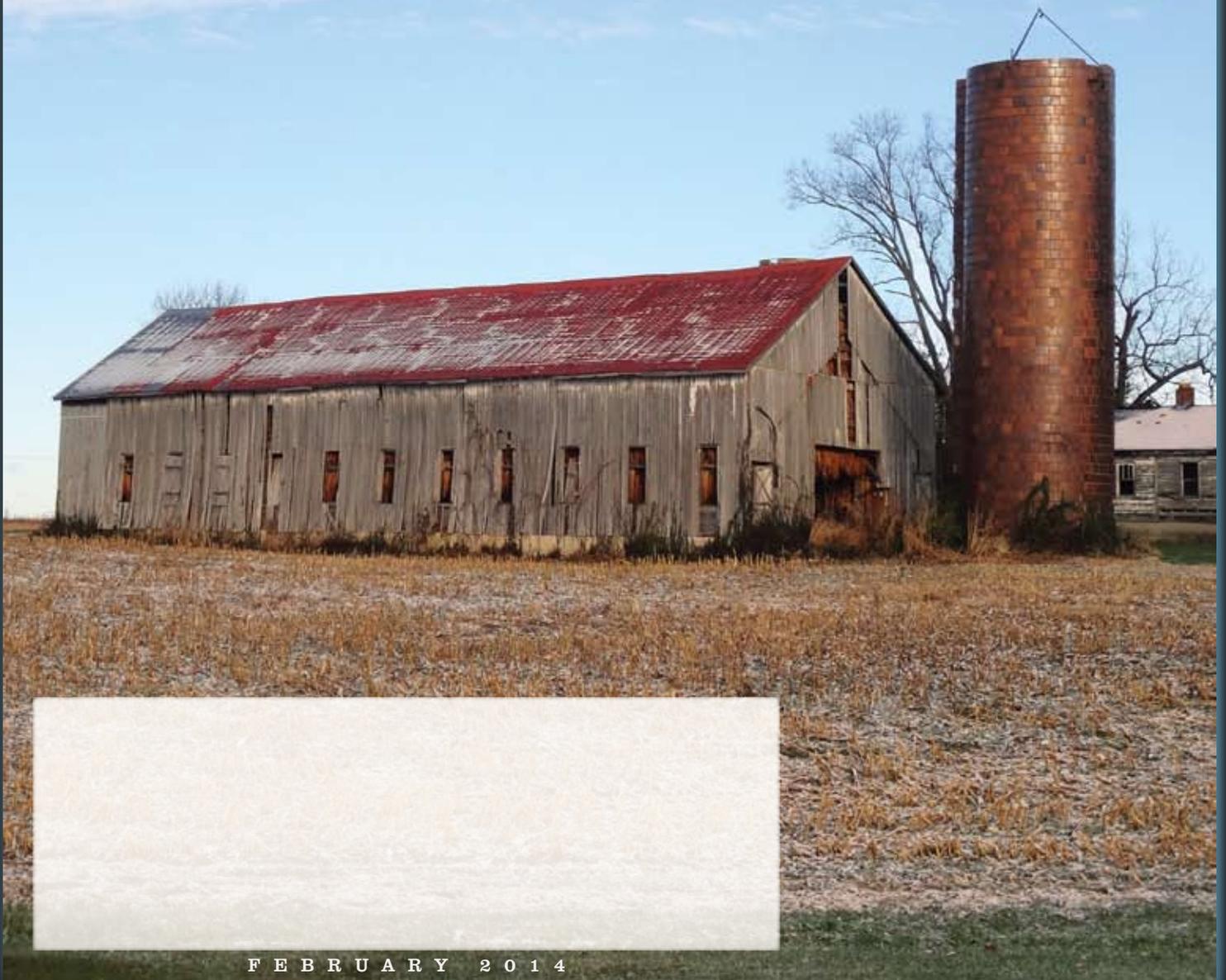


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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS  
Volume 13 · No. 1  
FEBRUARY 2014

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Cover Photo: A rural scene in Shelby County  
by L. Joe Cain

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**K**entucky Farm Bureau was well represented and well recognized at last month's American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting. We had close to 350 members on hand, including 25 voting delegates. I'm pleased to report that Kentucky received a hefty share of attention in the awards presentations.



Our young farmer program continues to shine. This time, Mercer County Agricultural Extension Agent Linda McClanahan won the "Excellence in Agriculture" Award, Shane and Mary Courtney of Shelby County were runners-up in the Achievement Award competition and Janelle Miller of Pulaski County finished among the top 16 in the Discussion Meet.

In the past eight years we're had three winners and three runner-ups in the prestigious Achievement Award competition for state contest winners. This is a highly competitive contest for very lucrative prizes. It's a significant accomplishment to continually surface excellent candidates.

I'm also pleased to report that KFB was selected for the maximum number of awards for program excellence. This includes pretty much everything we do in the areas of public affairs, communications, leadership development, member services and education. Also, our social media program won us a "New Horizon" award for "most innovative new program."

All of the recognition at our national level is proof positive that we're on the right track in service to our members.

Turning to policy, it was quieter than usual. With Congress continuing deliberations on the farm bill, delegates chose to stay the course with our policy position. They overwhelmingly decided that now is not the time to go in a different direction. The same held true with the critical farm labor issue. Congress hopefully will get something done about that this year.

As always, the AFBF meeting is an impressive undertaking as thousands of farmers and ranchers from different regions and backgrounds assemble under one banner to develop policy benefitting our agriculture industry. Around 7,000 members were there, once again affirming that Farm Bureau truly is the voice of agriculture.

**Mark Haney**

President

Kentucky Farm Bureau

# Passing it on



Leslie Meredith makes a point to her 7th grade science students.

## Ag Literacy Award winner conveys passion for agriculture

**A** passion for science and, in particular, agriculture and the environment, was passed on to Leslie Meredith from her father – Hardin County farmer Richard Preston. Before starting a farming career more than 30 years ago, Preston earned a Doctorate Degree in Chemistry and worked as a research scientist.

