity to promote Kentucky sheep and goats all over the world," Bowman said.

While most of the sheep and goat production in the state is focused on meat, Bowman's office is also promoting fiber and wool. This year, the office is sponsoring the first Kentucky Sheep and Fiber Festival in Lexington.

Bowman said the Kentucky Sheep and Development Office will promote every aspect of the sheep and goat industries in the state.

"We're working to support everybody involved, from the producers to the stock yards to the slaughter houses and the people in the fiber industry," Bowman said. "There are so many things these industries touch, it's incredibly important to be at the table of Kentucky agricultural policy."

Bowman and livestock experts at state universities say the sheep and goat industries in the state are poised to become major agricultural players with a little boost from university research, some readjusting of attitudes and some skillful marketing.

Sheep and goats are a natural comple-

ment to the state's large beef cattle industry, Bowman said. Goats can and are being used to clear unwanted species, such as multiflora rose, kudzu and bush honeysuckle from pastures. Sheep, in combination with cattle, improve pastures because the two species' grazing habits differ, and a flock can be added to the beef herd without increasing pasture acreage.

"It requires a little bit more management, but the two create an incredible symbiosis that hasn't been taken advantage of," Bowman said. He also said sheep and goats are a natural to graze the hilly lands and small farms of eastern Kentucky, many of which used to depend upon tobacco.

Farmers can also take advantage of the good demand for goat meat and strong prices, said University of Kentucky Extension Goat Specialist Terry Hutchens.

"Goat prices are high right now and likely to continue to be high," Hutchens said. "What the state could use is more, larger producers, those with herds of 400 to 800 does."

While the state's dairy goat herd is limited to four certified dairies, interest in making goat cheese is growing, Hutchens said. UK offers a

cheesemaking school for up to 20 participants; the March program filled up in two weeks.

At Kentucky State University's research farm near Frankfort, Dr. Ken Andries and associates are researching ways to help farmers cope with some of the challenges of raising goats in Kentucky. He has studied pasture stocking rates, advantages of fall vs. spring kidding (no difference except for better conception rates in the spring), and organic vs. nonorganic sources of selenium.

One of the major challenges of raising goats is predator control, and Andries has found donkeys effective in keeping the

herd safe from dog and coyote packs.

Another challenge, to both goat and sheep producers, is parasite control, especially control of the stomach worm, or barber pole worm. As worms gain resistance to anthelmics currently on the market, producers are turning to breeding efforts to produce goats resistant or tolerant to worms. At KSU, Andries has introduced Spanish goat genetics into the largely Boer goat herd to test parasite resistance. The Spanish goats, while not as meaty as Boers, have more natural resistance, he said.

Hutchens said UK's study of parasite resistance in goats shows "that ultimately producers are going to have to select animals with some resistance."

Professor of Animal Sciences at the University of Kentucky Dr. Debra Aaron said sheep producers, too, battle parasite loads in a state with a warm, wet climate



such as Kentucky's. She said sheep producers also need to learn to selectively worm animals to keep down parasite resistance to anthelmics.

But while parasites and predators are a problem for sheep producers, the number one challenge they face is a lack of shearers in the state, Aaron said. That, coupled with low prices for medium grade wool, makes it difficult to profitably harvest wool from the traditional meat breeds, such as Suffolk and Hampshires.

Bowman said he hopes the answer to the sheep shearing shortage lies with the UK Sheep Shearing School.

# Legislators check in for “Check-Out Day”



To mark Food Check-Out Day, KFB Women’s Committee Chairperson Frieda Heath presented state officials with a gift basket of Kentucky products. Pictured are Governor Steve Beshear, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman David Givens and House Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom McKee.

“**F**ood Check-Out Week” is still going strong as an effective way to promote how Americans benefit from the work of farmers.

The event was initiated 14 years ago to put a spotlight on the low cost of food in the United States. While that remains the primary message, Farm Bureau also is stressing nutrition and value in the food supply.

