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Cover photo by: Tim Thornberry Flags flying proudly in in Franklin County.

Interior graphics by Melissa LaRoche

Kventucky 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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President's

¬ or nearly 100 years, Kentucky Farm Bureau has served as the "Voice of Agriculture," in its efforts to help rural communities be successful, and from its beginning, KFB has operated as a grassroots organization. Today we have offices serving all 120 Kentucky counties.



As a member of the organization's executive committee, I take pride in our mission and the fact

that no matter where you live in this great state, Farm Bureau has a presence.

The structure of this organization is that of two entities, the Insurance Company so many of you are familiar with, and the Federation, which is the agriculture advocacy arm of KFB. And it is because of the membership for both, that makes us one of the most successful Farm Bureau's in the country. Collectively, we can do amazing things by coming together, both Insurance and Federation, and operating in a joint manner.

Over the decades. KFB has advocated on behalf of its members for a variety of laws, rules and regulations to enhance our rural way of life.

In doing so, the end result has not always been a benefit just for farm member families, but all of our membership, and all Kentuckians. As a rule, if the farm communities are doing well, that transcends into the overall economic wellbeing of the Commonwealth.

In fact, this organization began at the request of the business community in 1919. Those leaders then, knew the value of a strong rural environment; if farm families were prosperous, they would bring much of that prosperity to main street businesses, and that still holds true today.

Along the way, Farm Bureau has looked for other ways to add value to its membership including insurance for property and casualty assistance. Eventually the insurance benefits that began in 1943, would grow from protecting only livestock to covering farms, homes, and automobiles, along with other types of protection. Today, the Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Company is the largest mutual insurance company headquartered in the state.

Our Member Services Division works extensively to identify needs of member families so benefits can be added or modified to fit those needs. Benefits for the farm, for the home; identity theft, security, health, travel, automobiles and banking are examples of what KFB does to assist its member families in making their lives better.

From a policy development perspective, and in keeping with the grassroots origins of KFB, policy recommendations are a critical component in allowing county Farm Bureaus a voice in what issues are supported by the organization. These recommendations really exemplify who we are as a farm organization and what topics we consider to be important.

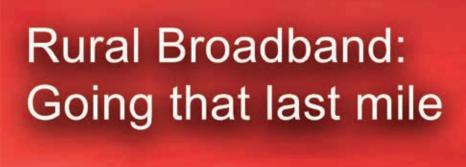
Through gradual and sustained growth, KFB now stands as the fourth largest Farm Bureau in the country. By having that strong voice, we can be assured that Kentucky will always have a seat at the table during discussions and decisions of policy as it relates to agriculture and rural development, at both the state and federal levels.

But the successes we see as an organization come because of the members who make up Kentucky Farm Bureau and that will still be true tomorrow and for the next 100 years.

> **Mark Haney** President Kentucky Farm Bureau

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COMMENT COLUMN



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

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Comment



In looking back over my career at Kentucky Farm Bureau, I never really envisioned the day I would retire, but I always heard when that time came, I would know it. It has taken 41 years for that to happen and I can honestly say, I have loved being a part of the Farm Bureau family every step of the way.

However, in everyone's life comes change, and that time has come for me. Through these many years, I have had the opportunity to take on different roles for our organization from field work, to public policy, to administration. And in each one

of those roles, I learned something new, almost every day.

I've seen great organization-led accomplishments from a legislative standpoint including passage of the Farmland Assessment Constitutional amendment which has had a tremendous impact on the protection of farmland; House Bill 44, which was passed in 1979 and has ultimately benefited every property owner, whether on a farm or in an urban area; and the passage of legislation that created the Kentucky Water Resources Board to address water related issues in a proactive way.

I have also seen the world of agriculture change in our state going from a predominantly tobacco-based farm economy to one of the most diverse agricultural economies in the country. Thanks to the contributions made by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, many more farm families have been able to remain on their farms and maintain a generations-old tradition.

Through all of these achievements and all the milestones reached over the last 41 years, I am proud to say Kentucky Farm Bureau has been a driving force in making opportunities become reality in helping to keep our farm families and rural communities sustainable and successful.

I found that the way we do things as an organization to meet the needs of our members, may have changed through the passage of time, but we never changed the reason why we do what we do. Collectively we, as a group, have achieved goals we may not have otherwise been able to accomplish individually.

Kentucky Farm Bureau, at its heart, is an agricultural organization and I feel strongly that we have made a difference for all communities and all Kentuckians.