Today, Mrs. Meredith strives to pass along those interests to her 7th grade science students at West Hardin Middle School. She's proved to be very good at it, receiving widespread recognition which includes KFB's 2013 Excellence in Ag Literacy Award. As a state winner, she will represent Kentucky in a national competition this summer.

Visitors to her classroom quickly recognize that Mrs. Meredith loves to teach the subject and is devoted to connecting with her students. On a recent morning as she was explaining the scientific properties involved with an ice pack, she turned to a student sitting on the front row and said, "Cameron, you have a game tonight, don't you? Hope you won't need this."

She had the close attention of the class of 27 students while addressing various ways that heat is transferred. She had a variety of props on hand to illustrate the messages.

Mrs. Meredith was selected for the KFB award because of how she regularly incorporates agricultural and environmental issues into her lesson plans, plus conducts projects that require students to think, research and take action beyond the classroom. On this day, she passed around bags of ammonium nitrate pellets as part of a demonstration on chemical change, and then spoke about the chemical's link to crop production. "Fertilizers are like vitamins for plants," she said. She then explained how farmers judiciously apply fertilizer, particularly when rain is in the forecast. "If it's rained on, it's not useful to the plants. That costs the farmer money. And third, it could cause pollution," she explained.

She went on to discuss the value of nitrogen to plant growth.

She also had the students discuss the difference between fertilizer and pesticides.

Mrs. Meredith has been at West Hardin Middle School since 2002 and became the Science Department chairperson in 2010. She teaches 190 seventh-graders in seven classes per day and is the seventh grade team leader.

Mrs. Meredith has made a big mark with projects. Last year she managed a school-wide Farm-to-School Unit that promoted health and nutrition. She convinced the school's faculty to participate, with teachers incorporating material about agriculture, food, nutrition and health into their lesson plans.

On several occasions she has had fresh produce brought to the school for their students to consume and learn about.

Under her direction West Hardin Middle School is among only a handful of schools certified under the Kentucky Green and Healthy Schools program administered by the Kentucky Environmental Education Council. West Hardin was among the initial participants in the program designed to move schools toward becoming safer, healthier and sustainable.

Mrs. Meredith has directed a variety of projects in the Green and Healthy Schools program, most notably a wildflower garden in front of the school.

Like her father, Mrs. Meredith holds multiple degrees, with a Bachelor's in Plant and Soil Science from the University of Kentucky and a Masters in Education from Bellarmine University. She also has a counseling certificate from Western Kentucky University.

She says she initially was interested in a career in plant research or perhaps agricultural extension, "but I knew teaching was very rewarding. It appealed to me."

She and her husband, Jayson Meredith, who is a mechanical engineer, live in a rural area in western Hardin County and do some farming "on the side," she said.



# comment

## C O L U M N

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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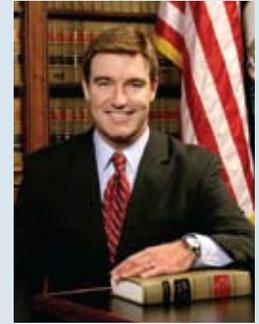
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**O**n September 11, 2013, a three-judge arbitration panel found Kentucky did not diligently enforce the terms of the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) in 2003. The consequence of this decision is that Kentucky is at risk of a reduction in its 2014 MSA payment.



As Kentucky farmers, I wanted to let you know about some key facts as we move forward.

First, the arbitration panel's decision is an assessment of how well the Commonwealth enforced the MSA in calendar year 2003 only. The panel did not assess enforcement efforts of the Beshear Administration or the Office of the Attorney General under my tenure.

The Commonwealth, including the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, was represented by outside counsel. The primary role of the Office of the Attorney General was as a witness testifying on the Commonwealth's behalf.

Despite the arbitration panel's decision, we firmly believe that Kentucky met its obligations and disagree with the findings and conclusions. We are pursuing all legal options in the wake of this decision.

In June, Kentucky filed a motion in Franklin Circuit Court challenging an attempt by this same arbitration panel to approve a partial settlement with some of the parties. Kentucky maintains that the panel overstepped its authority in allowing the tobacco companies and a minority of states to amend the MSA without the unanimous consent of all states - as the MSA requires.

Kentucky is planning other actions to minimize the impact of the arbitration panel's decision on the Commonwealth and will continue working to vacate these arbitration orders.

This case dealt only with 2003 enforcement. The Commonwealth is confident it will prevail in most, if not all, of the future arbitrations. Escrow deposits have been made by nearly 100 percent of these companies for the last several years.

I know how important the MSA has been to our state, to our communities and to our farmers, and I wanted to make sure you had the facts you need about this case.

**Jack Conway**  
Kentucky Attorney General

# Mercer Co. ag agent wins national award



Linda McClanahan receives the award from AFBF President Bob Stallman and Mark Gilbert of program sponsor General Motors.

**M**ercer County Extension Agent Linda McClanahan won the “Excellence in Agriculture Award” presented at the AFBF annual convention last month in San Antonio. Also, Shane and Mary Courtney of Shelby County were among the runners-up in the Achievement Award competition that is also part of the young farmer and rancher program. The three were representing KFB after having been selected for the state awards at KFB’s annual meeting in December.

In other developments:

\* KFB President Mark Haney was re-elected to represent the Southern Region on the AFBF Board of Directors.

\* KFB received six Awards of Excellence; for its work in communications and public relations, policy development and implementation, education and outreach, leadership development, member services and membership initiatives.

\*KFB’s social media program was judged best in the “large state” category, earning the organization a “New Horizon” award for “most innovative new program.”

\*Janella Miller of Pulaski County finished among the top 16 in the Discussion Meet.

The Excellence in Agriculture Award recognizes young farmers and ranchers who do not derive the majority of their income from an agricultural operation, but who actively contribute and grow through their involvement in agriculture, their leadership ability and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations.

McClanahan produces a daily radio program on WHBN, writes an article each week for The Harrodsburg Herald, creates industry-focused newsletters for her farming community audience, and offers her expertise as a guest columnist in the Mercer County Cattlemen’s

Association newsletter. She was presented with her choice of either a 2014 Chevrolet Silverado or a 2014 GMC Sierra, courtesy of GM, and a paid registration to the 2014 Young Farmer & Rancher Leadership Conference.