KFB goes a step further, marking the occasion to also show appreciation to state lawmakers for their continuing support of our agriculture industry. KFB staff distributed gift baskets of Kentucky products to legislators and other state officials to signify Food Check-Out Week, which was February 21-27. KFB Women’s Committee Chairwoman Frieda Heath was on hand to greet the recipients and explain the purpose of the event.

Meanwhile, County Farm Bureaus held a variety of events such as distributing materials at supermarkets or schools, disseminating information through local media or providing food to charitable organizations.

“Check-Out Week is a good opportunity

to remind everyone of how they benefit from our affordable food supply,” said Mrs. Heath. “Without question we have the best food system in the world. Americans pay far less for food than those in most nations. We take this opportunity to remind people of this.”

On the national level AFBF is promoting how consumers can learn to shop effectively to put nutritious meals on the table with lower costs. AFBF has developed and distributed materials dedicated to helping consumers make healthier food choices.

Still, the most powerful message is that food remains a bargain, even during these tough economic times. USDA estimates that the average American spends about 11 percent of disposable income on food, which is far below the share for housing, health care and some other necessities. And while Americans can work about two months to earn enough money to pay their annual food bill, it takes twice as long to pay taxes for the year.

The combination of the incredible efficiency of American farm production and federal policies that protect the economic viability of our agriculture industry make



food a bargain in the United States. As a result, Americans have more money to spend on other things, which boosts the overall economy and quality of life.

# Quite a Prize

Shane Wiseman of Clark County received 250 hours free use of a Kubota tractor for being named a finalist in the 2009 Outstanding Young Farm Family program. He recently was presented with the tractor at Amburgey's Farm Machinery in Mount Sterling. Pictured from left are KFB Young Farmer Program Director Jay McCants, Kubota Regional Sales Manager Don Barker, Wiseman and Kenny Amburgey, owner of Amburgey's Farm Machinery.



## Capping off a meeting

KFB Directors (from left) David McGlone, David Chappell and Terry Rowlett presented Fourth District Congressman Geoff Davis with a "Don't Cap Our Future" cap as part of the initiative to show opposition to the proposed energy bills that could be costly for farm families. Representative Davis supports KFB's position, describing "cap-and-trade" as "an economic colonization of the heartland." The KFB Directors discussed a variety of issues with the congressman, who describes himself as "kind of a populist at heart."



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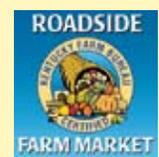
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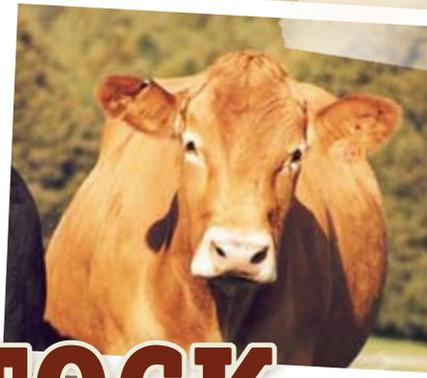


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## Three veterinarians are first participants in incentives program

**D**r. Patricia Davis of Cynthiana, Dr. Angela Olt of Greensburg and Dr. Ryan Wonderlich of Shelbyville are the first to be enrolled in Kentucky's Large/Food Animal Veterinary Incentive Program. The program provides assistance in repaying student loans.

Kentucky Farm Bureau's Education Foundation is administering the program on behalf of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Foundation, which launched the initiative after receiving a \$100,000 donation for the purpose of encouraging large animal practice in the state. The Kentucky Agricultural Development Board later approved a \$1 million investment for the program.

Recipients must be in the first or second year of practice in Kentucky and working in a practice that devotes at least half of its time to large/food animals. They must have a current outstanding balance on a student loan through a lending institution.

