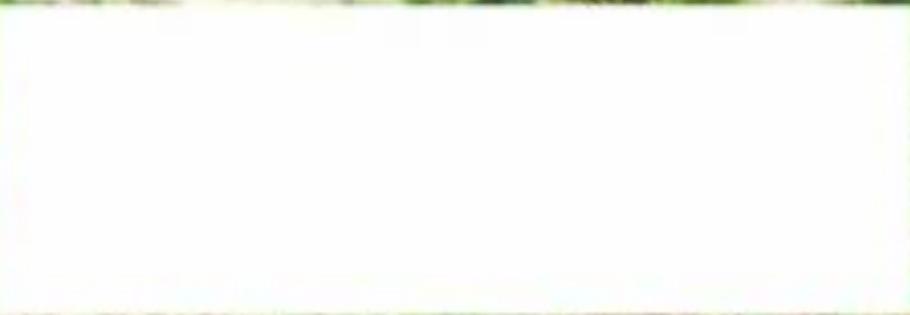


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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS
Volume 15 | No. 10
December 2016-January 2017

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Cover photo by Tim Thornberry

Kentucky Farm Bureau News is published ten times per year. Combined issues for December-January and June-July are sent to all members. The remaining eight issues go to regular members. Bulk postage rate paid at Lebanon Junction, Ky. Changes in address should be mailed to KFB Communications Division, PO Box 20700, Louisville, Ky. 40250.

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As I look at the calendar, it's hard to believe another year will soon come to a close. It has been a busy but productive year at Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB).

It has also been a busy year for our farm communities. As we finished with our harvest duties, many producers across the state saw near record yield potential for soybeans, and a record yield per acre for this year's wheat crop. We've also seen some tough times, especially for our tobacco producers who fought an abnormally wet summer, followed by an extremely dry fall.

This dry period has most of the state experiencing drought conditions. For non-farmers, a drought in winter may seem to be uneventful, but many of our wheat producers are having to irrigate next year's crop, pasture conditions are in bad shape around much of the region and some livestock producers are already feeding their winter hay supplies.

In times like this, water becomes a big issue. The efforts made by KFB members, along with supportive legislators brought to fruition the Kentucky Water Resources Board created by House Bill 529 in 2016. This important legislation will help Kentucky be proactive in water issues and it couldn't have come at a better time.

We never want our rural communities and urban neighbors to be at odds over water and we feel comfortable that won't be the case through the work of this board and the heightened water awareness brought about by this effort.

With that said we have a full plate, advocacy-wise concerning other issues, as well. We welcome a new administration to Washington and as with any administration change there comes a period of transition we must endure as we make our voices heard and our positions known.

There is much on our wish list so patience will have to be the order of the day as we look to our lawmakers to help with matters related to the agriculture industry including farm labor, rural economies, international trade and uncertain market conditions.

These topics will all be a part of the discussions that will be taking place across the country regarding the next Farm Bill. KFB has initiated a Farm Bill Working Group to help identify the needs and concerns we have in this state that are connected to agriculture's most important piece of legislation.

Several discussion committees composed of ag stakeholders from different commodity groups, KFB advisory committees and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture will be holding meetings in the coming weeks and months to develop a unified message of what we as agriculturalist feel needs to be included, excluded or changed as part of this bill.

In addition to the changes we will see in Washington in 2017, we will also be welcoming many new state legislators coming to Frankfort for the upcoming General Assembly Session. As always, we offer our assistance on matters related to agriculture and rural development issues and welcome all of our lawmakers back after the first of the year.

With the winter season upon us, we may have a break in our farming endeavors but there is plenty of work to be done as advocates. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to the coming year.



Mark Haney

President
Kentucky Farm Bureau



KFB President Mark Haney addressed the 2016 Annual Meeting.

KFB President Mark Haney emphasizes KFB Loves KY during Annual Address

Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) President Mark Haney addressed the organization's 97th annual meeting with positive news about another year of continued growth for KFB, a review of advocacy efforts made in the past year and a look into the year to come.

More than 2,000 KFB members from across the state gathered at this year's annual meeting. Haney, in his annual address thanked all members and their grassroots efforts to support their communities and to support agriculture.

He also pointed out the continued growth of the KFB Insurance Company and its importance to the organization.

"It is the engine that drives this organization and no one else in the country has what we have at KFB," he said.

In discussing accomplishments made in 2016, Haney mentioned a campaign that debuted at this year's state fair that speaks to how KFB feels about Kentucky.

"It is called 'KFB Loves KY' and talks about the many ways we love our state," he said. *"It has been a huge success and has been very effective."*

He also told members of a new initiative the Insurance Company will begin to help alleviate distracted driving. With a growing number of accidents caused by cell phone distractions Haney said the hope is to curb this trend in an effort to save lives.

He reflected on the 2014 annual

meeting when the Water Management Working Group (WMWG) was announced and how advocacy efforts since then brought about passage of legislation creating the Kentucky Water Resources Board during the 2016 session of the General Assembly.

Haney announced a new group which will work to create a unified message from Kentucky agriculture for the next Farm Bill.

"In 2018 we will be re-authorizing probably the most important piece of legislation for all of rural America," he said.

In 2017 there will be listening sessions at the federal level to gather information for the next bill. The KFB Farm Bill Working Group will conduct discussion sessions with stakeholders throughout the state in order to develop a cohesive strategy to bring to Kentucky's Congressional delegation assuring Kentucky agriculture will have strong input into the next Farm Bill.

In continuing the discussion about federal issues, Haney noted some of the overreach of agencies that regulate many issues related to the farm. With the broad-based changes caused by the recent election, he said there are high expectations that positive changes will come which will give regulatory relief to agriculture and other industries.

The subject of GMO's was a big topic over the past year. Haney said while Congress took action regarding labeling, it isn't something to forget.

"We now have to continue to have an educational program and we have to be able to explain to consumers how GMO's fit into the agriculture process. We need to be very proactive about that," he said.

Trade was another subject Haney spoke about during his address. He said he feels confident that in the coming months a trade agreement will be realized, pointing out farmers have to be able to trade in a global market.

Moving back to state issues, Haney said tax reform is something being discussed extensively and it is something to be moved on cautiously.

"We want Kentucky to be competitive with all the states around us," he said.

One of the most discussed issues coming from county Farm Bureaus this year was that related to wildlife management. Haney said the issue of wildlife populations will be one taken on in the coming year.

In concluding the KFB President said, in traveling across the state, he sees Farm Bureau members taking leadership roles in their communities.

I couldn't be more proud of the work that you do," he told members. "I encourage you to be involved. Let's set out to get things done even though they may be different than what we've done in the past. We are strong as an organization and we can accomplish great things for the state of Kentucky."



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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Editor Tim Thornberry
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 Dallas, TX

Advertising Casey McNeal
 Times-Citizen Communications
 800 798-2691 (ext. 334)

Circulation Kelley Parks
 (502) 495-5112

comment

COLUMN



As the 2017 Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly commences, you will hear much about the importance of economic development and job growth. As Speaker of the House, I have made those issues my top priorities, and have found support among many of my fellow legislators, as well as Governor Bevin.

Kentucky has far too often found itself losing jobs, both through business relocation and site selection, to our sister states. Many times that has been due to antiquated laws on our books that do not make us as attractive as states such as Indiana and Tennessee. As state officials, we have to rectify that situation and make Kentucky a place better suited for new businesses and create a climate that will make our current ones more apt to expand.

While our urban areas will of course benefit from these changes, I also intend to make it a primary focus that the rural parts of the Commonwealth profit, as well. As a lifelong resident of rural Russell County, I recognize that these areas of the state are often forgotten, especially in the world of economic development.

In the growing agribusiness industry, Kentucky is unique in the fact we are well-suited for a diverse agricultural realm that includes livestock, row crops and equipment manufacturing. To me, this is an area we need to highlight and find innovative ways to expand. By doing so, we will be able to provide more jobs, better-paying jobs, and increase the quality of life in our rural areas.

I am a firm believer that what revenue problems our state faces are best solved not by increasing taxes, but rather by expanding our tax base by putting more people to work and the current workforce finding higher incomes through new opportunities. Increasing the amount of disposable income for our hard-working families benefits them first and foremost, but also allows for government to better serve the people.

To achieve these goals, it is going to take many working together towards such a common goal. We have to put the days of petty partisan gridlock in Frankfort behind us. But, equally as important, state government officials cannot achieve this by ourselves. This type of monumental effort is going to take buy in and support from local leaders, both elected and civic. The Kentucky Farm Bureau, with its network in all 120 counties, can be an invaluable resource and I hope such efforts will have its support.

