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MARCH 2013 • VOL. 12, NO. 2



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The photolane.com

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farmers rarely receive the astounding amount of positive attention generated by that Super Bowl commercial featuring Paul Harvey's "So God Made A Farmer" narrative. Outside of personal perils such as crop-killing weather catastrophes or a crippling farm economy, farmers are largely overlooked. You just don't hear much about them. But that's okay with them; they're too busy farming to worry about public relations.



Agriculture organizations like Farm Bureau, however, are very concerned about public perceptions of farmers and the agriculture industry as a whole. Our farmer members expect us to represent them effectively in the public relations world, as well as in the public policy arena. March brings the annual observation of "National Agriculture Week," an occasion in which farm groups make a special effort to tell consumers about how the industry contributes to our quality of life.

While Paul Harvey's popular tribute justifiably extols the many virtues of farmers, we also can point to the many outstanding achievements stemming from their work producing our food and fiber. As Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack pointed out recently in his remarks at the American Farm Bureau's annual meeting, the productivity gains of U.S. farmers over the past few decades are rivaled only by the high-tech industry. And agriculture does much more to strengthen our nation, including providing a robust export situation which reduces our nation's trade deficit.

But perhaps the most important point is that because of our remarkable agriculture industry, citizens spend a smaller percentage of their income on food than those from any industrialized nation. This means our farmers are, in effect, providing us with a bonus we can spend on other things, thereby creating more jobs and more economic activity.

Paul Harvey greatly respected farmers for what they do. He, in fact, owned a farm in Missouri and was a Farm Bureau member and a regular spokesperson for several farm commodity groups and agribusinesses. He was an incredibly effective ambassador for farmers. We could use more like him.

MARK HANEY

PRESIDENT

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR KENTUCKY AG IS RELEASED

The Kentucky Agricultural Council (KAC) unveiled its five-year strategic plan for agriculture at a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda that included Governor Steve Beshear, Agriculture Commissioner James Comer and the chairmen of the House and Senate Ag Committees. KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck, who is on the KAC Board of Directors, was among a sizeable group of state agricultural officials on hand to see the plan presented to the state government leaders.

Governor Beshear praised the plan and

the KAC, commending the once-stagnant organization for a revitalization that has enabled it to “reclaim the mantle for agricultural planning.”

“This strategic plan is not just about improving our farms and helping our farmers; it’s about strengthening their place in our communities, improving quality of life and economic vitality across Kentucky,” Governor Beshear said in a news release. “This plan for Kentucky’s agriculture community is a strong and thoughtful document that, when implemented, will help secure a bright future for

our farm families.”

KAC established a task force on the future of agriculture with representatives from its 80-plus member organizations. The group had three co-chairs: Keith Rogers, 4-H Foundation; Todd Clark, Council for Burley Tobacco; and Sharon Furches, Kentucky Women in Agriculture. Clark is immediate past president of Fayette County FB, Mrs. Furches is the current president of Calloway County FB and Rogers is a former president of Hardin County FB.

For more than a year, KAC’s task force met and held public forums to gather input from across the Commonwealth to guide the strategic plan. The 2013-2018 strategic plan is a follow-up to the 2007-2012 plan, which was presented to Governor Beshear early in his first term. Many of the action items from the earlier plan have been accomplished.

Governor Beshear said the initial plan “told me that agriculture was reacting to change and, in fact, embracing that change. Over the past five years we’ve seen what we can do. Now it’s time to roll up our sleeves and get to work again.”

Comer said he was especially encouraged by the plan’s recommendations for supporting new and young farmers and enhancing ag education.

“It’s so important that we focus on the future and the next generation,” Comer said. “There are so many opportunities for farmers in Kentucky. I look forward to working on our (KDA’s) part of the plan.”

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Paul Hornback concurred about the opportunities, crediting the Ag Development fund with fueling significant progress. “It’s amazing where we’ve come in the past 10 years,” said Hornback, a Shelby County farmer who served on KFB’s Board of Directors for many years. The progress, he added, proves that “farmers are willing to adapt.”

House Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom McKee said he could be counted on to support the plan.

He too cited the advances stemming from the ag development fund’s establishment in 2001.

“I know what we can do” when plans and resources are in place, he said.

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN INCLUDES SEVEN CORE STRATEGIES WITH RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO DRIVE KENTUCKY’S PROGRESS. THEY ARE:

### **Next Generation Farming**

Make farming attractive and accessible to the next generation of both full-time and part-time aspirants, including those from diverse, non-traditional groups including retirees, women, minorities and urban dwellers.

### **New Markets Identification & Development**

Increase on-farm incomes and strengthen economic vitality of rural areas through continuous identification and development of new market opportunities.

### **Regional Agricultural & Rural Community Development**

Encourage region-specific agricultural development projects and initiatives through funding from the Agricultural Development Board.

### **Agricultural Education**

Promote, advocate for and expand the number of schools offering Agricultural Education programs by linking the contribution of Agricultural Education to “Unbridled Learning” College & Career Readiness For All, Kentucky’s new accountability model.

### **Consumer**

#### **Education & Outreach**

Engage with Kentucky consumers to increase their trust in the state’s Agricultural producers & products. Build consumer appreciation of the benefits of agriculture economically to the state as a whole and at the individual county level, and in terms of its role in ensuring the sustainability of Kentucky’s culture and a rural lifestyle.