“This award means a lot to me. It means that my work has had an impact, the judges were able to see the importance of the programs that I have done, and they were able to see my passion for agriculture,” said McClanahan. “It also means that all the hours, the night meetings, the weekend events, and all the things that I have done have paid off, but, more importantly, that they truly have made an impact on the industry in Mercer County and throughout Kentucky.”

The Courtneys won KFB’s prestigious Outstanding Young Farm Family contest for 2013. They produce burley tobacco, row crops, fruits and vegetables on nearly 600 acres in Shelby County.

# Farm Bill and labor top policy agenda



KFB President Mark Haney and Vice Presidents Eddie Melton and Fritz Giesecke at the business session. They were among KFB's 25 delegates.

## Voting delegates to AFBF's 95th annual meeting last month approved resolutions that will provide the organization with authority from its grassroots members to push Congress to resolve unfinished issues like the farm bill and ag labor.

“Securing victories on those issues is critical to our competitiveness as individual farmers and ranchers, and to our nation’s success as a food producer,” said AFBF President Bob Stallman, who was re-elected to his eighth two-year term. “Farm Bureau made progress on our priorities this past year, more so than most other organizations, and this year, our delegates have provided us direction to work with Congress to complete this agenda.”

On the farm labor front, delegates reaffirmed strong support for meaningful ag labor reforms that ensure farmers and ranchers have access to workers when they are needed. Delegates also voted to support flexibility that would allow the employment of workers by more than one farmer.

With congressional farm bill action nearing completion, delegates reaffirmed Farm Bureau’s policy, overwhelmingly determining that now is not

the time to make changes.

On dairy-related issues, policy supporting changes to the dairy safety net, including margin insurance programs, was reaffirmed.

On another livestock-related issue, support was reaffirmed for country of origin labeling with a statement reiterating that it needs to be compliant with World Trade Organization rules. AFBF also supports efforts to lengthen the term of grazing permits from 10 years to 20 years.

On other issues, delegates adopted new policy that supports the use of unmanned aircraft systems for commercial agricultural, forestry and other natural resource purposes. They also supported the requirement for drone users to gain the consent of the landowners, if operating below navigable airspace. However, they opposed federal agencies’ use of drones for regulatory enforcement, litigation or natural resource inventory surveys.

Delegates approved new policy sup-

porting the protection of proprietary data collected from farmers and maintaining that such data should remain their property. Delegates also voted to support efforts to educate farmers regarding the benefits and risks of collaborative data collection systems. They also approved policy stating that farmers should be compensated if companies market their propriety information, and that farmers should have the right to sell their proprietary data to another producer, such as in the case of a land sale. Delegates voted to oppose farmers’ data being held in a clearinghouse or database by any entity subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Delegates also reaffirmed their support for the renewable fuels standard and approved a policy supporting renewable fuels tax incentives for the production of biodiesel and cellulosic ethanol and installation of blender pumps.

KFB had 25 of the 357 voting delegates.

# “Growing Strong” is women’s theme

**AFB** Women’s Leadership Committee Chairperson Terry Gilbert of Kentucky highlighted program successes during the annual business meeting of the AFB Women. Gilbert, a KFB Director from Boyle County, challenged women in Farm Bureau to strive to improve their communication and leadership skills and find more opportunities to get involved in policy issues important to agriculture.

“Learn as much as you can about issues that affect farmers and ranchers, such as the farm bill and the need for

immigration reform,” she said. “Step up and use your listening and communication skills.”

Gilbert announced “Growing Strong” as the 2014-2015 theme for the program of work of the AFB Women’s Leadership Program.

“Women have always been a powerful force in agriculture, in business, as entrepreneurs and in our communities,” said Gilbert. “Our new program of work reflects this reality and provides a strategic platform for Farm Bureau women to improve their skills and become com-

peting advocates in sharing the importance of modern agriculture.”

The women introduced “Our Food Link,” a new year-round program that county and state Farm Bureaus can use to reach consumers of all ages and backgrounds with information about today’s agriculture. The roll-out of the program included the distribution of a planning toolkit and publicity tools to help Farm Bureau members start thinking about projects that will engage people in their communities.

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# Stallman urges activism

**W**ith an appreciation for agriculture’s heritage, farmers and ranchers are focused on the opportunities and challenges of the present, keeping their eyes on the road ahead, AFB President Bob Stallman said in his keynote address at the annual convention last month in San Antonio.

Stallman, a rice and cattle producer from Texas, also spoke about the example Farm Bureau members set during what was a bitterly divided Congress in 2013.

“This very gathering is about people from different regions and backgrounds coming together to develop policy that benefits all of American agriculture,” he noted.

While lawmakers are close to the finish line on the farm bill and the Water Resources Development Act, farmers and ranchers can’t wait any longer for effective, long-term solutions to the agricultural labor crisis, which has forced growers to leave millions of dollars worth of crops unharvested and threatens the country’s food security.

“Farmers and ranchers have been

waiting for Congress to take action and work for solutions, waiting for them to put the nation’s needs above politics,” Stallman said.

Despite this time of congressional gridlock, few organizations have seen their key priorities passed by even one house of Congress, much less two, Stallman noted.

“The progress we’ve made speaks to our grassroots strength, our strategic focus and our credibility as the nation’s Voice of Agriculture.”

On the regulatory front, securing farmers’ and ranchers’ privacy is a growing concern, as are attempts to challenge farmers’ ability to use modern technology to increase crop yields and food quality.

“Instead of focusing on how to feed more and more people with existing land and water, and instead of allowing us to use food staples to address nutritional deficiencies in less-developed countries, some are intent on standing in the way,” Stallman said of state legislation and ballot initiatives that would require labels for foods made with bio-

tech ingredients or even ban the use of biotechnology outright.

With the Environmental Protection Agency late last year putting the wheels in motion to propose extending federal regulatory authority to nearly every body of water in the country – and ultimately regulating so-called “waters” that aren’t even wet most of the time – farmers and ranchers are bracing for a fight.

Farm Bureau has also been working through the courts to stop EPA’s attempts to broaden its regulatory reach.