I look forward to working to make Kentucky a better place in which to live and welcome your support and ideas.

Jeff Hoover
 Speaker of the House
 Kentucky



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Congressman Andy Barr, top photo and Sen. Mitch McConnell received "Friend of Farm Bureau Awards during this year's annual meeting.

Kentucky Farm Bureau sets priority issues for 2017 legislative session

Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) concluded its 97th annual meeting with its board of directors approving priority issues for the 2017 legislative session. The organization's delegates adopted policy positions at its business session.

Wildlife management is one of KFB's top priorities. Farmers across the state have long dealt with damage to crops and property caused by ever increasing wildlife populations. A priority issue seeks effective wildlife management that will reduce the wildlife population in an effort to alleviate continued crop and livestock losses, automobile accidents, human injuries, and loss of life.

Another state priority issue for KFB is rural roads. Specifically, KFB supports the rural secondary and county road aid programs and continuation of the 22.2 percent allocation of the state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads. With road fund revenue declining, continuing the current road fund formula is critical to maintaining farm to market roads.

On the topic of water, KFB supports the Kentucky Water Resources Board and advocates for a coordinated effort to manage water resource projects across the Commonwealth.

Also on the list of state priorities is support of the current provisions of House Bill 44 (KRS 132.010), passed in 1979, which

limits revenue from real property taxes to four percent plus new growth. Proposals to exceed four percent should automatically go to the voters.

From a national priority perspective, KFB supports a thorough regulatory review to ensure regulations do not impose an undue economic burden on any segment of society and the regulatory process is transparent and results achievable.

The 2017 national priorities also included national farm policy. Congress will soon begin discussing the 2018 Farm Bill. KFB has already begun discussions to ensure that the next farm bill will provide the necessary provisions for a strong safety net for agriculture. A component of that debate will be the development of additional water resources.

In addition to setting priority issues for 2017 on the final day of the meeting, members heard from Kentucky 6th District Congressman Andy Barr and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who was accompanied by his wife and the Transportation Cabinet Secretary Designee Elaine Chao.

Both McConnell and Barr spoke of the positive changes expected at the national level with a new administration coming to Washington.

Barr said one of the first things he thinks will come up on the agricultural agenda in the next Congress will be regulatory relief in



particular water regulations.

"That Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule that you all have worried about from the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), consider that dead on arrival," he told members during a morning breakfast event.

McConnell said on the issue of trade, the United States needs to be the best country in the world to do business.

"I think it's important that we all remember America is a great trading nation going back to our founding," he said. *"There are a lot of winners in trade agreements and of course, American agriculture is a good example of that. If you add up all of the countries with which we currently have trade agreements, we have a trade surplus."*

He also said there are a number of things he hopes the new President will be able to do immediately upon taking office.



Mike Bach of Bath County Named 2016 Kentucky Farm Bureau Farmer of the Year

Mike Bach of Bath County was honored as the 2016 Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) "Farmer of the Year" during the organization's 97th annual meeting in Louisville.

Each year, KFB recognizes an individual whose efforts not only strengthen the state's agriculture industry but also demonstrates service and leadership both on and off the farm.

Three Kentucky farmers were selected as finalists in this year's competition – Bach, Darren Luttrell of Ohio County and Gary Cecil of Daviess County. After a careful review of each finalist's nomination form and an on-site visit to their farms in October, the judging committee selected Bach as KFB's 2016 "Farmer of the Year."

Over the past 37 years, Bach's farming operation has grown exponentially to the more than 2,500 acre operation it is today. The business consists of hay and corn silage along with 170 beef cattle, a cow/calf herd, corn, soybeans and hemp.

Bach markets the hay and silage

through the cow/calf operation and markets his calves in a number of ways including through direct feedlot sales and truck loads through local stockyards. Bach also sells bred heifers.

In addition, Bach and his wife Mary raise fruits and vegetables, namely peaches and asparagus. Through selling these items at farmers' markets, he has been able to better educate consumers about food production. Bach doesn't have any immediate plans to expand the farming operation, which has been a no-till farm for 15 years, but would like to see his son Steven, who has a nearby grain operation, continue the family tradition.

Bach said while time management and qualified help are problems, with the assistance of bigger equipment with better technology the operation has overcome those obstacles.

"We may work a little longer in the day but we sleep a lot better at night," he said.

Bach is very active in his community and church. He has served as the

president of the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association; serves as the Bath County Extension Foundation Board Vice President; has been on the Bath County Farm Bureau Board for more than 20 years; serves on the Kentucky Farm Bureau Forage Advisory Committee; serves on the Bath County Farm Bureau Executive Committee; and is a State 4-H Foundation Board member.

Bach was also instrumental in getting the Agricultural Marketing Center in Bath County established and was recently elected to the Bath County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

FARMER OF THE YEAR FINALIST, DARREN LUTTRELL

Since 1982, Darren Luttrell has been a part of the family farming operation and has seen production acres double from 1,800 to 3,600 consisting of corn and soybeans. He also operates eight broiler houses and raises 380 head of beef cattle.

In addition, he has also been associated with a leading agriculture

technology company as a dealer for the last 16 years. While this part of his overall farming experience is not a major revenue contributor, Luttrell said it has allowed him to know and utilize their technology quickly and work with some of the best and most progressive farmers in the area.

The Luttrell operation is a true family farm. His two sons are both involved full-time on the farm primarily focusing on the grain and cattle operations while wife Debbie helps him with the poultry business.

Luttrell has used different precision farming tools over the years to help reduce input costs and has always been willing to try new farming practices. He would like to expand his grain system and grow more acres in the future. He also plans to give his sons more responsibility in the decision making process on the farm.

"The key to our future is a well-executed succession plan that will ensure a successful operation for many years to come," said Luttrell.

He has been active in the Ohio County Farm Bureau, the local Chamber

of Commerce, his church and the local school system where he is known as "Farmer Luttrell" and has helped teach children about life on the farm.

FARMER OF THE YEAR FINALIST, GARY CECIL

Gary Cecil began his farming operation 41 years ago with 10 rented acres of tobacco. Today that number has grown to more than 1,000 acres of tobacco, grain and produce. In fact, Cecil is the largest commercial watermelon grower in Kentucky with 400 acres that produce 1,140 boxes per acre. He contracts with three companies for the watermelons as well as three tobacco companies for his burley crop of 228 acres.

Additionally, Cecil grows 370 acres of a variety of vegetables and grains including: cucumbers, peppers, pumpkins, corn and wheat. The farm also supplies many of the local schools with fresh produce during the spring and fall months.

His daughter Suzanne handles much of the produce distribution and local farmers' market sales and currently

has 200 customers in her Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. The couple's other daughter, Katie, is also beginning to work in the operation as she transitions back to the farm.

Cecil's son partners in the tobacco, watermelon and vegetable sides of the business along with a side business called Cecil's Spreader Service in which they spread fertilizer for farms in Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky.

His wife Imelda is a nurse, something Cecil credits as having been helpful with an outside income and insurance in the early farming years.

"We intend to create more opportunities for local food access in our region," said Cecil. *"We have been working on organic production methods for the past three years and are seeing that we will continue to expand this part of our operation, as the consumers are demanding it."*

Cecil is very active in his community, having served on Farm Bureau boards, his church, the Soil Conservation Board and local Chamber of Commerce.

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU FARMER OF THE YEAR

Judges met in mid-October to conduct interviews with the finalists and visit the farms. The "Farmer of the Year" recipient will be announced at KFB's 2016 state annual meeting in Louisville on December 1 and will receive \$1,000 from the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation. All three finalists will be given a KFB jacket, and the runners up will each receive \$250 from the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation.

In addition to the statewide recognition and prizes, KFB's "Farmer of the Year" winner will represent Kentucky in the Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Ag Expo Southeastern "Farmer of the Year" contest, the South's most prestigious agricultural award, in Moultrie, Georgia, October 17-19, 2017. Last year's winner received a \$15,000 cash award plus \$2,500 as a state winner from Swisher International, the use of a Massey Ferguson tractor for a year from Massey Ferguson North America, a \$500 gift certificate from the Southern States cooperative and a Columbia jacket from Ivey's Outdoor and Farm Supply.