#### **Government Policies, Initiatives & Programs**

Develop policies and funding streams designed to support the overall health (economic & environmental) of farms in Kentucky, as well as lead to increased net farm income. Ensure that all Kentucky Agricultural Development Fund (KADF) proceeds are invested with a purpose of improving the net farm income.

### **Policy-Maker**

#### **Education & Outreach**

Ensure all legislators and policy-makers at local, state and national levels understand the economic and community impact of Kentucky’s agricultural sector — “an implementation plan for the Strategic Plan.”



Since January 1 of this year, it has been my privilege to become associated with the Kentucky State Fair Board and its stakeholders. This is a wonderful opportunity, and I have never felt more welcomed than here in Kentucky. I grew up in western Oklahoma and have farm and agricultural roots. I was in both the 4-H and FFA programs there. This state reminds me a lot of that time and place, and I am happy to be here and to now call Kentucky home.



I am fortunate to have worked in several facilities over the past 30 years. My experience includes Convention Centers, Arenas, Theatres, Stadiums and Conference Centers. I have had the opportunity to work with the Olympics and have owned my own business. My experience and skills have prepared me for this opportunity with the Kentucky State Fair Board. I look forward to working with Kentucky Farm Bureau and the Commonwealth's agriculture community through the board.

My focus for the Kentucky State Fair Board is to further our purpose of advancing Kentucky's convention and tourism industry, and the agriculture industry, while honoring the heritage of our agricultural roots. Included in our purpose is the promise is to deliver world class service to our clients and their attendees by living our core values of integrity, service, courage and accountability. Kentucky Farm Bureau is an integral part of helping us fulfill our purpose. Whether it is helping to attract and maintain business such as the National FFA Convention and the Kentucky Farm Bureau Beef Expo, or growing the National Farm Machinery Show, the Kentucky State Fair and the North American International Livestock Expo, we look to you, your involvement and your leadership as we strive to serve our agriculture community and our Commonwealth.

## RIP RIPPETOE

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Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all.

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"The Voice of Kentucky Agriculture"

kyfb.com

# PRESIDENTS CONFERENCE

Getting members to utilize the member benefits available to them has been a continual concern of KFB leaders over the years. Despite KFB's promotional efforts, many members apparently aren't aware of the various discounts available to them on products and services.

"It's the best-kept secret in Farm Bureau," lamented KFB Director Kim McCoy of Cumberland County during a presentation at the annual Presidents and Vice Presidents Conference last month.

McCoy, who is Vice Chairman of KFB's Member Benefits Advisory Committee, was part of a panel discussion to encourage county Farm Bureaus to offer localized member benefits programs. He was joined by Mercer County Agency Manager Leon Mayo, whose county has a program with 28 options for its members; and Fayette County FB Executive Director Carrie Johnson, whose county actively promotes the KFB program and intends to start one of its own.

McCoy expressed frustration about the situation.

"We have an excellent program with 34 benefits; using them can easily pay for your (annual) membership dues," he said. "But if you poll our associate members, most don't know much about the benefits."

Noting his past service as both a President and Vice President of Cumberland County FB, McCoy urged the county leaders to appoint active member benefits committees and to encourage the county office personnel to "talk up" the benefits.

"Nothing beats personal testimonies," he said. "Get out there in the counties and talk about the member benefits. Ask yourself what you can do to boost the program. It's a valuable resource for everyone."

Cumberland County, he said, has put member benefits "on the top burner" and plans to develop a local program.

Both he and Mayo pointed out that a vibrant member benefits program could

prompt a member to retain membership even if switching insurance.

Mercer County's program "is a win-win" for all parties, Mayo said.

Mayo, who has been a KFB agent for 29 years, agreed about word-of-mouth advertising.

"In our office it's all about promotion," he told the county leaders. "You've got to sell your staff on why you are doing it, why it's important, why it helps you."

He said several more Mercer County businesses want to be included in their program.

"They know it's a plus for them to be associated with Farm Bureau. They get some great advertising."

Ms. Johnson said it's important to have support from the insurance office personnel. "It's good to get the agency managers and the CSRs to talk about it on the phone" calls from members, she said, adding that she often is questioned about the membership fee. "They ask, 'what do I get for this?'" she said.

The two-day conference also featured sessions on tax issues, communications resources, policy issues and farm vehicle regulations. It kicked off with motivational speaker J. Alan Williams, who stressed the value of teamwork, humility and being selfless while working in a team environment. "Individualism is a problem with being a good teammate," he said. Later, he referenced a quote from Hall-of-Fame basketball coach John Wooden: "Isn't it amazing what people can accomplish when no one wants to get the credit?"

Williams made his points with several

stories about his days as a walk-on basketball player at Wake Forest University. He has written a popular book titled "Walk-On" which is available to county Farm Bureaus in bulk at a discount rate. For information go to [www.teammatesmatter.com](http://www.teammatesmatter.com).

KFB President Mark Haney addressed the group at breakfast on the closing day. He encouraged the county leaders to stay



County Farm Bureau leaders listen to a presentation at the annual conference.

the course in assuring that the organization is driven at the grassroots level by policy development and activism.

"So many other organization are successful, but they can't say they are grassroots -- they build their policies at the top and move them down the chain," Haney said. "We can never do that -- we'd lose our effectiveness."