Dr. Davis is a 2009 graduate of Tuskegee University who is practicing at the Harrison Veterinary Clinic in Cynthiana. She graduated in the top three percent of her class at Bourbon County High School and studied Biology at Western Kentucky University before enrolling at Tuskegee University in Alabama. Tuskegee and Auburn University have an arrangement with the state of Kentucky to accept a number of Kentucky students each year. (Kentucky does not have a School of Veterinary Medicine)

Dr. Olt has a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from St. George's University plus a Masters in Animal Science from UK and a B.S. in Agriculture from Western. She practices at the Shuffett Animal Clinic in Greensburg and lives on a Green County farm with her husband.

Dr. Wonderlich has a practice in Shelbyville. He has a Doctorate Degree from Auburn University and received an undergraduate degree from Western. He's a native of Shelby County and was part of a 4-H Club national champion dairy judging team.

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## Cattle numbers steady; breeding herd down

The Kentucky cattle and calf inventory for January 1 was estimated at 2.30 million head, unchanged from a year earlier. However, there were fewer beef cows and milk cows in the total herd. The beef cow inventory was estimated at 1.07 million head, down four percent, and the 2010 milk cow inventory was down seven percent to 80,000 head.

Kentucky producers held 150,000 head of beef replacement heifers on January 1, down 6.2 percent from 2009. Other heifers and steers showed a significant increase in inventory, jumping 12.3 percent to 365,000 head; USDA attributes this increase in part to plentiful forage supplies. Calves less than 500 lbs. were estimated at 510,000 head, an increase of 20,000 from the 2009 estimate. The 2009 calf crop was estimated at 1.03 million calves, a decrease of 40,000 from the previous year estimate. Bulls 500 lbs. and over numbered 75,000 head, unchanged from last year.

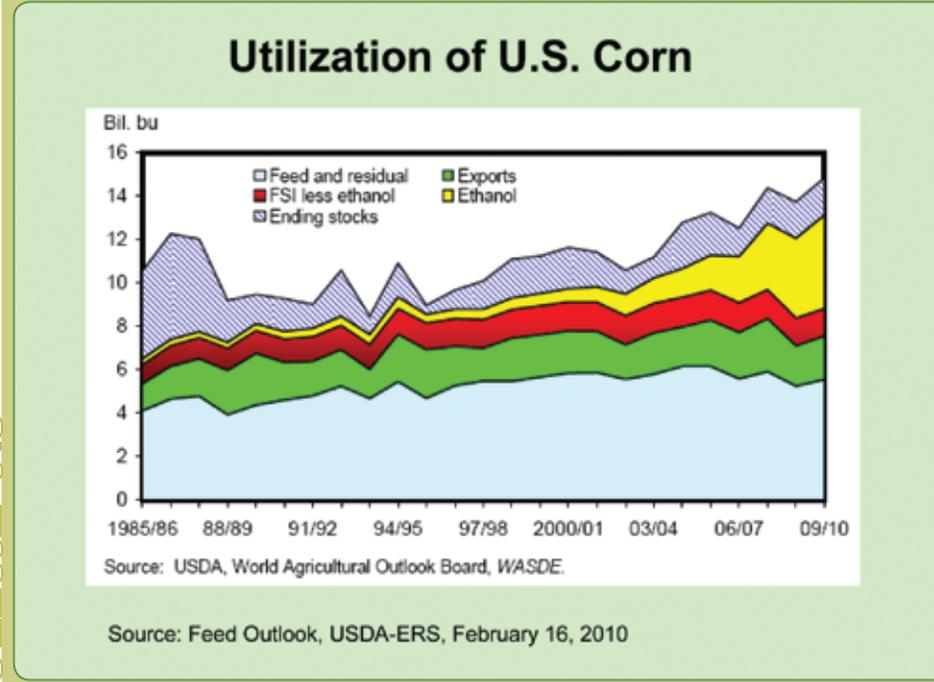
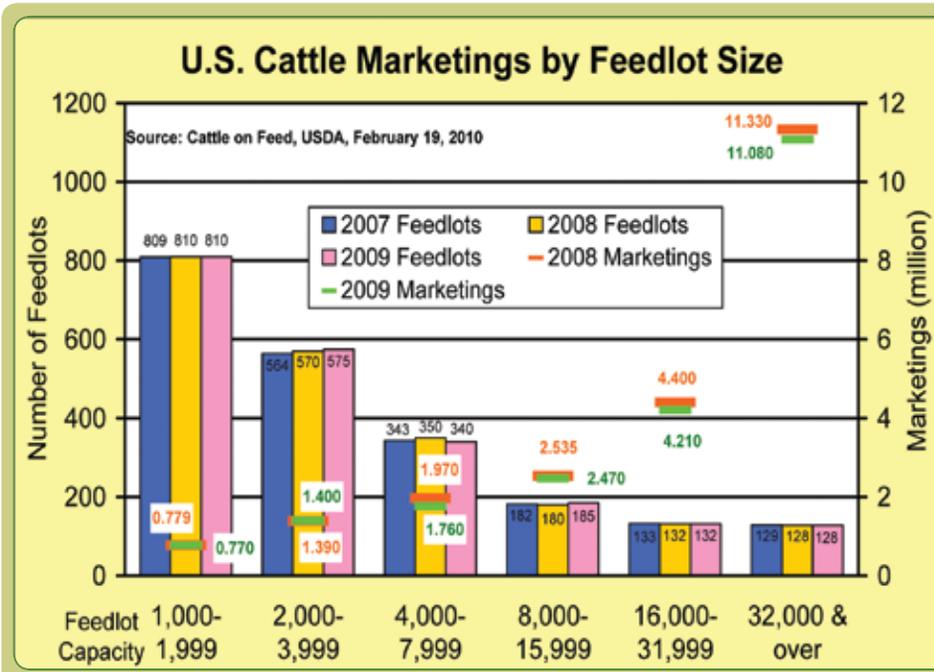
Nationally, the total cattle herd declined nearly one percent to 93.701 million head. The number of beef cows and the 2009 calf crop were both one percent less than reported a year earlier.