One challenge that Farm Bureau has turned into an opportunity is the aging demographic in agriculture. Farm Bureau’s rural development initiatives – like the organization’s partnership with the Department of Agriculture on Start to Farm and its support for the recently launched Farmer Veteran Coalition – put beginning farmers and ranchers on the path to success.

Stallman encouraged Farm Bureau members to take part in the Farmer Veteran Coalition’s effort to help create opportunities on farms for those returning from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

# KFB recognized for social media program

KFB's social media program was selected for AFBF's annual "New Horizon Award" for innovative new program. AFBF President Bob Stallman presented the award to KFB President Mark Haney during a general session at the annual meeting.

KFB's social media program also received an award for excellence at last year's AFBF Public Relations Conference. The program is coordinated by Communications Division Director B. Todd Bright, Public Relations Director Dan Smaldone and Social Media Specialist Carilynn Gravatte.

Ms. Gravatte said she was "absolutely elated" to receive the recognition for the two-year-old program.

"We've worked hard to develop and execute a strategy to attract followers," she said. "Our goal all along was to be the leader in the online conversation about Farm Bureau and Kentucky agriculture. It is very gratifying to be recognized by our Farm Bureau colleagues from throughout the nation."

KFB debuted its social media presence in August of 2012 after establishing an overall vision for social media use and a cross-functional team to executive and oversee the plan. The team included representation from every

division in the Federation as well as Insurance Company staff.

September 2012 saw the launch of the KFB Federation's Facebook page. Over the next 12 months, 15 different social media properties were activated to highlight specific program areas. New Facebook pages were created for KFB's television program Bluegrass & Backroads, Certified Roadside Farm Market Program, Young Farmer Program, Women's Leadership Program, and the state fair icon, Freddy Farm Bureau. Twitter accounts were activated for KFB, Freddy Farm Bureau, and Bluegrass & Backroads. There's also a joint YouTube account for all program areas, a sizeable Flickr account for photo management and a Newsroom blog.

Staff also has conducted numerous social media training sessions and have met with county Farm Bureau leaders to discuss the program and how it can benefit them.



AFBF President Bob Stallman (right) presented the New Horizon Award to KFB President Mark Haney.

## Strategic plan

**A**FBF's Board of Directors set a strategic action plan to address public policy issues for this year. The plan includes focusing attention on the following key issues: agricultural labor reform, support for renewable fuels, support for biotechnology, protecting farmers' interests in regard to new technology systems and data compilation, opposition to expanded federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act, and protecting farmer and rancher interest regarding fiscal policy and tax reform issues.

The board also approved the inclusion of efforts to advocate for standards and incentives strengthening the U.S. renewable fuels sector.

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# An interview with new



Dean Nancy Cox sparked enthusiasm at a recent alumni event.

*Dr. Nancy M. Cox became Dean of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the beginning of this year. She is well known within Kentucky agriculture circles, having been at UK since 2001 as Associate Dean for Research and Associate Director of the Experiment Station. In that capacity she served on numerous committees and was involved in many projects in concert with Kentucky ag leaders and organizations. KFB President Mark Haney, who served on the search committee, notes that Dr. Cox had widespread support for the Dean's position.*

*With a tight budget and an agriculture industry that is constantly changing with new technologies, production systems and product demands, the college has many challenges in meeting the needs of the many it serves. KFB News recently interviewed Dr. Cox about a variety of issues facing the college.*

**Question:** Did you ever envision being in a position like this?

**Dean Cox:** No. I fell into becoming an administrator when someone at Mississippi State asked me to step into the role temporarily as a research administrator. But then I realized how much I liked knowing about all the research and helping with all of it rather than just my particular narrow research program. I came here as a research administrator in 2001. I've had the opportunity to look at other positions but I love Kentucky and have been very happy here. When the Dean's position came open I was strongly encouraged to apply.

**Q:** How would you summarize the current status of Kentucky agriculture?

**Dean Cox:** Certainly we are very strong and continue to grow in farmgate receipts. It has been a

pleasure to watch the transformation we've made because of the ag development fund and the hard work of so many dedicated people. The fact that Farm Bureau, the ag schools and the commodity organizations related to agriculture have pulled together to get this done is very impressive. I'd put our relationship up against any state.

**Q:** Do you feel fortunate to be taking this position at a time when the farm economy is strong and there are no crucial issues out there?

**Dean Cox:** Yes. If you talk about Kentucky agriculture now, we're a perennial Final 4 contender, so to speak. We don't have any major problems. The economy is overriding everything. We're going in a positive direction. I'm quite fortunate to be at a college that is doing quite well, too.

**Q:** What is your vision for the college?

# UK Ag Dean Nancy Cox

**Dean Cox:** The college certainly needs to grow its great commitment to being a land grant and to designing and implementing services that help raise the farm economy and our economy in general. I think we're in a good position and we need to continue to recognize the breadth of agriculture in this state's economy. A good example of that is a study of the forestry industry that shows an almost \$10 million economic impact. This industry has been there all the time but we really haven't embraced it. We have done a study recently in what I call the agriculture and forestry business cluster. That means all the industries in the state that depend on land resources. We have a quarter million jobs relative to those industries. So I think we need to make sure the college is positioned to serve those allied industries that are centered on our land. I think that's very important.

**Q:** With information so readily available from so many outlets, some may be wondering about the future of extension. Will the extension service need to be reshaped? What changes do you foresee?

**Dean Cox:** First off, our extension system is strong and is one of the largest in the country. It's also one of the best supported in terms of county participation. I think it's very strong as a resource. But as far as challenges, I think one thing our people would tell you is the need to reach out to what I call 'the millennials,' those born in the 80s and 90s. These are young people who are very busy with work and family and don't have time to come to extension meetings or get engaged in our activities. We need to reach them and ensure that we can serve them. I recognize that's a big challenge. We have people thinking about that very hard. As we all know, we have a decreasing number of farmers and that's not going to change. But we also have a local foods movement that is drawing more people toward agriculture. We have different clientele that want to grow food sustainably and for a local market. That's a potential growth area for us.