After providing overviews of several pressing issues (farm labor, farm bill, etc.), Haney assured the local leaders that KFB management would never lose sight of the needs of county Farm Bureaus.

"We realize the importance of the decisions we make (at the state level) and how they can affect everyone in the Farm Bureau chain," he said. "Believe me, we realize this is not a game; that this is serious business and many people can be impacted by our decisions."



ABOVE: KFB Member Benefits Director Dwight Greenwell presided over a session with a panel consisting of (from left) Mercer County Agency Manager Leon Mayo, KFB Director Kim McCoy and Fayette County FB Executive Director Carrie Johnson.

MIDDLE: Motivational speaker J. Alan Williams stressed the importance of teamwork and unselfishness.

BOTTOM: Kentucky State Police Public Affairs Officer DeWayne S. Koch spoke about vehicle enforcement.

## NEW INCENTIVES PROGRAM

*KFB President Mark Haney and KFB Insurance Company Executive Vice President Brad Smith announced a new program to reward agencies and county Farm Bureaus based on profitability.*

*The “County Insurance Services Program” is now in effect to provide new incentives for agency performance, with the first payments to come in the first quarter of 2014. Agencies can qualify for a payment based on profitability on auto, other property or a combination of the two. In turn, the County Farm Bureau receives a payment equal to 50 percent of what the agency earned. In counties with multiple agencies, each agency is eligible and can have its payment apply to the county Farm Bureau.*

*The payment rate is based on a complex formula, but could amount to tens of thousands of dollars, with a maximum statewide payoff of as high as \$5.6 million. For example, the total payout in 2010 would have been \$2.1 million and in 2012 would have been \$1.2 million, Smith said.*

*The KFB officials told the county leaders that a transition “bridge” would be in effect for 2013-14. Counties will be eligible for the higher amount between the new program’s payment or \$1 per each member, based on 2011 membership. To kick off the program, counties have received 2012 “bridge” payments based on the 2011 numbers.*

*Haney explained that the intent of the “County Insurance Services Program” is to “align agency managers and agents to share in the profitability” as well as to encourage membership growth. The program was developed due to concerns about maintaining adequate resources at the county level.*

*“We never want to stop spending money on the county programs,” Haney explained. “We want you to continue to send people to the young farmer conferences, to the women’s conferences, to the Congressional tour and so on. We want you to put this money to work with your county Farm Bureau.”*

# YOUNG WINTER CONFERENCE FARMER



TOP: Motivational speaker Jon Petz (right) pulled some magic with Neil Owens of Lincoln County, taking a \$100 bill from Owens and somehow inserting it into the core of a lemon that he sliced in front of the audience. LEFT: Total attendance at the annual conference was just under 400.

RIGHT: Young Farmer Committee Chairman Jason McGlone of Carter County presided over the winter conference.

**M**otivational speaker Jon Petz has an especially illustrative way to urge his audiences to seize opportunities in life. Waving a 20-dollar bill at a sizeable group at KFB's Young Farmer Leadership Conference last month, Petz asked: "Who wants \$20?" Dozens of hands were raised in response. "Come and get it," said Petz. After a few seconds of silence, a young man responded "I got it" and came forward to fetch the \$20.

The point, Petz explained to the rest of the group, is "you said you wanted it but you didn't do anything about it when you could have. You didn't go for it."

That exercise was part of a thought-provoking and very entertaining presenta-

tion by Petz, a Columbus-Ohio based professional speaker who has become a regular at Farm Bureau events. During a luncheon on the closing day of the two-day conference, he spoke about having pride and passion in one's work, and considering new ways of thinking to get the job done. To illustrate the latter objective, he had the group do a verbal exercise enabling them to more quickly memorize the alphabet in reverse order. That was done by getting them to say "ZY" was an "X" Warrior who asked his wife "VUTS R Q PON" for? She said a "MLK JIHG" to "FED" the C(ute) B(aby) A (lligator)."

A young lady cited the reverse alphabet after only 10 minutes of the exercise. She drew loud applause.

As always, the conference had plenty to offer. A variety of workshops included one in which the children could conduct a variety of science-based activities. The families also had opportunities to tour the Louisville Science Center, go ice skating or attend the Advance Auto Parts Monster Jam truck show.

Workshop topics included crop insurance, farm safety, grain and cattle markets, social media, business development and strategic planning, financial management and state farm vehicle regulations.

UK Extension Farm Management specialist Dr. Steve Isaacs noted that several of his former students were on hand for his workshop on developing a strategic management plan. One of those was Misty



TOP: The children’s workshop was abuzz with activity. LEFT: Megan Buckman of Marion County mixes a solution for a science activity at the children’s workshop. RIGHT: Steve Meredith, a long-time farm leader and former National FFA President out of Hardin County, provided an overview of the farm-to-school program in Jefferson County. He urged the young farmers to “look for an opportunity to be an advocate for agricultural education.”

Bivens, who with husband Ryan won the AFBF’s prestigious Achievement Award for young farmers.

Dr. Isaacs stressed the importance of developing a mission statement for farm operations. Setting goals and establishing tactics to help reach those goals is crucial, he said.

He went on to outline what he described as “ten traits for top managers.” They are as follows: (1) Set goals based on a clearly defined mission. (2) Know costs of production. (3) Have access, assess and use information. (4) Develop good people skills through communication, leadership and empowerment. (5) Be innovative and adapt to change. (6) Be dissatisfied with the status quo. (7) Organize, focus and

prioritize. (8) View the future aggressively. (9) Be willing to access and take risks. (10) Take time to recharge.