NOTICE ANNUAL POLICYHOLDERS' MEETING OF KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

The annual meeting of the policyholders of Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, 10:00 a.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of (1) electing directors of the company, (2) to receive the annual report of its officers, and (3) to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

NOTICE ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF THE FB INSURANCE COMPANY

The annual meeting of the stockholders of The FB Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, 11:30 a.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of electing directors of the company and to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

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Mercer County Farm Bureau honored as Kentucky Farm Bureau's 2016 "Top County"

Recognized for its outstanding programming and for having a positive impact on both the community and its membership, Mercer County Farm Bureau was honored as Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) "Top County" in 2016. This is the second year in a row Mercer County has won the award. Volunteer leaders from Mercer County received the award at a recognition breakfast during the 97th KFB annual meeting at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville.

The "Top County" announcement headlined more than 110 membership program and insurance honors presented during the awards breakfast. Butler County, which has 2,170 members and a variety of successful service programs, was also honored as the Top County in the membership category for counties with 2,600 or fewer members. Mercer County (3,351 members) received recognition among the counties with 2,601 to 4,200 members, and Bullitt County (5,900 members) won top honors among counties with more than 4,200 members.

In other award presentations:

- Outstanding County Farm Bureaus were designated in 11 of Kentucky Farm Bureau's 11 districts. The recipients were: Barren, Bath, Breckinridge, Calloway, Casey, Franklin, Harlan, Harrison, Hopkins, Madison, and Mercer Counties.
- Gallatin, Mason, and Hardin Counties received Top Growth Awards for having the largest percentage of membership gain from 2015.
- Pacesetter Awards were given to counties in the three membership size classifications that were the first to achieve a membership gain during the year. The large county award went to Nelson County, followed in size by Mason and McCreary Counties.
- 11 counties won honors for having the highest member retention totals in their districts. Those winners were: Barren, Boyle, McCracken, Floyd, Grayson, Leslie, Lewis, Nelson, Pulaski, and Todd Counties.
- Wayne County was honored for having 53 consecutive years of membership growth.
- Grant County was recognized as the Most Improved County Farm Bureau.
- Three awards were given for most effective county Farm Bureau information programs. Daviess County won first place, Mercer County was second and Harlan County was third.
- 100 counties won awards for policy growth and profitability produced by their local Farm Bureau insurance agencies. Allen, Ballard, Fayette, Jefferson, Lee, and Lincoln Counties came closest to the growth goal set for that county.



The Hines Family with KFB leaders and Young Farmer Award sponsors.

Brad and Karen Hines

NAMED KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU'S 2016 OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARM FAMILY

Brad and Karen Hines of Hart County were honored as Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) 2016 "Outstanding Young Farm Family" during the organization's 97th annual meeting in Louisville. Each year KFB awards this distinction to a couple, under the age of 35, who has exhibited the strongest farm management skills, most consistent financial growth and highest level of involvement in both Farm Bureau and the community.

Growing up on his family's dairy and tobacco farm in Hart County, Brad Hines worked as a diesel technician at Jacobi Sales and ran his own diesel truck and farm equipment repair business after graduating college. Knowing he wanted to return to his agricultural roots full-time, Hines purchased his first 113-acre farm at an auction in 2005. Today he manages a 1,900-acre operation where he raises beef cattle and grows alfalfa, corn, soybean, tobacco and wheat.

His wife, Karen, who also was raised on a farm and was actively involved in FFA, 4-H and livestock clubs throughout her youth, works as a nurse at a regional hospital in addition to assisting with the farm's management and office work. In addition to farming their own land, Brad has also generated additional income over the years through his diesel repair business and by providing custom planting and



harvesting services on approximately 500 acres of land belonging to neighboring farmers.

As the couple continues to learn and implement more effective agriculture management practices, employ single-season calving and new breeding techniques for their cattle, and gain newer and larger facilities and equipment, their productivity has steadily increased each year.

Brad and Karen have both been members of Hart County Farm Bureau since 2001, are active members of the county, Kentucky and National Cattlemen Associations and participate in many other local industry and community-focused activities.

In addition to receiving statewide recognition as the newest "Outstanding Young Farm Family," the Hines won

a Case IH Scout courtesy of KFB Insurance and Case IH, an Apple iPad from Republic Bank & Trust, \$1,000 cash from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$750 Dyna-Gro Seed voucher from Crop Production Services, a \$500 voucher from Southern States Cooperative, and a voucher for 12 bags of seed corn from Pioneer Seed.

They also received an expense-paid trip to compete for the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Achievement Award next month in Phoenix, AZ.

Winners of the AFBF national contest will take home their choice of either a 2017 Chevrolet Silverado or a 2017 GMC Sierra, courtesy of General Motors, and a paid registration to the 2017 FUSION Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, in February, 2017. Pioneer Seed.

OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARM FAMILY FINALISTS

MATT AND AMANDA GAJZIK

The Gajdziks have been involved in farming most of their lives. Matt, although not born on a farm, had the benefit of spending time on a dairy operation at a young age. His love for agriculture grew from there, encouraging him to become a first-generation farmer.

Amanda's family were farmers and she grew up on a diverse grain, cattle and tobacco operation. Both received college degrees in agriculture and began their first farming endeavor together in 2002 with 10 cows. The two worked public jobs while growing the farm and today their operation consists of 2,000 acres jointly farmed with Amanda's sister and brother-in-law. Their farming operation includes corn, soybeans, burley tobacco, apples, peaches and hemp. They also raise cattle, and grow pumpkins, and hay.

The couple adds to their business with a lawn mowing and catering service. Their plunge into the produce industry came in 2010 recognizing the need in their community for a local



orchard. They now have an on-farm market to sell their produce along with other locally produced goods such as eggs, honey, meats vegetables and crafts. Through strategic planning and a bit of learning from their mistakes, the couple has doubled the foot traffic in their market every year since it began.

The couple are members of the Shelby County Farm Bureau. They have two children and plan on expanding their operation all in an effort to build a farm of

which their children can be proud.

The Gajzik's second place finish earned them 250 hours free use of a Kubota tractor, an Apple iPad from Republic Bank & Trust, \$750 cash from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$500 Dyna-Gro Seed voucher from Crop Production Services, a \$300 voucher from Southern States Cooperative, and a voucher for 8 bags of seed corn from Pioneer Seed.

BEN AND KATIE FURNISH

In 2003 Ben bought his first group of cows and raised his first tobacco crop utilizing the farming background he grew up with on his parents' 176 acre cattle and burley tobacco operation. From that point he expanded significantly on what his father had started and purchased his first farm of 46 adjoining acres in 2005.

Over the next decade he would continue to grow through purchased and leased land. Today, he and his family operate on more than 1,400 acres of owned and leased land. Farm production includes stocker steers, burley tobacco, corn, soybeans, wheat, mixed hay and, for the last two years, industrial hemp.

The Furnishes also custom harvest hay for a neighboring farm and custom harvest grains for neighboring farms when needed. Katie has a degree in nursing and works part-time as an RN at their local hospital. The couple has two children with another on the way. Ben, who has a degree in agriculture economics, uses the Kentucky Farm



Business Management program to help compare his family operation to others of the same size in an effort to improve and be more profitable.

The couple plans to expand their stocker operation in the future and are looking "heavily" at starting a "wean to breeding" hog operation allowing for another source of natural fertilizer, lowering their input cost without sacrificing crop yields.

Ben and Katie are members of Harrison County Farm Bureau and are active in many other organizations.

They also enjoy many family activities including being active in their church and participating in local recreational baseball.

For their third place finish, the Furnishes won 100 hours free use of a New Holland tractor, an Apple iPad from Republic Bank & Trust, \$500 cash from Premier Crop Insurance, a \$250 Dyna-Gro Seed voucher from Crop Production Services, and a \$200 voucher from Southern States Cooperative, and a voucher for 6 bags of seed corn from Pioneer Seed.



Kirby Green wins Kentucky Farm Bureau's Discussion Meet

Kirby Green of Daviess County won first place in the final round of this year's Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Discussion Meet, a debate-styled competition for young farmers that relies on an individual's skill in reasoning and logical discussion of issues. The event was one of the highlighted activities during KFB's annual meeting in Louisville.

Green bested three other entrants in the final event, winning a Kawasaki MULE donated by Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company and Jacobi Sales. She also won a trip to the national finals in Phoenix, AZ, as part of the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention, January 6-11, 2017. Winners of the national contest will have their choice of either a 2017 Chevrolet Silverado or a 2017 GMC Sierra, courtesy of General Motors, and a paid registration to the 2017 FUSION Conference in Pittsburgh, PA on February 10-13, 2017. Three national runners-up will receive a Case IH Farmall 55A, courtesy of Case IH, a \$2,500 cash prize and \$500 in STIHL merchandise, courtesy of STIHL.