## Grain storage is up

USDA statistics show that Kentucky producers added five million bushels of on-farm grain storage capacity during the twelve months ending December 1, 2009. At 190.0 million bushels, this is the largest on-farm estimate since storage reached a low of 150.0 million bushels in 2002. Commercial off-farm storage totaled 66.0 million bushels, unchanged from December 1, 2008. However, the number of facilities declined by five to 180.

## Crops top \$2.4 billion

Field crops produced by Kentucky farmers in 2009 are preliminarily valued at \$2.425 billion by USDA. This is up from \$2.255 billion in 2008 and \$1.810 billion in 2007. Corn for grain, valued at \$711.6 million, continued to be Kentucky's number one cash crop, accounting for 29 percent of the total crop value. Ranked second in value at \$657.7 million was soybeans, up sharply from \$476.1 million in 2008. The "all hay" crop fell to third place with a value of \$569.7 million; this was \$26.3 million higher than the 2008 crop. Of the total hay value, alfalfa contributed 20.5 percent. The 2009 tobacco crop value of \$383.2 million was nearly unchanged from 2008. Burley's portion totaled \$274.1 million, up from \$242.6 million in 2008.



charts

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## Farmer of Year contest begins

Applications for the Kentucky Farmer of the Year Contest are being accepted. This program rewards farmers for their commitment to excellence in the agriculture industry and their efficiency in farming practices, sound financial management, and leadership in civic organizations. The winner will represent Kentucky in the Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest, the South's most prestigious agricultural award, later this year.

The Southeastern Farmer of the Year program was started in 1990 by Swisher International and the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition. Since its inception, more than \$800,000 has been awarded to state and overall winners in this contest. Ten southeastern states currently participate in this regional awards program.

The contest is open to all farmers older than 21 years of age. Interested farmers may obtain an application from their county Farm Bureau office, Area Program Director, or at kyfb.com. All completed entries must be postmarked by April 16.