From a membership standpoint, I feel our member benefits are second to none beginning with the flagship insurance company. Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance has grown to be the largest mutual insurance company headquartered in the state, something all of us at this organization take great pride in.

While I prepare for a new role as President and CEO of the State Fair Board, my many experiences while serving at Farm Bureau will prove to be a big advantage as I take on this position.

I look forward to new opportunities but my heart will always belong to this wonderful organization. I can't thank the dedicated members from across the state, and the incredible staff enough for allowing me to be a part of their lives through these many years. I have gained lifelong friends and can honestly say I have been a part of the best Farm Bureau family in the country.

David S. Beck

Executive Vice President Kentucky Farm Bureau

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Kentucky Farm Bureau took the proactive step to ensure Kentucky citizens and farmers have a secure supply of fresh water for the future by creating the 20 member Water Management Working Group. Adequate water resources are critical to agricultural production and Kentucky's overall economy. Planning and developing plentiful water resources now will prevent one segment of the economy being pitted against the other during times of extreme drought. Learn more about Kentucky Farm Bureau and how we support the Kentucky Water Resource Board at kyfb.com/federation/water.



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THE VALUE IN KFB MEMBERSHIP

hen Farm Bureau was first established, it was done so to benefit farm families and rural communities, serving as a collective voice for the ag industry. Throughout the years, that mission has not changed. As the organization has grown to also include associate members, providing ongoing benefits to members has been a very important part of the organization.

Through the years, developing and promoting member benefits has been a key component in helping the organization grow. Kentucky now ranks as the fourth largest Farm Bureau in the country, and at the end of the day, having such strong numbers helps the organization in its advocacy efforts which in turn, positively affects our members in both rural and urban areas.

"Membership is what drives this grassroots organization in all 120 counties across this state," said KFB President Mark Haney. "We pride ourselves on the member benefits we offer and we go to great lengths to make sure they offer real value. Being of value to our membership fortifies our mission in being the voice of agriculture."

Haney added that while there are specific benefits offered at the state level, many counties offer other, more local member benefits, as well.

Muhlenberg County is a good grown up in famexample of that, as many local rural business, subusinesses there offer discounts to to make it work. Farm Bureau members.

"It takes

"We have such a good relationship with the business community in Muhlenberg County and it shows by the number of those businesses that offer discounts to our members," said Mary Kate Kordes, the county Women's Committee chair and KFB State Director. "We often say it pays to be a Farm Bureau member, and that really is true. And we are fortunate to live in a community and a state that sees the value in being a part of this organization."

Muhlenberg County Farm Bureau is all about. recently celebrated with member benefit appreciation events held at many local businesses. Those members attending and in shad the chance to use respective community.



discounts and those who were not members had the opportunity to sign up.

Depot Gifts and Corner Fashions in Central City was one of those businesses that participated. Misty Deason, the store manager and buyer, said having grown up in family that owned a small rural business, she knows what it takes to make it work.

"It takes relationships and communication and we want people to have the feeling of being home when they come to these small stores and businesses," she said. "Having this good relationship with the local Farm Bureau is one way to help their members get a better value here in our store and other businesses in the county, and it helps us from a customer prospective."

Susan Gipson the store's sales clerk and buyer said sharing with the community is what their business is all about.

"We are proud members of Farm Bureau and Kentucky Proud members, and in sharing with those in our community, our customers get 15

percent off their purchases just by being Farm Bureau members," she said. "It pays to use the membership and we, as members ourselves, have done so at other businesses in our county. As merchants, we are proud to be in this community and proud that Farm Bureau is here, as well."

Dwight Greenwell, KFB Director of Member Benefits said one of the great things about Farm Bureau is the effort county organizations put into taking care of their members.

"While Farm Bureau offers many wonderful benefits at the state level, these local organizations really work hard to put together member benefit packages that connect to their hometown businesses," he said. "As a grassroots organization, seeing these local efforts really emphasizes how effective our organization is in serving our members."

To learn more about Farm Bureau member benefits, go to:

https://www.kyfb.com/federation/member-benefits.



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MILK 2 MY PLATE **GRANT MAKES MORE DAIRY PRODUCTS AVAILABLE TO KENTUCKY FAMILIES**

Commissioner Quarles Announces \$30,000 Award from The Dairy Alliance to God's Pantry for Milk Coolers

Kentuckians who struggle to buy nutritious foods for their families now have greater access to fresh Kentucky-produced milk thanks to a \$30,000 grant from The Dairy Alliance to God's Pantry Food Bank, Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles announced today.