Runner-up in the state Discussion Meet was Kyle Kelly of Owen County, who received \$1,000 cash from KFB.

The two other finalists in the state-level contest were Lilly Robertson of Logan County and Kyle Skidmore of Bullitt County. They each received \$200

cash awards from KFB.

KFB's Discussion Meet tests entrants on their basic knowledge of critical farm issues and their ability to respond in a panel setting to differing

points of view. The topic debated by the four finalists was: "American Agriculture depends on foreign-born labor force. How would you draft a national immigration policy?"

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Reported by J. Page

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Ryan and Miranda Chaplin Win Excellence in Agriculture Award



Ryan Chaplin (center left) and Miranda Chaplin (center) received the 2016 Excellence in Agriculture Award at Kentucky Farm Bureau's 97th annual meeting, held in Louisville. The award was presented by Mark Barker (center right), for Farm Credit Mid-America, Mark Haney, KFB President (left), and David S. Beck, KFB Executive Vice President (right).

Ryan and Miranda Chaplin of Bourbon County won top honors in Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) Excellence in Agriculture Awards program during the organization's 97th annual meeting in Louisville.

The Excellence in Agriculture competition awards first, second and third place distinctions each year to individuals or couples under the age of 35 who contribute to and exhibit leadership growth from consistent involvement in Farm Bureau and other agriculture and civic-oriented organizations. To qualify, contestants must not have the majority of their income subject to normal production risks associated with farming.

For the win, the Chaplins will go on to represent Kentucky in the national competition at the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) annual convention, held in Phoenix, AZ, January 6-11, 2017. The Chaplins were presented with a John Deere Gator, courtesy of Farm Credit Mid-America, and an expenses-paid trip to the AFBF annual meeting courtesy of Kentucky Farm Bureau.

Ryan Chaplin is a research facilities manager for the Meats Laboratory at the University of Kentucky. Miranda Chaplin is the operations/outreach director for Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education. They were both raised on beef cattle and hay family farms.

Second place in the contest went to Steven and Ashley Debord of Pulaski County. They were awarded \$400 courtesy of KFB. Mike Meyer from Harrison County placed third and received \$300 from KFB.

When the Chaplins compete for top national honors next month in Phoenix, they will be vying for their choice of either a 2017 Chevrolet Silverado or

2017 GMC Sierra, courtesy of General Motors, and a paid registration to the 2017 AFBF FUSION Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, February 10-13, 2017. Three national runners-up will receive a

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Ray Allan Mackey honored for Distinguished Service to Agriculture



Hardin County farmer Ray Allan Mackey has been named winner of Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) annual award for Distinguished Service to Agriculture. He was honored at the organization's 97th annual meeting at the Galt House Hotel.

Mackey grew up on the family farm that included livestock, tobacco, grain and commercial seed production. He was also involved an early age with 4-H and FFA projects.

After completing college, he began to manage the family farm under the leadership of his father. Mackey and his wife Jan purchased their first farm in 1986 raising grain, tobacco and alfalfa hay. As their family grew, they expanded the operation buying another farm and adding a small beef cattle herd and a small farrow-to-finish swine enterprise.

After the tobacco buyout of 2004 the Mackey's increased their volume of tobacco to the point of now having contracts for 165,000 pounds of burley tobacco. He also grows 1,500 acres of corn and soybeans with his brother David.

Mackey has always been eager to try new farming practices as a way to improve efficiency and profitability including the use of vertical tillage in seed bed preparation and variable rate soil testing and fertilizer application.

He has also been active in building relationships with foreign buyers to expand markets and improve exports while participating and serving in leadership roles with commodity organizations.

Some of those organizations included the Kentucky Beef Cattle Association, the Kentucky Pork

Producers Association and the Kentucky Soybean Association. He has also been active on the board of the Kentucky Corn Growers Association serving as vice-president and president and presently serves on its Promotion Council. He also currently represents that organization on the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Meat Export Federation. From a community standpoint, Mackey has served in many volunteer and

leadership roles in his church, with the local extension service, and with Farm Bureau. He has also worked extensively with youth programs and made presentations to 4-H and FFA winners during livestock shows.

Mackey has been an active spokesman for farmers and Farm Bureau through the years often being called upon by the local media for comments about ag-related issues.

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George Henderman recognized for Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau

George Henderman of Bullitt County has dedicated his life to his family and farm while also serving his local Farm Bureau organization and his community in a multitude of capacities. Because of that service, Henderman has been named winner of the 2016 Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau Award and honored at Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) 97th annual meeting at the Galt House Hotel.

In addition to his farming operation that consists of tobacco, grain, livestock, poultry, dairy, and fruits and vegetables, he has been an active Farm Bureau board member for 20 years.

He often speaks at Fiscal Court, conservation, and extension meetings on behalf of Farm Bureau but one of his biggest passions is speaking to school groups and educating students about agriculture.

Henderman is a lifetime member of

the FFA and supports the local chapter in many ways and is currently helping to organize a local FFA Alumni chapter. He is also active with 4-H. His involvement in the schools is widely known throughout the area and has been instrumental in advancing agriculture in the classrooms in Bullitt County including helping to get a computer lab for agriculture classes. Henderman also donated time and equipment for plowing and re-seeding the Boy Scout Camp.

He has been active in his church and many other organizations, as well. In addition to his many roles at Farm Bureau including President for the last three years, he has been involved in the District Conservation program, the Bullitt County Extension Service, a Kentucky Cattlemen's member, Farm Credit Services Board of Advisors, and the Bullitt County Farmers' market Committee, to name a few.

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Warren Ward of Pemberton, Minnesota says his knees ached so terrible at night that he couldn't get to sleep without taking pain killers. "An orthopedic surgeon told me both my knees were shot, I had bone rubbing on bone, and I needed knee replacement surgery. Then someone told me about Steuart's Pain Formula. I started using it and in 3 days I had no pain in my knees. I went right to sleep at night and I haven't taken a painkiller since."

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Judy Trunnell receives Excellence in Ag Literacy Award

Judy Trunnell, a teacher at College View Middle School in Daviess County, is the recipient of Kentucky Farm Bureau's 2016 Excellence in Ag Literacy Award. The announcement was made at the organization's 97th annual meeting.

KFB's Excellence in Ag Literacy Award recognizes and rewards teachers who excel in their efforts to incorporate agricultural concepts throughout their core curriculum. Nominations were made for a variety of pre-kindergarten through 12th grade teachers who use their classrooms to help students comprehend the value of agriculture as it impacts their personal well-being economically, environmentally and socially.

For winning the award, Trunnell received \$500 cash and an expense-paid trip to the National Ag in the Classroom Conference June 20-23, 2017 in Kansas City, MO, where she will represent

Kentucky in the national competition.

Trunnell has been teaching for the past 23 years and joined the staff at College View Middle six years ago. Knowing that everyone's livelihood depends on agriculture led her to teach students about the importance of making good, nutritious food choices and how to do so.

Her five-week unit on "Nutrition" began with teaching students about the six vital nutrients that bodies need in order to survive and what types of foods would be found under each classification.

Students were given a variety of activities to enhance the instruction including participation in a timed, class-by-class competition to see who could name the most fruits and vegetables by color variation. Trunnell said the students were amazed that certain colors could provide certain health benefits.

Her students also participated in

evaluating food labels to determine if that particular food source met nutritional needs by way of a classroom grocery store.

Trunnell also created, with the help of the school's Youth Service Center, a day called, "Farm to Fork: Celebrating Local Food and Local Farms."

A learning station was set up like a local farmers' market where students were able to go from station to station to better understand and appreciate some of the local foods and agriculture in the local community.

Trunnell said by utilizing the lessons in this "Nutrition" unit and the activities in which her students were involved, they have been motivated to take life-long lessons back to their own homes.

Trunnell graduated with a bachelor's degree from Brescia College and received her master's degree from Western Kentucky University.

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Randa Morris of Garrard County and Jacob Patterson of Pulaski County were awarded top honors in the 2016 Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth contest. Both winners were recognized during the December 1 general session of Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) 97th annual meeting, held at the Galt House Hotel in Louisville.

Morris and Patterson were selected from 22 district finalists out of approximately 400 young people who competed in county and district contests over the past several months. Judges met with finalists for personal interviews during the annual meeting, awarding points for each contestant's leadership record, conversational ability and scholastic achievement. KFB gave both Morris and Patterson a \$2,000 college scholarship, an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. on the KFB Congressional Tour in February 2017, a luggage set and watch for winning the contest.