## USDA predicting rise in 2010 farm income

Net farm income is forecast to be \$63 billion in 2010, up \$6.7 billion or 11.8 percent from 2009.

The 2010 forecast is \$1.4 billion below the average of \$64.5 billion in net farm income earned in the previous 10 years. Still, the \$63 billion forecast for 2010 remains the fifth largest amount of income earned in U.S. farming. Farm income exceeded \$80 billion in 2004 and 2008 and topped \$70 billion in 2005 and 2007.

Total production expenses in 2010 are forecast to rise to \$281.4 billion, \$0.7 billion (0.3 percent) higher than a revised forecast of \$280.7 billion in 2009.

## Animal ID program is scrapped

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the Agriculture Department will develop a new, flexible framework for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and will undertake several other actions to further strengthen its disease prevention and response capabilities.

"After concluding our listening tour on the National Animal Identification System in 15 cities across the country, receiving thousands of comments from the public and input from states, tribal nations, industry groups, and representatives for small and organic farmers, it is apparent that a new strategy for animal disease traceability is needed," Vilsack said. "I've decided to revise the prior policy and offer a new approach to animal disease traceability with changes that respond directly to the feedback we heard."

Among the changes, NAIS will only apply to animals moved in interstate commerce and will be administered by the states and tribal nations to provide more flexibility. It will also encourage the use of lower-cost technology and be implemented transparently through federal regulations and the full rulemaking process.

## Scientist critical of CBS report on antibiotics

Dr. Scott Hurd, an associate professor of veterinary diagnostic and production animal medicine at Iowa State University and a former USDA deputy undersecretary for food safety, provided a scientific response to the antibiotics stories aired this week by "CBS Evening News."

Hurd's report clearly points out the inaccuracies in the report by CBS anchor Katie Couric that was highly critical of the use of antibiotics in livestock.

In August, AFBF joined other organizations who wrote to the Obama administration stressing the safety of antibiotics. The groups said:

"The bottom line for on-farm antibiotic use is this: Farmers and ranchers strive daily to provide best possible management of their animals through superior genetics, nutrition, veterinary care, housing and handling. Optimal animal health and welfare leads to production of safe, affordable and abundant food, critical to U.S. food security. Maintaining the health of U.S. herds and flocks requires farmers and ranchers to have all approved safe and effective technologies, including animal health products, available to us.

However, despite the unsubstantiated allegations surrounding these uses, no conclusive scientific studies have been offered demonstrating the use of antibiotics on farms contributes significantly to an increase in human resistance. In fact, a growing body of evidence shows just the opposite, namely the responsible, professional use of these products reduces pathogens in and on foods, enhancing animal welfare while not contributing to resistance."

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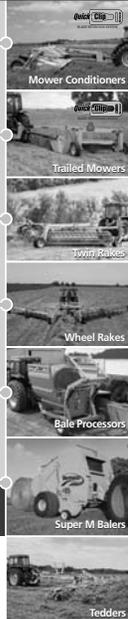
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Hardy naturalizer that spreads quickly. Produces bigger stems and more blooms each year. Scatter in an informal setting for a dazzling spot of beauty. Plant 6-8" deep and apart in full to partial sun. We send our choice of mixed colors. 10-12 cm bulbs. Zones 3-9.

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If you love strawberries but don't like to pick them, grow Quinaults. THEY ACTUALLY GROW BIG AS TEA CUPS! And they're just as delicious as they are big. These firm, deep red berries make fancy "restaurant" desserts. Excellent for preserves, freezing and eating fresh, too. When planted in April, Quinaults will produce July through September — right up until frost! Treat yourself to big luscious berries all season.

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*A carefree naturalizer!*

(*Hemerocallis*) A non-demanding cover for steep slopes banks and other hard to mow areas. Plant along roadways, walks and fences. One plant produces 50 or more charming 4-5" blooms a season. Spreads quickly. Grows to about 2' tall. Mixed colors.

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*Cover bare spots with color!*

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	N6492	Mixed Hybrid Lilies	
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