God's Pantry used the grant to acquire seven milk coolers for its Winchester and Lexington-Fayette County food pantries. The grant was awarded in conjunction with The Dairy Alliance's Milk 2 My Plate initiative and the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's (KDA) Hunger Initiative.

"The coolers funded by this grant enable God's Pantry to store fresh milk for

four affiliate food pantries." Commissioner Quarles said. "As a bonus, our hardworking dairy farm families will get a new market for their products. This is one small step that hopefully will lead to more such initiatives to help Kentucky's dairy farmers. We are extremely grateful to The Dairy Alliance for its support."

"On behalf of the dairy farm families of Kentucky and the Southeast, The Dairy Alliance is proud to partner in the vision of Commissioner Quarles," said Doug Ackerman, CEO of The Dairy Alliance. "His leadership during these difficult and changing times serves to provide hope for the people of Kentucky and the hard-working dairy farmers out there who work 365 days a year to nourish all American families."



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Winchester Farms Dairy delivered milk to God's Pantry as part of Tuesday's presentation. The pilot project currently provides 60 gallons of milk a week to the food bank, but God's Pantry CEO Michael Halligan is hoping to increase volume over time.

"Hungry families, particularly those with young children, often lack calcium-rich milk in their diet. This pilot project will help us establish a consistent, sustainable flow of milk to those in need," Halligan said. "In the first few weeks, we've witnessed so much joy and excitement through a cold glass of milk. Hats off to The Dairy Alliance, Winchester Farms Dairy, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. and our amazing Kentucky dairy farmers for helping us begin to imagine what's possible through a growing Milk 2 My Plate program."

The Dairy Alliance launched Milk 2 My Plate early this year to build an infrastructure for getting dairy products from Kentucky farms to Kentucky homes while developing relationships between processors and food banks. For more information about The Dairy Alliance and Milk 2 My Plate, go to thedairyalliance.com.

Commissioner Quarles unveiled the Kentucky Hunger Initiative two years ago to bring together farmers, charitable organizations, faith groups, community leaders, and government entities to look for ways to reduce hunger in Kentucky. To find out more about the Hunger Initiative, go to kyagr.com/hunger.

Map the Meal Gap 2017, an annual study by Feeding America, revealed that one in every six Kentuckians - including one in five children - was food insecure in 2015, meaning that consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year.

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UK ENTOMOLOGIST DETAILS WAYS TO PREVENT TICK BITES

By Katie Pratt

ick season is underway and a University of Kentucky entomologist is reminding Kentuckians to take precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones from tick bites.

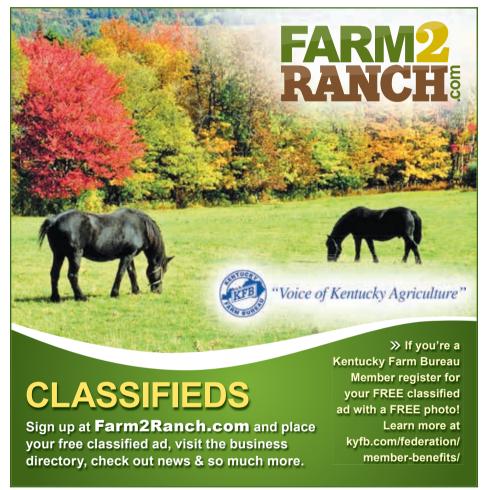
"In tick-prone areas, check yourself, children and other family members every two hours, and very thoroughly after returning home from hikes and other outdoor activities," said Lee Townsend, UK extension entomologist

in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. "Common places to find ticks are behind the knees, around the waist, under arms, neck and head."

Several effective precautions will reduce exposure. Wear a repellent; products containing DEET are particularly effective. A sprayon clothing treatment containing permethrin is good to use when in places where ticks are likely to be abundant. Avoid walking through tall grass and brushy areas along fence lines or adjacent to woods. Wear light-colored clothing so ticks are easy to spot. Check pets when they come in from outdoors.