**Q:** How would you assess the current tie between research and extension? Is this something that needs to be adjusted?

**Dean Cox:** Land grant colleges are always trying to do a balancing act between what we invest in research, teaching and extension. Extension depends on research and we have a whole lot of folks in the college who have a joint appointment between extension and research. That's one of the best ways

to ensure that the balance is there; that the research is getting out there to extension. This is something we always think about. The way you make adjustments is when you have an opening in the college – you try to get the best balance. I think we are doing well at this. We are recognized in both the crop and animal areas for having a strong extension program. Our favorite thing is when the research goes out to the extension agent and then they (the extension service) take that and come up with more research that we need. It's a continual cycle of feeding the system.

We also want to do research that might not be ready for extension today. We want to be on the cutting edge, so the balancing act is how much we invest in the longer term and in the shorter term.

**Q:** Is there a need to encourage research to move beyond the traditional areas we've seen?

**Dean Cox:** Yes, there is a reason to be looking ahead. A land grant university always must look ahead. Some of the ways we are looking ahead involve what I call the bio-economy, with biofuels being a big part of that. Despite the trends in energy costs we have a commitment to see some big projects through in that area. The bio-economy also includes making pharmaceutical and natural products that can be used in human medicine and animal medicine. There's also bio-based natural products. We have a lot of research in that, too. We also have a program to reach the organic producers. We're always looking ahead for new uses for plants and for advancing technologies in our animal areas.

**Q:** In your view, how does the College of Agriculture fit within the university?

**Dean Cox:** Remembering that UK was created as a land grant university, we believe the college may be the most true to that mission. We do, though, have many colleges within the university that do a great service to the state. But we still feel we are at the heart of the land grant university. If you look at the numbers and where we stand at this university, we are in the top three or four for undergrad numbers, we're in the top two or three for research numbers, we are way ahead in number of employees, with around 2,000 counting extension. In effect, we're like a super college. We certainly take opportunities to explain our uniqueness to our partners at the university and I feel we have a good reputation within the university.

**Q:** How do you envision the college working with other ag colleges in the state?

**Dean Cox:** We already do a number of things with the other colleges, particularly Kentucky State. We are mindful of trying not to duplicate programs and services because we simply cannot afford to. We really can't be too competitive with each other, either, because we're trying to serve the state as a whole.

**Q:** How will you involve groups like Farm Bureau and the commodity organizations as the college moves forward?

**Dean Cox:** As far as Farm Bureau goes, we have a deep relationship. We use the Farm Bureau resolutions very seriously and are aided by Farm Bureau in many ways. And we appreciate the Dean having a position on the Farm Bureau board. That's an important connection. We also enjoy being a member of many of the commodity groups. We value those ties, as well. So I think this is an area that we are doing well, and I certainly expect to maintain those relationships.

**Q:** What budgetary challenges do you face?

**Dean Cox:** As you know, we've seen some

declines in state support for our programs. We're waiting now, anxiously, to see what the federal government does with its allocations that come to the ag schools. The sequestration took a lot from us and we're hoping to have that restored. Grants have declined too because of federal sequestration. But we remain pretty strong in terms of getting grants. We had about \$25 million in external money awarded in grants last year. Overall, budgets are tight. Nobody says how big we have to be. We just have to be good. We have to be mindful of using whatever we have as best we can.

**Q:** What is your biggest challenge in this position?

**Dean Cox:** Probably ensuring that this college comes out well in the new budget model the university is implementing. We have every reason to think we will be strong but it's going to take some attention.

**Q:** Are you comfortable with the politics involved in holding a position of this nature?

**Dean Cox:** I'll say this – the Dean is seen as part of the trusted agricultural leadership in this state. One of the things the Dean has to do is develop a trusted relationship with elected policymakers and others within the leadership structure. I hope I have started to build that already. My previous position, obviously, helps in that regard.

**Q:** Do you anticipate any unique challenges from being the first female Dean of the college?

**Dean Cox:** I'm happy to say I don't. I've heard a lot of people note that it's a milestone that there's a female Dean. Many of those people have been women who said "hurray" -- that makes me feel pretty good. But as far as the whole process of applying and interviewing, I didn't think I was different than any other candidate. I guess I should recognize that it's a step for the college. I certainly appreciate all the support I received. I will say that most of my career in agriculture has been sitting in rooms with all guys. I've been doing that since I became a faculty member in the 1980s. It's not a stresser for me to do that. You work your way along and hopefully gain the confidence and the trust from your colleagues. I certainly feel comfortable being part of what I guess you'd call the leadership group. And we have many great leaders in Kentucky agriculture. That's why we've been able to do so much.

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# Young Farmer



A winter storm that quickly dumped a few inches of snow on Lexington put a slight damper on KFB's Young Farmer Leadership Conference as tours were cancelled and a few of the scheduled presenters couldn't make it. Still, there was plenty of entertainment and useful information for the 340 participants.

Among the highlights was the Saturday evening auction to benefit the scholarship fund. The 70 items for sale fetched \$5,800 while the attendees had a fun time with the proceedings.

The workshops covered a wide range of pertinent issues to young farm families, covering public policy issues, health insurance, agritourism opportunities, precision technology and financial management. The kids got to play in the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Mobile Ag Science Activity Center plus had a variety of activities in the large conference center, including video cartoons. And there was an indoor pool at the Marriott-Griffin Gate.

Interest in new technologies was evidenced by large turnouts at the precision technology workshops. The sessions gave the farmers a good opportunity to interact with industry representatives.

KFB's Executive Committee addressed the group at various junctures. President Mark Haney praised the young farmer program for its many achievements in recent years. "You have done

so well; you really have achieved on the state and national levels," Haney said. "You are an asset. We want to put resources into your program to keep it strong."

Executive Vice President David S. Beck gave the opening address to welcome the group. He urged participants "to take this opportunity to become more familiar with Farm Bureau and to take useful information home with you. Ask yourself where you can become involved. Set goals. Look for ways to get involved on the local level."

Beck, who directed KFB's public affairs program for many years, added: "There's something in agriculture just as important as your ability to produce – it is policy that gives you the ability to produce in a way that sustains your operation."

He went on to encourage advocacy, beginning with establishing relationships with elected officials.