Runners-up in the contest were Alexis Cherry of Warren County and Alex Cochran of Washington County. They each received a \$200 cash award and digital camera from KFB. Congeniality awards, which were voted on by their fellow contestants, were won by Megan Mitchell of Trigg County and Bradon Burks of Barren County. KFB awarded both of them with \$100 cash prizes for the honor.

The 22 district finalists who performed at KFB's annual meeting included: Megan Mitchell, Trigg County; Tanner Hicks, Calloway County; Destiny Oliver, Caldwell County; James Payne, Henderson County; Madelaine Mink, Hardin County; Alex Burke, Breckinridge County; Alexis Cherry, Warren County; Brandon Burks, Barren County; Mollie Hurst, Fayette County; Alex Cochran, Washington County; Haley Varney, Franklin County; John-Michael Sachleben, Trimble County; Presley Woodrum, Casey County; Jacob Patterson, Pulaski County; Randa Morris, Garrard County; William Campbell, Lincoln County; Kyleigh Withers, Bourbon County; Logan Bechanan, Nicholas County; Miranda Robinson, Greenup County; Cameron French, Wolfe County; Xiao-Mei Zheng, and Ethan Morton, Harlan County.

All 22 contestants received luggage pieces and \$100 for winning district competitions.

Randa Morris and Jacob Patterson win Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth contest



Jacob Patterson of Pulaski County (second from right) received the 2016 Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth award from Betty Farris, past Chair of KFB Women's Committee (left) and David S. Beck, KFB Executive Vice President (right). Also pictured are the 2015 winners, Regan Miller and Ben Pinkston.



Randa Morris of Garrard County (second from right) received the 2016 Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth award from Betty Farris, past Chair of KFB Women's Committee (left) and David S. Beck, KFB Executive Vice President (right). Also pictured are the 2015 winners, Regan Miller and Ben Pinkston.

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Elections held during Kentucky Farm Bureau's 97th annual meeting

Pulaski County farmer Mark Haney was re-elected president of Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) during the organization's 97th annual meeting. Also re-elected were Webster County's Eddie Melton as First Vice-President and Hart County's Fritz Giesecke as Second Vice-President. They comprise KFB's Executive Committee along with Executive Vice President David S. Beck.

Haney has served on the Executive Committee for 17 years and has been a state director since 1993. For many years he chaired the State Resolutions Committee. He is a past president and current board member of the Kentucky Center for Agriculture & Rural Development, past president of the Kentucky Center for Cooperative Development and past chairman of the Kentucky Horticulture Council.

Haney has also served as former president of the Pulaski County Farm Bureau, and is a current member of the American Farm Bureau Federation's Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

He and his brother, Don, produce apples and peaches near Nancy, KY, where they also raise beef cattle. They sell fresh produce from their orchards – as well as cider, jellies, baked goods and other products – at a KFB Certified Roadside Market located on the farm. He and his wife, Marlene, have two sons and a daughter.

Melton, a former president of Webster County Farm Bureau, is chairman of KFB's State Resolutions Committee and also chairs KFB's Farm Bill Working Group, which will conduct statewide discussion forums seeking input from Kentucky agriculture on provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill. Melton additionally serves on the board of directors for Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company. He and his wife, Regina, have a daughter.

Giesecke serves as the chair of KFB's Beef Cattle Advisory Committee. He also serves as KFB's representative for the U.S. Meat Export Federation. Giesecke has been an active member of the Hart County Farm Bureau for over 30 years where he has held a variety of leadership positions, including county president. He additionally served 25 years as county supervisor for the local soil conservation district. Giesecke and his wife, Lydia, have a daughter and a son, and farms in Horse Cave, KY.

Returning board members are: Randy Chrisman of Anderson County; Marshall Coyle of Bath County; Jay Coleman of Barren County; Patrick M. Henderson of Breckinridge County; Tripp Furches of Calloway County; David McGlone of Carter County; Shane Wiseman of Clark County; Bige Hensley of Clay County; Kim McCoy of Cumberland County; Dr. Nancy Cox of Fayette County; Glenn Howell of Fulton County; Brandon Davis of Green County; Larry Thomas of Hardin County; Roger Fannin of Harlan County; Alex Barnett of Harrison County; Terry Rowlett of Henry County; Cloyce Hinkle of Knox County; David L. Campbell of Lincoln County; Joe Paul Mattingly of Marion County; Kelly Thurman of McLean County; Mary Kate Kordes of Muhlenberg County; David Chappell of Owen County; Terry Lawson of Rockcastle County; Scott Travis of Spencer County; and Carroll Amyx of Wolfe County.

New to the board this year are Victor Rexroat of Russell County; Larry Clark of Green County; Zack Ison of Mercer County; Vickie Bryant of Monroe County; and Greg Drake of Butler County.

Leadership for two of KFB's key advisory committees was also announced during the organization's annual meeting. Zack Ison of Mercer County is the new chair of the Young

Farmer Advisory Committee and Vickie Bryant of Monroe County, was elected as chair of the Women's Advisory Committee.

The new vice-chair of the Young Farmer Committee is Caleb Ragland of LaRue County and the new secretary is Tiffany Ison of Mercer County. Rolling off the committee is immediate past chair Kent Moore of Daviess County.

The Young Farmer Committee is comprised of both singles and married couples. Those members for 2017, including the officers, are:

Eric and Amy Holbrook of Breathitt County; Zack and Tiffany Ison of Mercer County; Jeremy and Christi Jones of Clark County; Kent and Danya Moore of Daviess County; Caleb and Leanne Ragland of LaRue County; Nick and Audrey Roy of Adair County; and Nathan and Chelsea Wilson of Fulton County, Dustin and Tammy White of Union County; Matthew and Mollie Seiter, of Bracken County; Travis and Sherry Newman of Garrard County; Tyler and Andrea Ferguson of Johnson County; John Pedigo of Monroe County.

Sharon Furches of Calloway County and Judy Hayden of McLean County were elected first and second vice-chairs respectively of the Women's Committee.

Members of the 2017 Women's Advisory Committee, including officers, are:

Vickie Bryant of Monroe County; Mary Jayne Cannon of Fleming County; Pam Stockdale of Owen County; Tracey Edgington of Garrard County; Sharon Furches of Calloway County; Judy Hayden of McLean County; Margaret Hensley of Clay County; Sue Litkenhus of Anderson County; Lisa Osborne of Greenup County; Carol Sullivan of Taylor County; and Betty Farris of Butler County.



KFB Ag Tour 2016: Northern Kentucky

The northern region of Kentucky is an area situated in the one of the more populated sections of the state. However, it is also home to some of the most diverse agriculture operations, including ag-related businesses, in the state. With such a rich agriculture heritage, this area proved to be a great place for the 2016 Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Agriculture Tour.

The annual event involves executive committee members from the Federation and leadership from the Insurance Company visiting a number of venues including county offices, agricultural businesses and member family farms throughout Kentucky.

KFB President Mark Haney said the tour is a way to help stay connected with the local Farm Bureaus which serve as the foundation of the organization.

"This tour allows those of us from the state office to hear from our members and staff at the local level; to hear about their successes, their concerns and any issues," he said. *"It's about getting feedback from our members; what they think we need to be doing and really building relationships allowing county Farm Bureaus and members to feel like they have access to us to be an advocate for them."*

This year's agenda included stops in Boone, Campbell, Bracken, Pendleton, Robertson, Mason, Fleming, Lewis, Bourbon and Harrison Counties.

Eddie Melton, KFB First Vice-President said it is the input received from the county Farm Bureaus that shapes the KFB's policy and priority issues.

"Every year our Resolutions

Committee meets to decide on issues we will advocate for in the coming year and that information comes from each and every county Farm Bureau," he said. *"Being out on this tour just reinforces that relationship and reminds us all just how important the grassroots advocacy efforts are to this organization."*

Fritz Giesecke, KFB Second Vice-President told members at each stop on the tour how grateful KFB is to have such effective advocates throughout the state.

"They took the time to come to these meetings and talk to us about their local Farm Bureaus, listen to what we had to say and voice any concerns they might have related to their farms or agriculture in general, and we really appreciated that," he said.

John Sparrow, Executive Vice-President and CEO of the KFB Insurance Company said it is gratifying to think about all the dedicated people in KFB and how special they are.