UK Ag Economist Dr. Lee Meyer opened the strategic management program with a presentation on the “Kentucky Farm Start” program for beginning farmers. The multi-step program involves a mix of classroom, field days, demonstrations and networking emphasizing such topics as farm planning, enterprise selection, soils and nutrient management, crop and animal management, recordkeeping and estate planning, Meyer explained.

UK ag econ colleagues Kenny Burdine and Cory Walters handled the workshop on grain and cattle markets while Dr. Jennifer Hunter conducted a session on

financial management.

KFB President Mark Haney spoke at the closing day luncheon. He noted the many achievements of the young farmers in the organization’s program, including having the national Achievement Award winner three times in the past seven years. “Young farmers are making a good mark for Kentucky,” he said. “You keep us focused on the work we need to be doing.”

Haney assured the group that KFB would maintain its commitment to issues vital to their futures, such as preserving the crop insurance program, strengthening the infrastructure for agriculture and agricultural research.

# MEATY TOPIC

## KFB'S FRITZ GIESECKE SPEAKS TO LOUISVILLE AG CLUB

**K**FB Second Vice President J. Fritz Giesecke spoke to the Louisville Agricultural Club last month about another organization that's near and dear to him – a trade group responsible for promoting U.S. beef.

The Hart County cattleman not only serves on KFB's Executive Committee but also holds that position with the United States Meat Export Federation (USMEF), a Denver-based non-profit trade organization that pursues export markets for domestic beef, pork, lamb and veal. USMEF is not as well known as organizations like the National Cattlemen's Association or National Pork Council, and yet it boasts a \$40 million annual budget with 16 foreign offices monitoring some 80 markets. And it has a list of accomplishments that would seem to warrant those numbers.



Fritz Giesecke speaks to members of the Louisville Ag Club.

Giesecke, who has been on the KFB Board of Directors since 1990, represents all of the state Farm Bureau organizations on the USMEF board. He was selected for the board in 2009 and promoted to its Executive Committee in 2011.

The KFB leader gave a presentation on USMEF during the monthly meeting of the Louisville Ag Club, which was formed 60 years ago to bring together ag interests in the Metro Louisville area. The group currently has 150 members. KFB Director of Market Information Ed McQueen is the group's current president and KFB National Affairs Director L. Joe Cain is Vice President.

The club holds most of its meetings at KFB's state office.

Giesecke noted that the most recent USDA reports indicated that 12 percent of U.S. beef and 26 percent of pork go to export markets. Pork exports were a record in 2011, with Mexico, Japan, China, Canada and South Korea as the top markets. Beef exports fell in volume but rose in value due to the high grain costs. Top markets are Canada, the Middle East, Mexico, Japan and South Korea, Giesecke said.

The best news for cattle producers, said Giesecke, is that Japan has relaxed its restrictions on American beef. That is expected to bring a huge increase in business. USMEF is forecasting \$1.5 billion in beef exports to Japan this year, a 45 percent increase from last year, he said.

The bottom line is that "the world wants our meats because of the quality. They especially want grain-fed beef," said Giesecke.

USMEF was started in 1976 with a \$165,000 budget and now is working with over \$40 million stemming from the USDA, export companies and part of the checkoffs on beef, pork, corn and soybeans. The commitment from corn and soybean growers comes because much of those crops are utilized to feed cattle and hog and therefore producers realize it's in their best interest to boost the trade for red meats, Giesecke told the Ag Club members.



KFB National Affairs Director L. Joe Cain introduced Fritz Giesecke.

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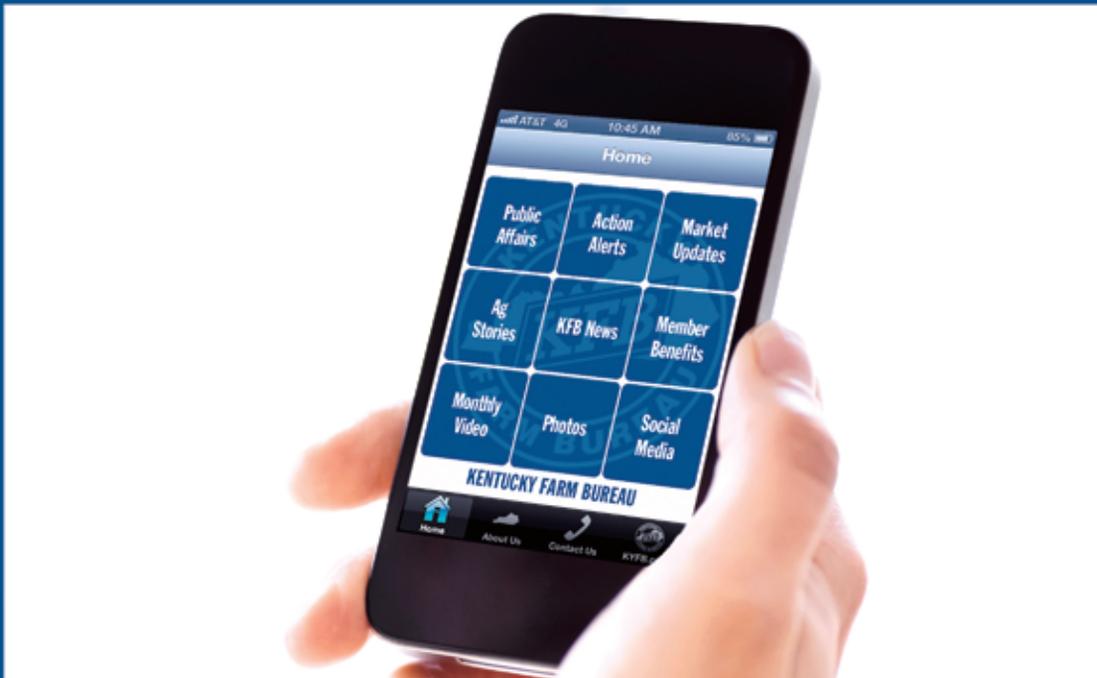
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## KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU

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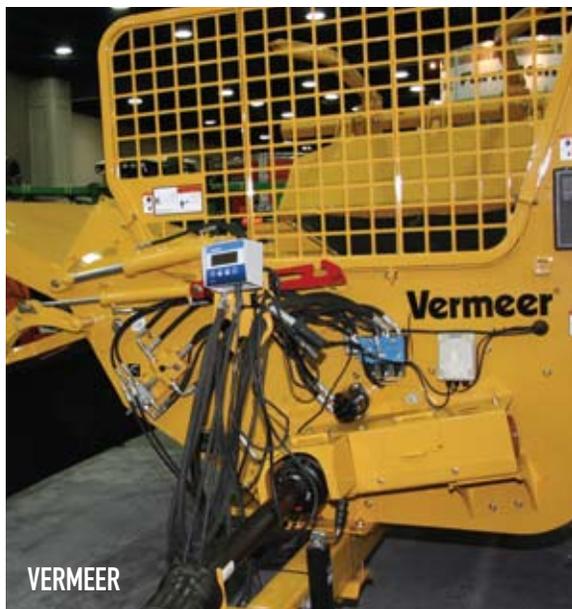
# OUR ADVERTISERS AT THE NATIONAL FARM MACHINERY SHOW

KFB News appreciates its loyal advertisers whose support enables us to communicate to our members through this publication. We visited the National Farm Machinery Show exhibits of several of our regular advertisers to express our thanks. This photo montage is a salute to those clients.



BECK'S HYBRIDS

Beck's Hybrids is the leading advertiser in KFB News. Working its exhibit were (from left) Josh Powell of Todd County, Kurt Karch of Evansville, Keith O'Haver of Salem, Ind., Adam Schmitt of Evansville and Steve Gauck of Greensburg, Ind.



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# MSU'S "RACER ACADEMY" ENHANCES AG EDUCATION

The Hutson School of Agriculture at Murray State University has extended its footprint well beyond its region with a program to enhance agricultural education while putting students on a fast track to a college degree.

The Racer Academy for Agriculture (RAA) offers agriculture classes to high school students for credit hours at both their school and MSU. Initiated in 2010 as an "agriculture bridge" pilot program, RAA has utilized a federal grant to expand statewide, involving around 250 students from 35 schools. It's a source of great pride and valuable exposure for an Ag School that has made significant strides over the years.

"We've had great success with this program," says Dr. Tony Brannon, Director of the Hutson School. "This increases the knowledge of agriculture for everyone involved. But there's also a significant economic element. The students pay a discount rate for these credit hours; it can save them thousands plus accelerate their college credits so they graduate quicker and therefore with less cost."

Brannon calls MSU Junior Alesha James "the poster child" for RAA. She explained why.

"They began the program when I was a freshman (at Calloway County High); I heard about it and was one of the first ones to ask my teacher about it," she recalled.

Already involved with FFA and interested in a career in agriculture, Ms. James took all of the available RAA classes during high school. Coupled with another program, she accumulated 29 college credit hours, enabling her to begin at MSA as a sophomore in the fall of 2011. The Agriculture Business major is on track to graduate next year.

Coming from a local high school, Ms. James took advantage of the opportunity to take some of the RAA classes on campus. She is now one of the Hutson School's "Ag Ambassadors" who promote the school and agriculture in general.

Sophomore Angela Survant took the "Contemporary Issues" course during her senior year at Caldwell County High School.

"I feel like the experienced really helped me prepare for college," she said. "I learned how to study for college and how to write papers, which is very important. A lot of my classmates were overwhelmed by writing projects; but I wasn't. I also became a lot more literate about agriculture. I had no idea there were so many issues. Now I feel I can act as an advocate."

Ms. Survant is majoring in Ag Education with a career goal to teach agriculture at the high school level.

Last year, USDA's National Institute of

I-Pad and a stipend. They must meet requirements, including a Masters Degree.

For dual credit, the local secondary agriculture teacher teaches the course within the regular school day. Minimum requirement is 40 hours of classroom instruction. Courses are also web supported by MSU.

The cost to students is a mere \$100 for a class offering three hours of credit. Dr. Brannon notes the significant of the low rate.

"This is as much an economic initiative as anything," he said. "Students can get 11 hours for as little as \$400. That's a great



Angela Survant (left) and Alesha James took advantage of the Racer Academy to gain college credits with agriculture classes.

Food and Agriculture awarded the Hutson School a grant in the amount of \$136,138 to expand RAA by developing new courses and increasing the number of secondary school partners. The funds also go toward improving the instructional procedure and gathering data for evaluation and analysis.