During the popular "eggs and issues" breakfast, Public Affairs Director Jeff Harper gave an overview of agriculture and other issues on the table at the current legislative session. Colleague L. Joe Cain presided over a workshop on national issues.

Presentations also addressed KFB's member services program and social media initiatives.

KFB's young farmer program is regarded as one of the best among the state Farm Bureau organizations.

# Conference



Facing page, a big crowd was on hand for the auction to benefit the scholarship program. Above, Advisory Committee Chairman Matt Gajdzik presided over the proceedings.

Below left, In what obviously was an enjoyable event, Alan Hubble takes a bid on a toy grain cart as Kent Moore displays the item during the scholarship fund-raiser. Alan and Kent serve on the young farmer advisory committee.

Bottom left, Young farmers were working on relaxing as hypnotist Doc Holiday coaxed them along as part of the entertainment at the conference. Of the 16 who volunteered to come on stage, only a few fell victim to the hypnosis.

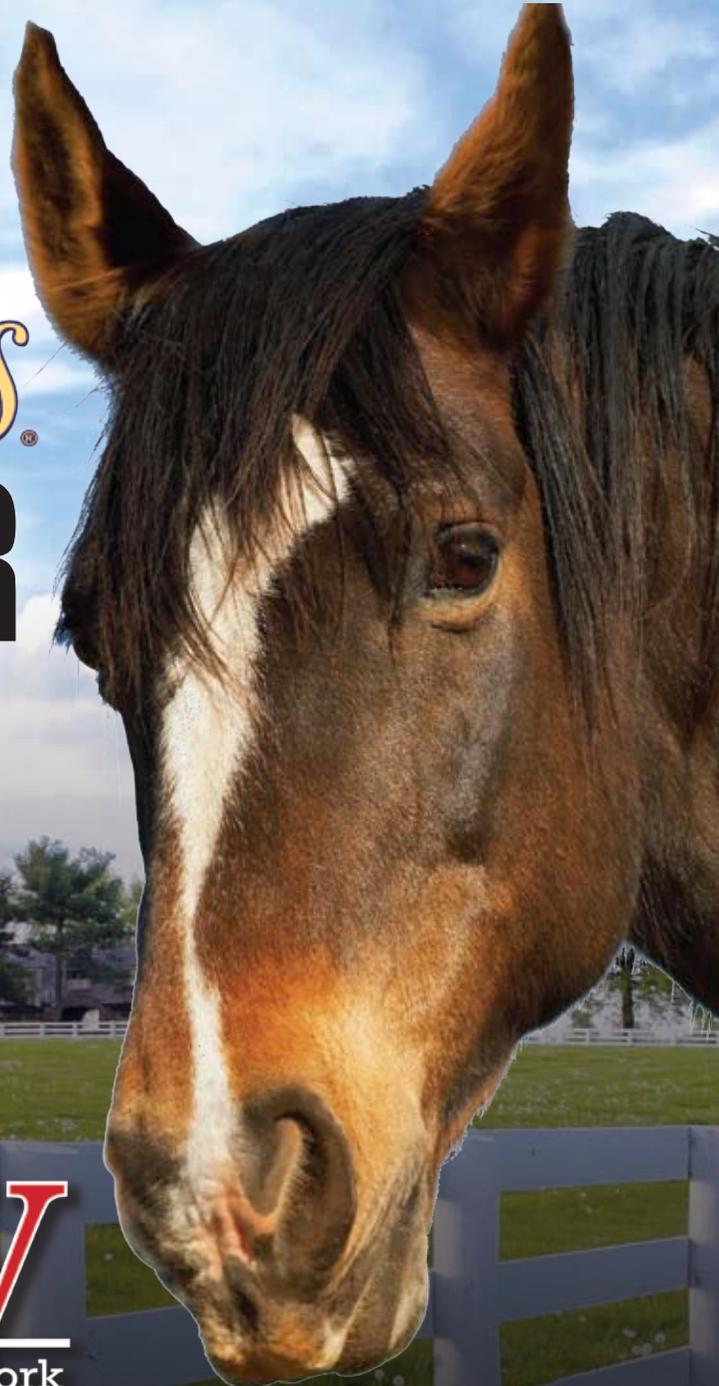
Bottom right, It's always good to start 'em young. Here, Piper Jones (front), Addison Jones (middle) and Phebe Jones look at the policy priority brochure. Piper and Phebe are the daughters of Derek and Sandra Jones of Marion County. Addison is their cousin.





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# Beef Expo begins Feb. 28 at Expo Center

The Kentucky Farm Bureau Beef Expo is set for February 28-March 1 at the Kentucky Exposition Center. This year's event will be the 28th rendition of the popular show involving 11 breeds plus a pen heifer show. The show has surpassed \$1 million in sales for the past two years.

The 2013 show had gross sales of \$1,083,150 on the sale of 459 animals from 210 consignors. Those sellers came from 19 states. Most of the top selling animals came from Kentucky consignors.

Close to 500 head are expected for the Junior Show. Last year 169 Kentucky cattle were sold by youth.

February 28 will feature the shows for angus, beefalo, gelbvieh, hereford, red angus, red poll, simmental and pen heifers. Shorthorn, charolais and limousine will show on Saturday and sales will be held from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.

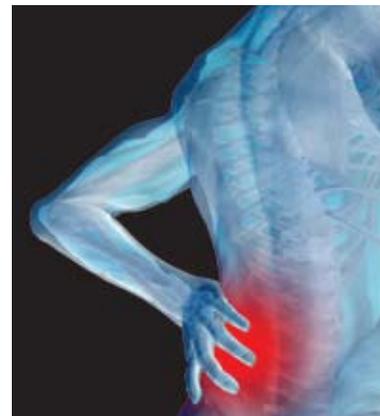
The Beef Expo is administered by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Shows and Fairs.

KFB sponsors and promotes the Beef Expo and has an exhibit in the trade show area. Other major sponsors are KDA, Farm Credit Mid America, Merial and the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association.