The lone star tick and the American dog tick are the most common species found in the state. Their tick bites usually are just an itchy nuisance, but these ticks can carry diseases. Fortunately, only a very small percentage of them are infected. The adult female lone star tick, which has a white spot on its back, can carry erlichiosis. Its saliva, injected during feeding, may cause some people to develop a "red meat allergy," a condition diagnosed more often as awareness of it increases. American dog ticks, reddish-brown with mottled white markings on their backs, have the potential to carry spotted fever. In addition, the black legged tick, also known as the deer tick, is becoming more common in the state and carries Lyme disease.

Prevention is the key to reducing the chance of being bitten by a tick. Even then, it is almost inevitable that some ticks will get past protective efforts, but prompt removal of attached ticks reduces the chance of infection if the tick is carrying a disease. Use fine-tipped tweezers to remove an attached tick. Grasp it as close to the skin as possible and remove it with a gentle, steady pull. Then, wash the bite area and your hands. Apply an antiseptic to the bite site to protect the wound from infection





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State weather data system now available on cell phones

inding weather information via one's cell phone is nothing new. But an app that is connected to the Kentucky Mesonet system is, and brings new meaning to real-time, Kentucky specific information from one of the most comprehensive weather information and reaches people across data systems in the country.

The network of automated weather and climate monitoring stations scattered across the state was developed here by the Kentucky Climate Center (KCC) at Western Kentucky University. This new app is another step being taken by Mesonet developers to increase availability of a system that is proving its worth over and over again.

Dr. Stuart Foster, KCC Director and State Climatologist is in charge of

community outreach for the Mesonet. He said reaching the public wherever they may be is important when it comes to keeping them informed about version, we were also making notes of weather conditions.

"While our website provides a lot of the state, it did not meet all the needs for those who are very active and very mobile," he said. "There are lots of times when people in all sectors, including agriculture, need access to high quality local weather data."

Being able to reach the public when they are away from their desktop computers was a driving force in developing the app.

This is the Mesonet staff's first launch of a mobile app and Foster

said they plan, in looking ahead, to build on the initial.

"As we were working on this first some of the types of features we would like to add in the future." he said.

Agriculturally speaking, being able to check changing weather conditions from the field is important especially at certain times during the season. This mobile app allows just that.

"This app certainly brings locally accurate weather information directly to farmers in the cabs of their tractors or combines," he said. "And this highlights the opportunities going forward to even better integrate some of that weather information with the technologically sophisticated applications they have tied into their machinery."

Foster added that the number of Mesonet stations is still on the increase in counties yet to have one, as well as from request for additional county stations by some local officials who already have a station in their

"Once we get the stations out there, people see the value and that creates the demand for more stations,' he said. "These requests really validate what we are doing."

Foster added that the culture of Kentucky in which people know each other, and care and communicate with each other especially in the rural areas, has contributed to accomplishments of the Mesonet system.

Because of that we have been able to reach out and build relationships at the local level and that is really, really critical to the success of the program,"

The Kentucky Mesonet app can be accessed at system's website, http://www.kymesonet.orgor through the various app stores available to mobile users.

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2018 COUNTY ANNUAL MEETINGS

ADAIR COUNTY

September 18, 2018 | 7:00 p.m. Lindsey Wilson Cranmer Dining Hall

BARREN COUNTY

September 15, 2018 | 6:30 p.m. Cave City Convention Center

BELL COUNTY

September 27, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Bell County Farm Bureau Office

BUTLER COUNTY

September 11, 2018 | 6:30 p.m. Eva J. Hawes Building. Morgantown

CARLISLE COUNTY

August 1, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. UK County Extension Office, Bardwell

CHRISTIAN COUNTY

June 28, 2018 | Doors will open at 4:00 p.m. and the meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. Western Kentucky State Fair Convention Center

DAVIESS COUNTY

August 16, 2018 | 5:00 p.m. Reid's Orchard

August 8, 2018 | 11:30 a.m.

GRANT COUNTY

September 14, 2018 | 5:00 p.m. Alpine Hills Dairy Farm

HARLAN COUNTY

September 15, 2018 | noon Harlan County Farm Bureau Office

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FLEMING COUNTY

Fleming County Farm Bureau Office

Chase Fulcher Archery Center **IOHNSON COUNTY** October 30, 2018 | 6:00 p.m.

Johnson County Farm Bureau Office IACKSON COUNTY

HENDERSON COUNTY

July 28, 2018 | 5:30 p.m.