"In talking about KFB Loves KY, it comes from the core of what the organization is really about; people that serve their communities on behalf of Farm Bureau," he said. *"It speaks to why the organization is so strong and why it is so effective."*

David Beck, KFB Executive Vice-President noted just how important county Farm Bureaus are to their communities.

"Think about what those communities would be like without those county Farm Bureaus. They certainly would be missed," he said. *"We may do things differently now than when we started nearly a century ago but, we do them for the same reasons;*

to serve as the Voice of Agriculture and to make our rural communities strong. We have a bright future ahead if we work together and collaborate."

Haney said it is a good feeling to visit the members on this tour and across the state. At each location he talked about issues that may be coming up soon especially when it concerns water use on the farm, how important trade is to family farms and how vital it is to have input on the next Farm Bill.

"These members are not only supporting Farm Bureau but rural Kentucky; where they live and where they raise their children and grandchildren," he said. *"They understand the need to be an advocate at the courthouse in their county but also at the statehouse in Frankfort."*

Haney added that when he visits county Farm Bureaus, he encourages members to be bold, step out to get things done and encourage young people to be involved in their local organizations.

This year's tour concluded in Paris where Bourbon County Farm Bureau President Jeff Carter said working with their agency manager has helped create many growth opportunities.

"We have invested our County Incentive money into sending our young farmers to conferences, to Washington and sending more people to our annual meeting," he said. *"We cannot do all that we do without our agency manager. We do everything we can to make sure he is successful and in turn, he tries to do all he can to make sure we are successful. And it is working well in Bourbon County."*





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KPPA ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM

FRIDAY (January 27, 2017) (All times central)

6:30 p.m. — Scholarship Auction Banquet

- Awards
- Scholarship Auction

SATURDAY (January 28, 2017)

7:00 - 9:00 a.m. - BREAKFAST (Hartland Café)

All meetings will be in Meeting Room 1 Sloan Convention Center

9:00 a.m. — Veterinary Feed Directive
 - Panel discussion

10:00 a.m. — National Pork Board Report

- Stephen Herring, National Pork Board

10:00 a.m. — Ladies Program

- Rosie Cochran, Pharmacist

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. — Interviews for 2018 KPPA Officers and National Delegates Crosswinds Board Room

10:30 a.m. — Hog and Grain Markets

- Dr. Steve Meyer, Vice President, Pork Analysis, Express Markets Inc. Analytics

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. — LUNCH (Hartland Café)

1:00 p.m. — Tosh Farms

2:00 p.m. — 2017 KPPA Annual Meeting

• KPPA Financial Report - Benji Hudnall

• NPPC Report

• NPB Report - Stephen Herring

• Election of 2017 KPPA Officer and National Delegates

6:00 p.m. — Kentucky Pork Producers Association Banquet

(Meeting Room 1 & 2 Sloan Convention Center)

• Awards

• Quilt Drawing



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CANDID CONVERSATIONS



What to expect with VFD implementation

KFB Candid Conversations presents a discussion about the topical issues facing the agricultural industry in a question and answer format with a member of Kentucky's agricultural community. In this column, State Veterinarian Dr. Robert Stout discusses the Veterinary Feed Directive, a regulatory action taken by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and goes into effect January 1, 2017.

Can you provide a little background on the Veterinary Feed Directive (VFD)?

Antibiotics ushered in the era of modern medicine and have been in use for over 70 years. They have been widely used in veterinary medicine, starting with penicillin and the sulfa drugs since the 1950's. Appropriate use in animals has long been a contentious issue whether by veterinarians or by producers. It's taken nearly 20 years to reach the implementation of the VFD rule. FDA's stated purpose is to phase out the use of Medically Important Antimicrobial Drugs (MIAD) for food production purposes.

Distribution of antibiotic products can be placed into three categories:

1. Over the counter (OTC) products: These include many topical and injectable antibiotics labeled for "veterinary use."
2. Prescription products: These products are available directly from a veterinarian or by prescription at a pharmacy.
3. VFD's products: MIAD's for use in feed require a written or electronic document to be issued by a veterinarian and presented to the producer and the feedmill. The records are required to be maintained for two years.



Dr. Stout, right appeared with Ag Commissioner Ryan Quarles at a meeting earlier this year.

What was the reasoning behind the FDA's decision to implement this directive?

Antibiotic resistance has been recognized in both human and animal medicine for several decades, but has become a focus of public health in the last decade due to several instances of specific antibiotics becoming ineffective. This has led to the current action taken by FDA. The focus of the VFD rule regarding MIAD's is two-fold: MIAD's in feed will be limited to veterinary oversight of their use after January 1, 2017. The VFD outlines the process for producers, feed mills and veterinarians to follow. Off label use is prohibited; and their usage in food animals is limited to three specific areas: treatment of disease, control of disease, and prevention of disease. Use for enhancing weight gain and feed efficiency is prohibited by the rule.

How will this affect livestock producers?

If indeed the producers need to use antibiotics in their feed for any purpose, they are required to establish a veterinary-client relationship (VCCR). In

other words, they cannot buy this type of feed unless they get a veterinarian to sign off on it and the veterinarian can't issue a VFD unless he or she has been on the farm and knows the animals on that farm and the management practices. The VCCR is defined in the Veterinary Practice Act that governs veterinarians. The farmer is going to have to plan. It's not going to be something they can wake up one morning and say I have to get this done today. It's not going to be time consuming but it will require some planning. The other thing that is really important is that MIAD's will be restricted to use as stated on the label by the manufacturer. That is the only thing for which producers can use it. As an example, a very common practice is the usage of CTC, Chlorotetracycline, used with a mineral mix, especially in the summertime, as a preventative for pink eye. It seems like that would fit the parameters for disease treatment and control but it's not on the label for CTC so it will not be available for that purpose.

Are only food animals affected by this regulation?

Yes, it is just that including, swine,

cattle, small ruminants and bees. And the thing with bees may be problematic as veterinarians don't know much about bees and they don't want to know about bees and yet they are listed as the person who would have to sign off on their (VFD listed feed) use in bees. FDA may look at some way to refer that responsibility to someone that has knowledge. But that is an opinion on my part at this point in time. FDA has also been questioned about availability of some products for use in small ruminants.

In your opinion, will this put an added strain on local veterinarians?

A veterinary cannot ethically execute a VFD unless he or she has that VCPR with the farm. Is there in most cases a vet available? Yes, there is. Will it be a hardship in some cases? Yes, both on the veterinarian and the producer.

Will this be costly to livestock owners or feed manufacturers?

There are certainly going to be costs associated with the manufacturer in changing labels and the way things usually happen, those costs get passed down the line. If indeed there is an impetus to change the label, then I would think the producer could expect to participate in the cost of that. Certainly veterinarians will have to charge for their time to establish a VCPR and to issue the VFD.

Have you received many questions from producers about the directive?

Quite frankly, I haven't. We have participated in many presentations and Q&A's at producer meetings and at Farm Bureau, but really as far as producers reaching out to us, no. There have not been a lot of questions. I think this means they haven't been to the feed mill on January 2 and asked for the product and told they can't have it. My opinion is there's going to be a lot of surprised folks. It hasn't hit home yet and when it does, that's when we'll probably get the questions.

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Farm City Luncheon and Beginning Farmer Summit Just Two of the Highlights at the 2016 NAILE

In addition to being the world's largest all-breed, purebred livestock show, the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) is host to many other activities. This year was no different and included a first time event.

The Kentucky/Tennessee Beginning Farmer Summit brought a capacity crowd together to hear from agricultural leaders in both states talk about the importance of and resources available to new farmers.

Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said there has long been a tradition of small family farms in the region but there have also been many changes.

"Gone are the days when everyone in your community worked on the farm, when your family worked on the farm and when finding labor was easy," he said. *"We are part of a global economy today, something that we must learn to adapt to and be a part of."*

Quarles also said that, with the average age of today's farmer being 62, ways must be found to inspire the next generation of agricultural leaders and do a better job of defining who today's farmer is and how efficient and diverse small family farms have become..

John McCauley, State Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack asked for the summit to bring together new farmers as a way to learn about available programs. Another focus of the summit was to discuss what could be done to help the younger generation coming out of colleges of agriculture to come back to the farm.

"Across the nation we have declining numbers in our young farmers. We're graduating a lot of great students from our colleges of agriculture but we're losing many of them to ag engineering, ag chemical companies and other



Vickie Oliver, Kroger's Director of Grocery Merchandising, center, accepts the 2016 Agribusiness of the Year Award, from Gary Huddleston, left, Chairman, Agribusiness Industry network (left) and Sarah Davasher-Wisdom, COO of Greater Louisville, Inc.