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# KFB announces staff changes

KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck recently announced several staff changes. Stacy Lowe, who has been director of the young farmer program for two years, is now the Area Program Director for

Area 3, which encompasses 12 counties in and around the Louisville area. Mike Tobin, who has served nearly two years as Director of the Commodity Division, is now Area Program Director for Area 10, in north-

eastern Kentucky. L. Joe Cain has moved from Director of National Affairs and Political Education to Director of the Commodity Division. Cain has worked for KFB for nearly nine years.

Ms. Lowe succeeds Chris French, who left the Area 3 position to become a District Sales Manager for KFB Insurance. Tobin replaces Joe Claxon, who retired. (Tobin lives on a farm in Harrison County, which is part of Area 10.)

Women's Program Director Scott Christmas also will be handling the young farmer program until a permanent director is announced.



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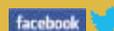
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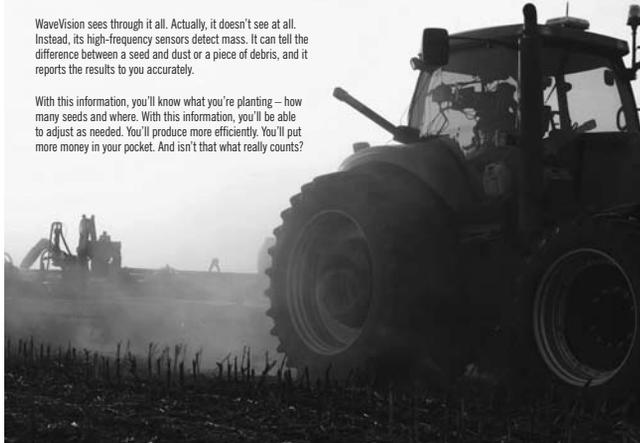


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By Ed McQueen

## Grain exports set quarterly record

Total grain (wheat, corn, soybeans) inspected for export at major U.S. ports totaled a record 39.2 million metric tons (mmt) during the fourth quarter of 2013, according to the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). Inspections were 38 percent above Q4-2012 and 23 percent above the 4th quarter's five-year average. Grain inspections increased as U.S. corn and soybean production rebounded and U. S. wheat demand increased. U.S. Gulf grain inspections totaled 22.6 mmt, up 28 percent from last year and 18 percent above the five-year average. Pacific Northwest (PNW) grain inspections reached a record 9.7 mmt, up 41 percent from last year, and 17 percent above the five-year average.

Inspections of corn reached 9.9 mmt during the fourth quarter, up 127 percent from last year and 11 percent above the five-year average. Soybean inspections reached a record 23.1 mmt, 19 percent above last year and 24 percent above the five-year average. The increase continued to be driven by increased demand from China and other Asian destinations. U.S. soybean shipments to China increased 21 percent from last year during the fourth quarter. Gulf soybean inspections reached a record 13.4 mmt, up seven percent from last year and PNW soybean inspections reached a record 5.6 mmt, 28 percent above last year.

## Larger hay crop leads to lower prices

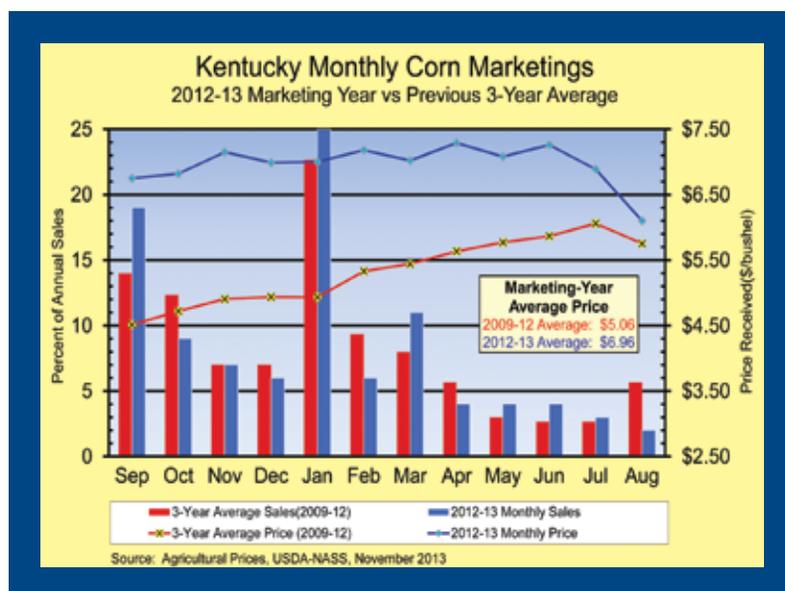
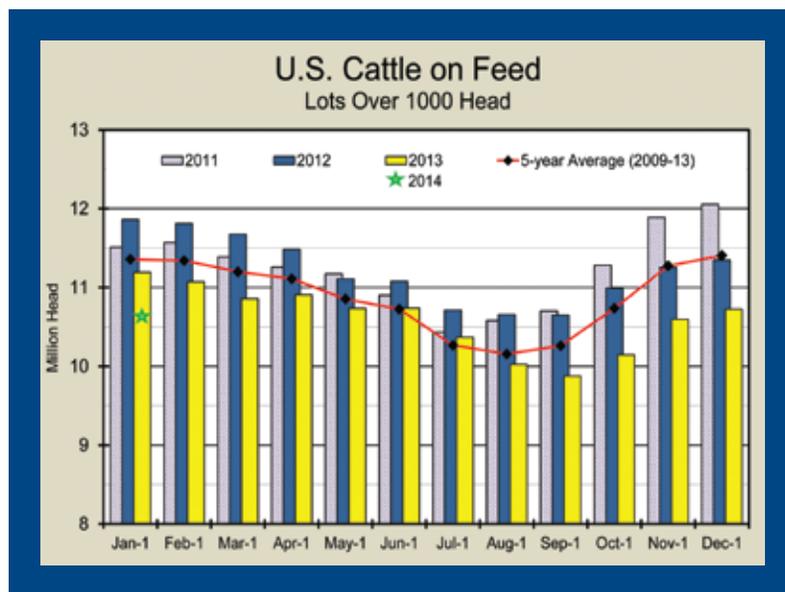
All hay production for 2013 is estimated at 135.9 million tons, a 13-percent increase from the drought-impacted total in 2012. At 57.6 million tons, alfalfa production was up 11 percent from 2012. Other hay production totaled 78.4 million tons, up 16 percent from the previous year. Kentucky's all-hay production for 2013 totaled 5.94 million tons, up 1.18 million tons from 2012. The state's alfalfa crop was 660,000 tons, or 138,000 tons above 2012's total.