September 17, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Jackson Energy Farm

LEWIS COUNTY

August 5, 2018 | 12:30 p.m. Ruggles Camp

LOGAN COUNTY

September 8, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Logan County Extension Office

MADISON COUNTY

July 9, 2018 | 6:30 p.m. Madison County Fairgrounds

MAGOFFIN COUNTY

September 10, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Magoffin County Extension Office

MARTIN COUNTY

October 5, 2018 | 9:00 a.m. Martin County Farm Bureau Office

MCLEAN COUNTY

August 4, 2018 | 5:00 p.m. McLean County High School

MENIFEE COUNTY

September 12, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Combread Cafe

MUHLENBERG COUNTY

July 23, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Muhlenberg County High School, East Campus

NICHOLAS COUNTY

July 26, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Vice's Community Center

OHIO COUNTY

August 7, 2018 | 6:30 p.m. Ohio County Extension Office

OLDHAM COUNTY

August 7, 2018 | 7:00 p.m. Oldham County LaGrange Farm Bureau Office

RUSSELL COUNTY

September 7, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Fairgrounds

SIMPSON COUNTY

August 30, 2018 | 6:30 p.m. Jim Roberts Community Park Agriculture Building

TAYLOR COUNTY

September 10, 2018 | 7:30 p.m. Taylor County Farm Bureau Office

TRIMBLE COUNTY

August 16, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Extension Office in Bedford

UNION COUNTY

June 23, 2018 | 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Union County Fairgrounds

WAYNE COUNTY

September 24, 2018 | 6:00 p.m. Aspire Center in Monticello



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DAVID S. BECK

The Next Chapter

The word "dedicated" is defined by Merriam-Webster as, "devoted to a cause, idea, or purpose." That description fits David S. Beck perfectly. Throughout his life, he has been dedicated to his family, his church, his agricultural way of life, and to the organization which he has been a part of for more than four decades.

avid S. Beck has undertaken a variety of roles at Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) and has seen many changes in the agriculture industry. But his presence at KFB has been a constant since 1977. That tenure will come to an end on June 30, as he retires from the organization and prepares for the next chapter in his professional life; President and CEO of the Kentucky State Fair Board.

"I had originally thought I would retire after the KFB's 100th anniversary next year," he said. "But the time was right and when the opportunity came along at the Fair Board, I saw it as a chance to continue some of the work I have been involved with for so many years."

KFB has long enjoyed a good relationship with the Fair Board which operates the Kentucky State Fair and Kentucky Venues, the management agency for the Kentucky Exposition Center and the newly renovated Kentucky International Convention Center.

HIS FIRST DAYS AT KFB

Beck, who came to KFB, a graduate of Murray State University and farmer from Lyon County, began as a field staff representative working with 13 counties before moving into the state office in the spring of 1978.

"My very first day in the state office was spent just getting to know people and I really didn't get many assignments at first. But it didn't take long before the list started building, beginning with advisory committees I staffed and the

legislative committees in Frankfort I was responsible for." he said.

In those days, Beck spent much of his time within the counties, as well as at the State Capital, in various meetings and with different commodity groups, along with his duties working with legislators. But those times with member families hold a special meaning for him.

"I thoroughly enjoyed working with our county members. It has been a great honor to be invited into their homes; to get to know their families and be with them in their dairy barns and tobacco patches and at their dinner tables," he said. "I just have really enjoyed the people."

Beck also enjoyed his work in Frankfort. He said in spending time talking about legislation and visiting with lawmakers, he could go back to the counties and tell members what was going on in the Capital.

"I saw the connection between the county members and those in Frankfort and Washington. I saw the respect lawmakers had for Farm Bureau. I saw legislators wait for the Farm Bureau representative to show up before beginning a committee meeting, and that really impressed me as a young man. It has been a blessing to me to have had a front row seat, by being a representative of Farm Bureau, to so many state and national issues that affect agriculture," he said.

SUCCESSES THROUGH THE YEARS

In having that front row seat, Beck played a role in getting key pieces of legislation passed that still benefit the agriculture community to this day. House Bill 44, which came about in 1979, has ultimately benefited every property owner, whether on a farm or in an urban area. This bill limits revenue from property taxes to four percent plus new growth.

In 1983, Beck was named the Director of Governmental Affairs and Assistant Executive Vice President for KFB. Shortly after that, he was instrumental in the getting the Grain Insurance Law, still known as Farm Bureau's Grain Insurance Bill passed which continues to protect Kentucky's grain farmers in the event of a grain elevator bankruptcy.

In 1994 he helped write the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act that helps protect farmers as they deal with water-related issues. That legislation is still viewed as a model for other states and pushed Kentucky to the forefront in agriculture-related conservation measures.