Besides the ag issues course, RAA also offers classes in Introductory Animal Science, Field Applications in Agriculture and Introduction to Agriculture Education. Two more are in the works for next year: Introduction to Veterinary Science and Introduction to Agribusiness Economics.

The curriculum was developed by consulting with high school ag teachers. The course instructors within the USDA grant receive an

economic incentive. And although we want them to come to Murray, the credits are transferrable to other Kentucky public universities."

RAA has progressed at a good pace after beginning with 12 schools and 100 students. This year's list of participating schools spans much of the state, stretching from Paducah (Lone Oak and Heath) to Northern Kentucky (Walton Verona) to Central Kentucky (Clark County, Madison Southern, Franklin County, etc) to Metro Louisville (Bullitt Central, Spencer County, Shelby County) to Southern Kentucky (Barren and Green Counties).

Another plus, says Dr. Brannon, is the increased state exposure for MSU.

# Louisville survey affirms opportunities for farmers to cash in on local foods craze

**a** survey of consumers and commercial food buyers in Louisville indicates a huge opportunity for Kentucky farmers to secure markets for fresh produce and other food products from their farms.

Seed Capital Kentucky, a non-profit organization working to develop a regional food economy, partnered with the Louisville Metro Government's Department of Economic Group in commissioning a study of local food demand. The survey by a New York-based food and agriculture consulting firm concluded that Louisville residents and commercial buyers already are purchasing about \$310 million worth of local food products annually, but are interested in spending an additional \$300 million.

The report's Executive Summary says: "Much work remains to be done to satisfy Louisville's appetite for local food. Consumers across the demographic spectrum want more local, fresh, prepared and processed food, at lower prices, and they want to buy that food where they already shop. Commercial buyers recognize that buying and selling more local food will require additional infrastructure and support, the kind of capital improvements that may require public and private dollars, but are keen to grow their local food purchases."

Louisville Metro Government has initiated a "farm-to-table" project to create links between urban consumers and rural producers. The project has received funding from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board and has the enthusiastic support of Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer. The metro area has several highly successful farmers' markets, a company handling distribution plus various other retail outlets for fresh farm products.

Stephen Reily, the founder of Seed Capital, wrote in the Courier-Journal that "farmers can't meet the explosive demand for local food overnight, and we will have to help them build their supply (through technical assistance, capital and a distribution infrastructure) to meet that demand.

If we can do this correctly, we will transform the future for our region's farmers – the real heroes of the local food economy – and their families."

The survey involved 421 consumers, 75 commercial buyers and 35 lengthy interviews and focus groups with consumers, farmers and commercial buyers. About 70 percent of the consumers said they purchased local foods; almost all of them said they perceive local food to be more flavorful and of generally better quality compared to foods from other areas. The con-

sumers reported strong interest in local fruits and vegetables. Demand was fairly consistent across all income levels and ages, the report said.

In 2011 Louisville residents spent \$2 billion on food, approximately \$1.2 billion on food-at-home and \$800 million away-from-home, according to the report.

KFB has several policy positions relative to the promotion and development of local foods. It has a certified roadside farm markets program involving over 100 markets throughout the state.

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# Equine survey reveals wealth of information

**K**entucky is home to 242,400 horses and the total value of the state's equine and equine-related assets is estimated at \$23.4 billion, according to the 2012 Kentucky Equine Survey.

The comprehensive statewide survey of all breeds of horses, ponies, donkeys and mules was the first such study since 1977. Conducted between June and October 2012 by the Kentucky field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, with support and assistance by the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture and the Kentucky Horse Council, the survey's results identified 35,000 equine operations and 1.1 million acres devoted to equine use. The results are a snapshot of the 2011 calendar year.

Phase 1 of the study was a statewide survey of equine operations that included an inventory of all breeds of equine, including horses, ponies, donkeys and mules. It included a look at sales, income, expenses and assets of those operations. County-level results from Phase 1 are expected soon. Phase 2 of the project will entail an economic impact analysis of Kentucky's equine industry. Phase 2 information will be available mid-2013.

With regard to the inventory of Kentucky's equine operations, the study determined that 56 percent are farms or ranches and 30 percent are for personal use, while three percent are boarding, training or riding facilities. Breeding operations accounted for two percent.

The vast majority of horses inventoried were light horses (216,300), followed by donkeys and mules (14,000), ponies (7,000) and draft horses (5,100). Thoroughbreds are the most prevalent breed in the state (54,000), followed by Quarter Horses (42,000), Tennessee Walking Horses (36,000), Saddlebreds (14,000), donkeys, mules and burros, Mountain Horse breeds (12,500) and Standardbreds (9,500).

The primary use of the majority of Kentucky's equines is trail riding/pleasure (79,500), followed by broodmares (38,000), horses currently idle/not working (33,000), competition/show (24,500), horses currently growing, including yearlings, weanlings and foals (23,000), racing (15,000), work/transportation (12,500), breeding stallions (3,900) and other activities (13,000).

According to the study, the estimated value of the 242,400 equines in Kentucky is about \$6.3 billion. In addition, the estimated value of equine-related assets, including land and buildings, vehicles and equipment,

feed and supplies and tack and equestrian clothing, is \$17.1 billion, bringing the total value of Kentucky's equine and equine-related assets to \$23.4 billion.