Hay stocks on U.S. farms totaled 89.3 million tons on December 1, up from 76.5 million from a year earlier. While this estimate is an improvement over the 2012 figure, which was affected by poor grazing conditions, the current forecast is nearly 12 million tons below the 10-year average of 101.1 million tons. Kentucky's December 1 hay stocks were also more plentiful with 4.2 million tons, up 0.8 million tons from December 2012.

The higher production and stocks of hay have resulted in prices lower than a year earlier. The preliminary USDA estimate of prices received by U.S. farmers in December 2013 indicates all hay valued at \$168/ton compared to \$189 in December 2012. Alfalfa price was estimated at \$187/ton, down \$30 from a year ago.

## Broiler production is up

Through November, the 2013 broiler meat production totaled 34.7 billion pounds, up 1.6 percent from the same period in 2012. November was the second consecutive month that average broiler weights exceeded the six-pound level. Average weights had been higher throughout 2013. With more chicks being placed for growout and continued growth in average broiler weights anticipated, USDA predicts 2014 production at 38.9 billion pounds, up three percent from the 2013 estimate. Wholesale prices for whole broilers averaged \$0.95 per pound in December. The annual average for 2013 was \$1 per pound, a 15-percent gain from the 2012 average of \$0.87 per pound. USDA forecasts the 2014 average price to fall between \$0.92 and \$0.99 per pound.



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# farm file

## Poster and essay contest is underway

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Poster and Essay Contest will add a category for digital submissions this year along with the traditional poster and essay competitions. The theme of this year's contest is "Kentucky Farmers — Our American Heroes."

The digital category will accept photos, including those modified using Photoshop, and original digital artwork. The new category will be open to all Kentucky students, kindergarten through grade 12, and will present awards for the first and second places. Entries must be submitted in printed form, accompanied by the high-resolution file in JPEG, PDF, or PNG formats.

The poster and essay contests also are open to students in kindergarten through grade 12. Statewide winners will be selected in each grade. Each winner will receive \$100 and will be recognized at the Kentucky Agriculture Day Celebration in April.

Students may submit either a poster, essay, or digital submission based on the contest theme. All artwork, photos, and writing must be exclusively student created. Essays, posters, and digital submissions will be featured in department publications and special events, including the 2014 Kentucky State Fair in August in Louisville.

Entries must be submitted to the KDA and postmarked by March 7. Winners will be notified by March 17. For more information, including complete contest rules and entry forms, go to [www.kyagr.com/marketing/poster-essay-contest.html](http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/poster-essay-contest.html) or contact Elizabeth McNulty at (502) 564-4983 or [elizabeth.mcnulty@ky.gov](mailto:elizabeth.mcnulty@ky.gov).

## Alltech announces innovation competition

Eleven Kentucky universities are expected to compete in the 2nd Alltech Innovation Competition which awards \$20,000 for the winning proposal. Last year UK won with an idea for reclaiming mountaintops with switchgrass for fuel. This year Alltech is seeking a business plan to capitalize on innovation in Kentucky's food and agriculture sectors.

The winner will be decided on April 26 at Bluegrass Community and Technical College, Newtown campus. Expected to compete are Asbury, Eastern, Georgetown, Kentucky State, Murray State, Morehead State, Northern Kentucky, UK, U of L, Pikeville and Western.

## KCA selects "Hall of Famers"

The Kentucky Cattlemen's Association inducted five members into its Hall of Fame during its annual convention last month. The inductees are Scotty Parsons of Christian County, C.F. Martin, Jr. of Hart County, Don Sorrell of Campbell County, Mike Gabbard of Montgomery County and Robert Vickery of Wayne County.

Parsons has been a member for over 20 years. He worked full time in school administration and after retirement focused on farming full-time on his commercial cow/calf operation. Parsons has been active at the county level and has served as President of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association in 2009.

C.F. Martin, Jr. has been a devoted member of the Hart County Cattlemen's Association for over 20 years. He started Martindell Shorthorn Farms with the purchase of his first heifer in 1952. He has served on the Hart County Fair Association for 40 years and been a member of the Hart County FB since 1952.

Sorrell hails from Campbell County and is the county's extension agent. He assisted local cattlemen in establishing the Northern Kentucky Cattlemen's Association and helped develop the Campbell County Cattlemen's Association.

Gabbard is a full-time farmer. He has a 700-acre operation with grain, tobacco transplants and a 140 head cow/calf operation. Gabbard has been called the "cornerstone" of the Montgomery County Cattlemen's Association, serving as president for three years and a member of the Executive Board for 18 years.

Vickery raised purebred Shorthorn cattle and in the 1960s transitioned to a commercial herd and feeder calf production. For over 60 years he remained active within both the local and state cattlemen's associations. He served as president of the Wayne County Feeder Calf Association, President of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association and was a KCA charter member. For three years Vickery was Vice President of the KCA Feeder Calf Division and served as a KCA Director to the National Cattlemen's Association. He is the father of Dan Vickery, the Wayne County FB Agency Manager.

### District Meeting Schedule

District 1	March 11	7 p.m.	McCracken County FB
District 2	March 4	6:30 p.m.	Ballard Conv. Center, Madisonville
District 3	March 27	6:30 p.m.	Rough River State Park Lodge
District 4	March 24	6:30 p.m.	Barren River State Park Lodge
District 5	March 20	7 p.m.	Nelson County Fairgrounds
District 6	March 3	7 p.m.	Scott County Extension Office
District 7	March 6	6 p.m.	Russell County Auditorium
District 8	March 3	7 p.m.	Madison County FB, Berea
District 9	March 18	6:30 p.m.	Blue Licks State Park Lodge
District 10	March 31	6:30 p.m.	Boyd County Extension Office
District 11	March 17	6:30 p.m.	Hazard/Perry Co. Sr. Citizens Center

(all times are local)



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