One of the biggest Farm Bureau achievements, in which he played a role, came in 2000 with the passage of House Bill 611, a direct result of the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. With this would come the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board and the Ag Development Fund which have literally changed the face of agriculture in this state and helped farm families remain on the farm, continuing a traditional way of life for them.

In addition to the many legislative accomplishments, Beck has received a

have had the chance to learn things that I can take with me and apply in my next role." he said.

Beck said his priorities in the new job include creating an environment and appearance in both the Expo Center and International Convention Center that are second to none and something all Kentuckians are proud of. In doing so, he would also like to see an increase in utilization of the properties and increases in revenue.

"Those properties provide jobs and opportunities for meetings and conferences," he said. "And in holding true to their agricultural heritage, we'll continue to have the best state fair in the country, and the North American International Livestock Expo, the KFB Beef Expo, and the largest farm machinery show in the country, along with opportunities for 4-H and FFA."

It's a challenge I'm excited about and it's because of Farm Bureau, I have this opportunity. Over the last 41 years, I have had the chance to learn things that I can take with me and apply in my next role.

number of awards and honors through the years including being selected as an Outstanding Agriculture Alumnus of the Year by the Murray State University Agriculture Alumni Association in 1992; a Distinguished Alumnus Award given by MSU in 2016; receiving the Kentucky Council on Post-Secondary Education's Oak Award in 2017 which honors outstanding graduates for achieving statewide or national recognition in their careers and for exhibiting a lifelong affection for their alma mater and to Kentucky.

Beck has also been active in many roles with his church, St. Matthews Baptist, and serves on a number of committees and boards at both the state and national levels.

THE NEXT CHAPTER

As he prepares for his new position at the Fair Board, Beck acknowledges it will be a challenging job but one he is ready to take on.

"It's a challenge I'm excited about and it's because of Farm Bureau, I have this opportunity. Over the last 41 years, I

Beck said he realizes there is a urban/rural divide as he prepares to move on to this next chapter in his professional life, and there exists the opportunity to help bridge that gap by way of the events taking place now and in the future at Kentucky Venues.

"Part of my commitment is, I will do all I can to close that divide as it relates to this community and the use of those properties," he said. "I have an appreciation for them and I care about them. I want them to be the best they can be."

Beck added that through solid partnerships with other local and state organization, this can be accomplished.

In making this transition, Beck acknowledges that change has come to Farm Bureau over the years and change is necessary to remain effective. But the organization exists for the same reasons in which it began nearly a century ago.

"To me, the value of Farm Bureau is doing things for the membership collectively that they can't do by themselves," he said. "And being a part of this organization has been a blessing to me."

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HARRISON COUNTY STUDENTS GET A TASTE OF THE FARM

HAVING ACCESS TO A WORKING FARM HELPS STUDENTS DISCOVER MANY POSSIBILITIES FOR THEIR FUTURES

YNTHIANA - For more than 15 years, Harrison County FFA members and agriculture students have had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience thanks to the access they have to a school-owned farm located next to the high school and middle school properties.

The students raise a variety of livestock on the facility including cattle. To compliment the farm, the high school also has its own greenhouse where different flowers and plants are raised conventionally while a hydroponic system is used to grow lettuce.

To celebrate local food and to showcase what these young farmers are doing on the farm, all students at both schools were rewarded with a local food day in which they were served hamburgers that were processed from

the farm's cattle herd and topped with lettuce grown in the greenhouse.

The burgers were grilled with the help of local ag and Farm Bureau leaders while FFA members shuttled the finished product to the cafeterias. High School FFA officers also spoke to each group as they entered their respective cafeterias to hear about the meal and about the goodness of local food and knowing its origins.

Savannah Robin, one of the two ag teachers at Harrison County High School, said the entire project of bringing food from the farm to the students was student driven.

"What I love about the kids in this community is, they're hungry for success and their hungry for projects like this one, and they took a lot of initiative in getting this established," she said. "The things we teach and what

we do at the farm are driven by what classes we teach and what projects students want."

A strong desire to promote local food by ag students, and because many of them are involved in beef production, helped to spark this idea. This most recent "burger day" was a first for students and the second year beef from the school farm was processed. Robin, who also serves as the Bourbon County Farm Bureau President, said they learned a lot going through this process especially in judging just how much beef would be needed to feed all those students.