KFB's David S. Beck presented the 2016 Harold Workman Agriculture Leadership Award to Dr. C. Oran Little.

areas of agriculture," he said.

McCauley added that through a variety of agencies there are opportunities for these young farmers.

The summit was designed to do just that, offer information that will help this next generation make the transition to the farm easier or staying on the farm more obtainable.

Tom Womack, the Deputy Com-

missioner of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture said both states have the same goals and objectives and it will take all in agriculture to reach goals and objectives.

"There is always going to be some risk in agriculture but I don't want you to be discouraged. I want to tell you that there is room at the table for you because of the demands that are going

to be placed on agriculture to meet rural demand for food, fiber and fuel," he told the attendees.

Kentucky Farm Bureau's Jackson Tolle, Assistant Director, Agriculture Education, Women's and Young Farmer Programs served on one of the discussion panels. He said, as a young farmer himself, it's important to get as much information out to this new generation as possible.

"There are so many resources available to beginning farmers at both the state and federal levels, it's critical for agriculture organizations to keep them informed and to help as much as possible in taking advantage of these opportunities," he said.

FARM-CITY LUNCHEON

In addition to the many shows, the new events and the rodeo, one of the most popular attractions at the NAILE is the annual Farm-City Luncheon which celebrates the contributions of the agribusiness industry to the community. During this year's luncheon, two noteworthy awards were presented; the Agribusiness of the Year Award and the Harold Workman Agriculture Leadership Award.

The Kroger Company was recognized as the 2016 Agribusiness Award winner. Sponsored by the Agribusiness Industry Network, this award honors a Louisville-area agribusiness which excels in financial growth and stability, employee relations and contributions to the overall agricultural economy.

The 2016 Harold Workman Agriculture Leadership Award was presented to Dr. C. Oran Little by Kentucky Farm Bureau Executive Vice-President David S. Beck.

During his presentation of the award, Beck recognized the many accomplishments Dr. Little made during his career in agriculture including his tenure as Dean of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

The Harold Workman Agriculture Leadership Award, named in honor of the former long-time President and Chief Executive Officer of the Kentucky State Fair Board, was established as a tribute to the men and women who have given unselfishly of their time and efforts in Service to Kentucky's Agriculture Industry.



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KFB Takes Active Role in Farm Bill Discussions

In its efforts to advocate for agriculture at both the state and national levels, Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) has initiated discussions with agriculture officials and organizations across the state related to the Farm Bill.

In the coming year, discussions will continue to be held by way of Farm Bill Discussion Committees as to create a blueprint of sorts detailing what state agriculturalists feel needs to be included, excluded or changed as part of the 2018 Farm Bill.

This collective group of stakeholders will help identify the needs and concerns of Kentucky farmers that are connected to agriculture's most important piece of legislation.

KFB President Mark Haney said input is critical especially with so many of the lawmakers and much of the general public being far removed from the farm.

"More and more of the very people who vote on this legislation aren't overly familiar with agriculture. So it's important for those of us who are in the industry to have input in what is included in the bill, and to have discussions with our lawmakers to help them understand it, as well," he said.

Haney added that by beginning the process at this time, Kentucky agriculture will be poised to have a strong voice when it comes to the content of the next bill.

"We think now is an important time to begin these conversations of what we think works with the current Farm Bill and maybe what's not working as well, and we think the timing is right for us to go to work on that now," he said. *"This is a huge piece of legislation and everyone has an opinion on it so we are going to try, collectively, to assemble many of those opinions so we can come with a unified voice to our elected leaders."*

KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton is serving as chair of the discussion committees. He said having the various commodity groups and other stakeholders involved is critical when it comes to input for the Farm Bill.

"As we move through these meetings,



it's important that we have a unified message and having so many from the different agriculture sectors at the table will help to ensure this," he said.

The Farm Bill, which was originally passed in 1933, is the main agriculture/food related piece of legislation that is re-authorized approximately every five years. It consists of 12 sections or titles. These titles cover a wide range of subjects including crop insurance, conservation, nutrition, trade and rural development, to name a few.

Funding for the bill comes two ways; one through direct or mandatory appropriations and the other through yearly appropriations or discretionary funds that are part of the overall federal budget.

The largest part of the bill, from a financial perspective, is related to the Nutrition Title which includes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Approximately 77 percent of the current bill appropriations are allocated to this title. When the 2014 Farm Bill was moving through Congress, there were efforts to separate the Nutrition Title from the remainder of the legislation.

Melton said keeping the bill together, as it is, only makes sense pointing out the obvious relationship between food programs and the programs that oversee those producing the nation's food supply.

"I think it is important to keep the Farm Bill intact as it is without removing the Nutrition Title for the simple fact, food production and food distribution

go hand-in-hand regardless what initiatives are used to fund programs such as SNAP," he said. *"As the demand for local foods grows, more and more people who need some type of food assistance are taking advantage of venues such as farmers' markets to obtain, fresh, healthy food while gaining a broader knowledge of where their food comes from."*

Simply put, the USDA describes the bill as being, *"important legislation that provides authorization for services and programs that impact every American and millions of people around the world."*

For more information about the Farm Bill, visit the web page, <https://www.kyfb.com/federation/commodities/2018-farm-bill>.

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Ag leaders gather at KFB State Office to discuss

“A different time in agriculture”



Agriculture commodity group leaders from across the state along with Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) Executive Committee met at the State Office in November to express their views on the current state of agriculture, and to hear about upcoming legislative issues at both the state and federal levels.

This annual gathering included State Sen. Paul Hornback, Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, State Rep. Tom McKee, Chair of the House Agriculture and Small Business Committee and representatives from some of Kentucky's Congressional delegation who led discussions about possible upcoming national legislative issues related to agriculture.

Hornback first said it was going to be a different year and a different time in Frankfort.

"For many years it has been a divided government and there have been a lot of issues that we thought the Senate should get passed and haven't," he said.

The recent election brought about the first change in the House majority since the 1920s with more than two dozen new legislators coming to Frankfort to take their seats in the General Assembly once this upcoming session begins.

Hornback asked the ag leaders that they "not push too hard" as there are many things to be "fixed" and they could not all be done in the first year.

As far as issues to watch for once this 30-day session of the General Assembly begins, Hornback said he thinks legislation related to Right to Work and Prevailing Wage could see quick passage. And while they are not specific to agriculture, they affect the industry.

Hornback also mentioned tax reform, calling it a big issue but one that will likely not be handled in this next legislative session. However, he did say there is a possibility of addressing it in a special session or in 2018.

Legislation connected to weight variances on poultry trucks, and divisible loads related to equipment hauling are likely to pass in this session, noted Hornback. These issues directly affect



PHOTO BY TIM THORNBERRY

Pictured from left: Rep. McKee, KFB's Jeff Harper and Sen. Paul Hornback.

“As we look at the past and think about the future, I’m always excited to think about agriculture and I continue to be excited about where we are...”

State Rep. Tom McKee

the ag industry and have stalled in past sessions.

McKee was recognized for his service to the state and to agriculture. He said it has been an honor to work with the commodity leaders present at the meeting and with agriculture.

"As we look at the past and think about the future, I'm always excited to think about agriculture and I continue to be excited about where we are, even though we are facing a different time in agriculture," he said.

McKee acknowledged that current market conditions are presenting challenges to keep agriculture the strong industry that it is.

He also said the tax reform issue is something to be moved slowly on.

"Remember this, the current tax structure we have now, we have a pretty broad based tax system and agriculture is treated favorably, and we must be very cautious as we move toward

some kind of tax reform," he said.

In other ag-related matters, McKee noted that as the state moves toward tax reform, the rural road formula needs to remain as it is. He said he would love to see a better distribution of alternative fuels and he thinks the state's industrial hemp legislation may be in store for some slight modifications.

McKee also said, with so many young people wanting to farm but also needing to work another job, creating technical education opportunities is important in order to get these young people trained for jobs that are already available.

From a federal perspective, the big topic was trade, along with other national issues including the Farm Bill and discussions that will be taking place in the coming year, farm labor, and immigration and regulatory reform.



FINANCIAL LIQUIDITY CAN HELP YOU WEATHER LOW GRAIN PRICES—WHILE MINIMIZING THE BURN

By Steve Allard, Chief Credit Officer

CASH BURN OR CASH BUILD

The only thing certain about commodity cycles is that they're uncertain, and farmers must have a plan in place to maintain the financial liquidity needed to plant and harvest an annual crop in good times or bad.