The total of all equine-related sales and income for equine operations in 2011 was about \$1.1 billion. That total came from sales of all equines, estimated to be \$521.1 million, and \$491 million in income from services provided, including both breeding and non-breeding services such as training, lessons, boarding, farrier, transportation, purses, incentives, etc.



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# FOOD. CHECK-OUT DAY

FB and some county Farm Bureaus used the annual "Food Check-Out" promotion to remind consumers of how they benefit from the work of farmers.

"Food Check-Out Day" was initiated 17 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. AFBF Women's Leadership Committee Chairperson Terry Gilbert, who is a KFB Director, participates in the national events. AFBF continues to donate to the Ronald McDonald House organization to recognize Food Check-Out Day.

KFB uses 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. KFB Women's Committee Chairperson Phyllis Amyx of Wolfe County greeted the legislators and explained the purpose of the event.

Baskets also were given to Governor Steve Beshear and Agriculture Commissioner James Comer.



KFB Women's Committee Chairperson Phyllis Amyx and Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper presented a gift basket to Governor Steve Beshear.



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## USDA projects record crops

In late February USDA released projections for the 2013-14 marketing year. Based on normal 2013 weather, it expects record-large corn and soybean crops, resulting in much lower season-average farm prices than received in 2012-13. This is only one possible outcome for crops yet to be planted.

For 2013, USDA predicts planted corn acreage at 96.5 million acres, down 700,000 from 2012. The average yield is projected at 163.6 bushels per acre, resulting in a record crop of 14.53 billion bushels. USDA expects a 20 percent increase in feed and residual use and a 67 percent increase in corn exports. The agency projects 2013-14 ending stocks of 2.2 billion bushels, which is 16.7 percent of total use – a seven-year high. USDA's 2013-14 season-average farm price of \$4.80 is much below the \$7.20 average projected for 2012-13.

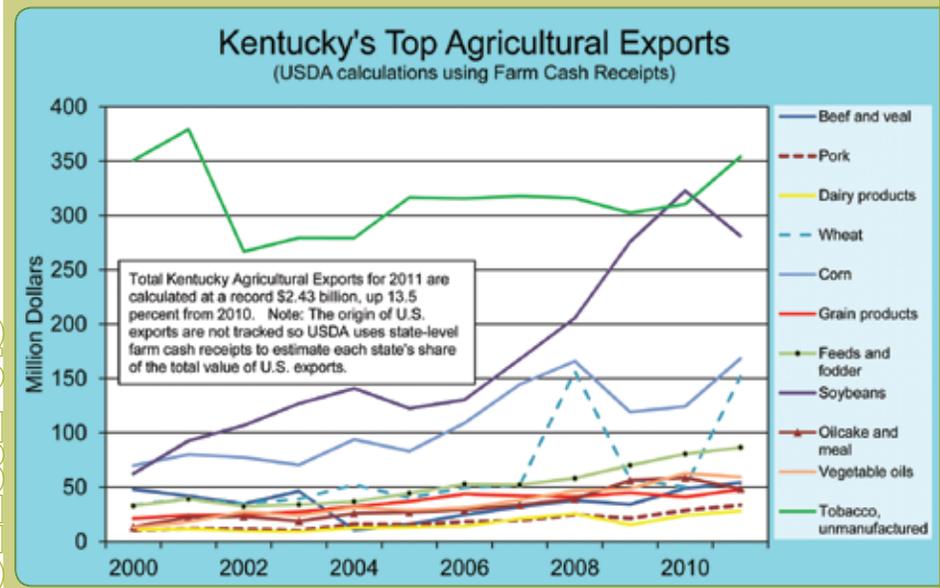
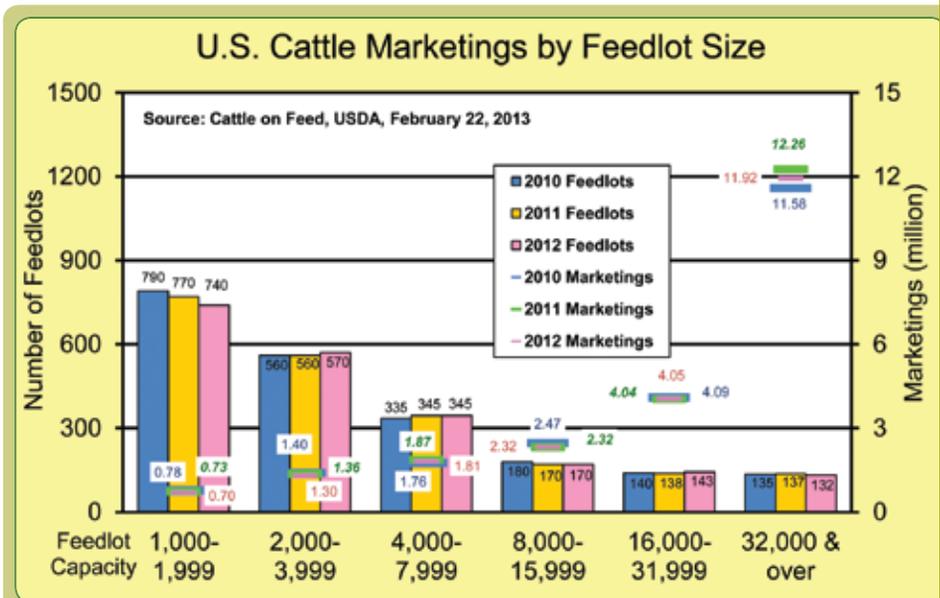
For soybeans, USDA projects 77.5 million planted acres, up 0.3 million from 2012. An average 2013 yield of 44.5 bushels per acre compares to 39.6 bushels in 2012. The 2013 crop is projected at a record-large 3.40 billion bushels, up 390 million bushels from last year. Even as domestic crush and exports grow in 2013-14, ending stocks could double to 250 million bushels, resulting in a stocks-to-use ratio of 7.6 percent. USDA's average farm price is projected at \$10.50, down sharply from \$14.30 in 2012-13.