Given crop prices and production costs projected by the USDA for 2016, it appears many corn, soybean and wheat farmers will be operating at a cash flow deficit, otherwise known as cash burn. Because we're coming off several prosperous years, cash burn rates haven't been top of mind in quite some time. However, understanding cash burn or cash build rates is important, as they indicate if you'll enter the coming year in a position of strength or a position of challenge.

Determining an individual burn rate, and what a farmer needs to do to manage it, is an important exercise. Farmers can expect their lenders to want to have a good understanding of their working capital position and projected cash flow, including estimated crop yields and prices. Analyzing these variables along with individual fixed costs helps determine if the operation is in a cash build or cash burn situation. And in today's environment, we're finding that many farming operations are showing some level of cash burn.

In our work with customers, we've identified areas where they can minimize the impact of cash burn. By understanding fixed costs and outlining an approach to liquidity, you can put yourself in a position to reduce the impact of low grain prices in the coming year.

Control fixed costs

Seed, fertilizer, fuel and other costs needed to produce a crop are categorized as variable costs. But farmers also need to understand their fixed costs, which can include land, buildings, equipment, employees, family living expenses and taxes. Fixed costs are costs that must be paid whether you put in a crop or not. After looking at thousands

of customers' financial data here at Farm Credit Mid-America, we see a lot of variance in farmers' fixed costs. And that is a determining factor in whether the farming operation is in a cash burn or cash build mode. In fact, fixed costs are typically the one variable that separates high-cost and low-cost producers. And in this environment, it is especially important to be a low-cost producer. Recent actions taken by customers to manage fixed costs include terminating leases on marginally producing rental acres. Some are selling underutilized or non-critical assets. Others are renegotiating rental rates with landlords or critically analyzing any opportunities to buy additional land. Many are forgoing equipment purchases, as can be demonstrated by recently reduced profit forecasts of equipment manufacturers.

Rethink liquidity

In recent profitable years, many farmers paid cash for capital assets, including equipment and real estate. Or they made very large down payments and/or financed the balance on shorter than normal loan repayment terms. Those decisions appeared wise at the time, but may now place additional strains on cash flow and liquidity.

Loan refinancing can have a direct, immediate and positive impact on your cash burn/cash build rate. Although a five- to ten-year loan may have looked like a good way to finance a real estate purchase when grain prices were much higher, those large loan payments in a low grain price environment can now create a real challenge for cash flow.

We're encouraging farmers to talk with us to make sure their loan structure and terms are right for today's environment and their situation. Stretching loan terms out from five or ten years to a more typical 20-year amortization reduces the annual cash flow requirement to service the debt.



The information in the report is derived from Farm Credit Mid-America's experience in rural and agricultural lending, and does not take into account the financial needs of particular individuals. This content is intended to be informational and is not a substitute for detailed advice on your specific situation.

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PHOTO BY TIM THORNBERT

KFB pushes for improved water resource management

BY TIM THORNBERT

In a year that went from water-thirsty-normal conditions for most of the spring and summer to a very dry period in the fall, so far farmers got a lesson in meteorology in 2016 seeing how quickly the weather can change.

These changing conditions came at a time when the subject of water has been at the top of many discussions. The creation of a water resource management program was one of the priority issues adopted by the Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Board of Directors for 2016.

The advocacy for such a program turned to reality during the last General

Assembly Session with passage of HB 523 creating the Kentucky Water Resources Board (KWRB) which is administered by the Energy and Environment Cabinet. The board will assist the cabinet in conducting research and developing recommendations to enhance the quality of water resources accessible for agricultural production in the state.

KFB's Water Management Working Group (WMWG) played a major role in getting that legislation recommended and passed, doing so unopposed with the chambers of the state legislature.

Steve Coleman, chair the WMWG, retired Director of the Kentucky Division of Conservation and KWRB member said the new board has been

taking work of the recent dry period in Kentucky and other states in the region.

"This is not the worst time for a drought occurrence and thankfully, our growing season is over, with the exception of winter wheat and cover crops. But going into winter with a shortage of water, snow does not bring the same moisture retention as rainfall in the spring, summer and fall," he said.

Coleman added that the KWRB will be involved with multiple agencies and organizations through legislation at all levels to the point of making recommendations to the Governor's Office as part of the drought mitigation process in the state.

"Years being rained out a season, we've now had a number of months

of planning and there are a number of considerations of how farmers can improve water storage practices," Co-chair said regarding the creation of the KWRB. "Those things are beginning to take shape and as we talk about the drought mitigation plan, and looking at it in the early stages of drought, people are around the table with good ideas and a network ready to help out and jump into action."

KFB President Mark Hines said while the issue of water is ever-present on the minds of farmers, it is also a subject that can bring together the agriculture community and their urban neighbors.

"Just like agriculture, water is something that affects all of us in one way or another. We need both to survive and being proactive about issues related to our water supplies helps to alleviate any differences that might occur in times of a drought or another type of water crisis," he said. "The work of the WMBWG has been invaluable in helping Kentucky lead the way in water resources development and I can't say enough about the support this state has received from our General Assembly members who recognized the need to pass water resources legislation. We thank them all."

Navigating weather events

In addition to all the proactive steps being taken in this state to help combat any issues caused by drought or other water-related situations, some help from Mother Nature is always welcome.

Mark Dixon, an agriculture extension agent at the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, said while the state is experiencing below normal levels of moisture now, the longer term forecasts do indicate some help.

He pointed out a period in November and 90 days before, when there was a rare deficit of over six inches below normal, setting the stage for more of a hydrological or long-term drought.

The driest areas of the state were located in the southeast and

southcentral portions of Kentucky which were designated under in the fall to be at extreme drought levels.

However, Dixon said the events experienced in late November and December have helped tremendously. In fact, the last week of November saw the first significant rainfall across many parts of the state since late August which may have helped farmers dodge the weather buffer. Another rain event occurred during the first week of December that brought considerable amounts of moisture to most of the state.

As of the most recent week into December, all extreme drought conditions in Kentucky had been relieved. But over 50 percent of the state remained at a D2 or severe drought level, as of the December 13 report that came from the U.S. Drought Monitor.

Dixon said the long range forecasts through March were calling for above normal precipitation and conditions continue to improve in Kentucky but long term forecast should always be taken, "with a grain of salt."

Dry conditions and the economy

Before the latest rain event, there are reports of many farm ponds being dry but municipal water supplies did not cause too much concern through this dry period. Perhaps the biggest problems were associated with forest fires not only in Kentucky but throughout much of the Southeast.

According to information from the UK, the Kentucky Division of Forestry estimates that, as of Nov. 27, more than 46,000 acres of woodlands had burned in southeastern Kentucky since Oct. 27.

These losses are not only having an impact from an ecological standpoint but economically, as well.

Jeff Strayer, extension professor of silviculture in the UK Department of Forestry, said wildfires have resulted in a \$1.1 million loss in timber potential in Eastern Kentucky, and this figure is increasing.

"Unfortunately, this loss adds to the

loss in timber that does not grow overnight. It can take 50 to 70 years, at the very least, to regrow the volume and quality loss on these acres," he said.

Strayer noted that in 2015, revenues from timber harvests, primary industries such as logging and millage and secondary industries that use lumber and other primary products in manufacturing added \$14.5 billion in direct, indirect, and induced revenue to the state's economy.

KFB advocacy at national level

In looking toward approving Kentucky's water resources, the work of the WMBWG has proven to be productive. KFB's Executive Committee recently visited Washington, D.C. to meet with the state's Congressional delegation and update them on the efforts being made in Kentucky on behalf of water development issues.

KFB Executive Vice-President David S. Beck said the meetings with Congressional members presented an opportunity to inform them individually of the progress being made in Kentucky regarding water management and emphasize the importance of federal support in moving forward.

"In dealing with water issues, it really is a partnership at both the state and federal levels. The thing is, it's right to be proactive in doing things collectively and to establish projects enabling farmers to see firsthand the opportunities in capturing water to use on the farm and alleviate some of the pressures between rural and urban communities on water demands," he said.

Beck also pointed out that good water management can mean the opportunity to grow the economy in that decisions made by other businesses and industries to stay or relocate to the state could often depend on the availability of ample water supplies.

The Washington trip also gave KFB leadership the chance to present to each of the Kentucky lawmakers a copy of the organization's priority issues for 2017, which includes water resources,