## Beef, Pork export values soar

U.S. beef and pork exports set new value records in 2012, beating previous highs set in 2011, according to USDA statistics compiled by the U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF). The value of beef exports rose two percent to 5.51 billion on 12 percent less volume. Pork exports set both volume and value records in 2012.

## Kentucky cattle buck the trend

Even as the U.S. cattle herd continues to shrink (down two percent), Kentucky's cattle inventory on January 1, 2013, expanded by more than four percent to 2.240 million head, according to the Kentucky office of USDA-NASS. This was the first increase since 2007. The number of beef cows grew by three percent to 1.028 million head, while the number of milk cows dropped four percent to 72,000 head. This is the first increase in cow numbers in six years. The number of beef replacement heifers was up 11 percent to 150,000 head. The 2012 Kentucky calf crop is estimated at 980,000 head, up 20,000 head from 2011. On January 1, there were three percent fewer beef cows in the U.S. than a year earlier, and the 2012 calf crop was down three percent to 34.28 million head. This is the smallest U.S. calf crop since 1949.



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## Farm policy booklet is available

Farm Policy Facts, which is a coalition of agriculture groups, has released a new pocket guide to aid in the mission to educate policymakers, media and consumers about the important role agriculture plays in our economic recovery and national security. The eight-page guide includes updated information on agriculture's contribution to our economy, the cost-effectiveness of farm policy and the importance of farms.

The guide also has a selection of famous quotes about agriculture from world leaders and a pie chart of farm spending.

To access the guide go to [www.farm-policyfacts.org](http://www.farm-policyfacts.org). It also can be found on Facebook and Twitter @FPFNews.

## Stallman speaks to immigration subcommittee

AFBF President Bob Stallman told the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security that a new, modern guestworker program for agricultural workers was needed. He urged the lawmakers to implement a new market-based labor program administered by USDA.

The new program would serve as a substitute for, and eventually replace, the H-2A program which has proved to be cumbersome to its users. Stallman said a new proposal would provide farmers with access to a legal and stable workforce over the long term.

"Ultimately, agriculture's goal is to develop a program that treats workers fairly, while being efficient and economical for employers to use," Stallman said during his testimony to the subcommittee. AFBF economists estimate that the agricultural economy and the broader U.S. economy are facing billions of dollars in lost productivity each year if the agriculture labor force issue is not addressed.

## IFAL applications are now available

KFB is now accepting applications for the Institute for Future Agricultural Leaders (IFAL) Program. IFAL is a five-day summer leadership conference that exposes students to college life and different fields of study for careers in agriculture. Students who currently are in their junior year can choose between a June 16-20 conference at Murray State University or June 23-27 at the University of Kentucky. Applicants may state their preference.

County Farm Bureaus can nominate up to four students, with applications due in the state office by April 23. KFB and the universities will accept the 45 most qualified applications for each conference. The fee is \$300.

Applications are available at county Farm Bureau offices or through high school agriculture teachers and county 4H agents. Those officials can nominate students but the application must be approved by the county Farm Bureau.

This is the 28th year of the popular program.

## KCA inducts five into Hall of Fame

The Kentucky Cattlemen's Association inducted five people into its Hall of Fame during the group's annual convention. The inductees are Martin Hayden of Daviess County, J.H. Manion of Grayson County, Dr. Jack Kimbrough of Shelby County, Charles Miller of Jessamine County and Jere Caldwell of Boyle County.

Martin Hayden has been a dedicated member of the Daviess County Cattlemen's Association for nearly 20 years while being active on the Green River CPH-45 Advisory Committee and being instrumental in starting the 4-H/FFA Feeder Calf Project.

J.H. Manion has been a devoted member of the Grayson County Cattlemen's Association for 29 years while serving in an officer position for 23 consecutive years. He helped establish special feeder calf sales along with being the driving force behind the Phase II grant programs being implemented.

Dr. Jack Kimbrough was a founding member of the Shelby County Cattlemen's Association in 1996. Kimbrough served as President of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association as president in 2002 and later became chairman of the Kentucky Beef Network from 2004-2008.

Charles Miller is a member and past president of the Jessamine County Cattlemen's Association. He was President of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association in 2000 and instrumental in starting the Kentucky Beef Network. Miller served as Kentucky Beef Network chairman from its inception in 2001-2003. He has also served on many national and local boards and committees.

Jere Caldwell was the founding member and first president of the Boyle County Cattlemen's Association. Caldwell saw an opportunity to improve the quality of Kentucky's beef cattle, by creating the Kentucky Beef Cattle Association and being the first president. Caldwell has been recognized for numerous achievements including the Polled Hereford Association's Lifetime Breeder Award.



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