"This year we sat down with our food service directors and our staff to ask what they needed from us, and so we've been planning this for months in order to make it all happen," she said.

STUDENT DRIVEN

A big part in making it happen was to make sure the beef being produced was the best it could be. Through their classroom experience, the ag students at both the middle school and high school levels, learn a variety of elements connected to the farm and its animals including high level nutrition, correct feed rations, and proper protein percentages, to name a few.

In learning these things in the classroom, they can move that knowledge to the farm and see firsthand the results.

Haley Fauste, who serves as the high school FFA chapter's sentinel, said as is the case for most cattle farms that sell directly to consumers, the students learn about processing part of the operation.

"The students at the farm take care of our steers, feed them and sometimes show them before they are processed, after two years, at a regional facility in Hazel Green (Wolfe County)," she said. "We then sell some of the beef or use it for the hamburgers that were used in our cafeterias."

FFA chapter president Annie Furnish said the school farm, which is comprised of 80 acres, features more than just cattle as part of the farming operation.

"We also produce turkeys, have them processed and sell them around Thanksgiving, as well as crops such as corn for popcorn," she said. "It is decided by the students each year as to what they want to grow so it is all very student led."

Whitley Lemons, the FFA secretary, said many of the local students have questions about the farm and where their food comes from.

"As an example of that, we put on an ag literacy day at our school farm each year where first grade students visit to participate in a variety of activities and they always ask a lot of questions; they are very involved," she said. "Many of these students are seeing farm animals for the first time and it's amazing to see their eyes light up when they first see a horse or a cow."

Kory Beth Whitehead, the FFA vice president, said she doesn't think most people not associated with a farm know all that goes into caring for the animals and how much attention is given in getting food from the farm to their tables.

"I honestly don't think they know how much effort it takes to actually make all this happen in getting that food to their plates," she said. "But it is important that people understand where their food comes from."

Brian Merriman, a senior student, serves as the hydroponics manager in the high school's greenhouse. He said hydroponics is a growing craft creating a huge impact and being a part of the school's agriculture program has been very rewarding.

"This is the first year we have had this manager's position and actually my first year in FFA but it has opened up a whole new world for me," he said. "My first love has been music but I see the possibility of a whole other career having been involved in this."

long-running middle school ag program, something some districts don't have.

Erin Butler, who serves as the agriculture teacher at the middle school, said by the time her students get into high school, they can see all the possibilities that are available and often those are life-changing possibilities. With the help of a graduate profile created by Robin, students can get an idea of what their teachers expect from them, and what they can achieve by the time they graduate.

"This graduate profile is invaluable and helps students see the many opportunities they will have in the agriculture industry and they get to see that at the middle school level, which is



PREPARING FOR THE NEXT STEP

While the ag students in Harrison County are getting a real taste of life on the farm, they are also preparing themselves for the future whether they remain on the farm or in some other ag-related industry.

"I can attest to the fact these students are becoming college and career ready," said Robin. "The projects they conduct, the writing they do, their level of thinking and their ability to problem solve very much lends to the success they will find after high school."

Robin added that many of these students are producing at a college level and are treated as though they are young college students.

Much of the success of the program comes from having the advantage of a

a real advantage for them," she said. "Agriculture is really one of the most important subject areas in life because it affects everyone and even if you don't major in agriculture you need to be an educated consumer."

It's easy to see that the agriculture educators in Harrison County believe in their students, and in doing so, the students believe in themselves. Robin said it's like opening a door for them and once it has opened they begin to see possibilities and opportunities they didn't know existed.

"The higher our standards are and the higher our expectations are of these students, the greater their achievement will be and they demonstrated that in many ways, every day," she said.

CANDID CONVERSATION

FB Candid Conversation presents a discussion about the topical issues facing the agricultural industry and rural communities in a question and answer format. In this column, Hilda Gay Legg, State Director of USDA Rural Development-Kentucky talks about that agency's role in assisting rural communities.

Could you tell our readers something about what USDA Rural Development does or its mission?

Absolutely! USDA Rural Development (RD) provides grants and loans to residents, organizations and businesses in rural communities. These investments can go towards housing, infrastructure for community facilities, business expansion, telemedicine to fight opioid misuse, and my passion, bringing broadband to every rural home. Three things that are critical to the success of the RD mission are infrastructure, partnerships and innovation (IPI).

In Kentucky, we often hear about initiatives taking place in our more populated areas, but how important are rural communities as they relate to the state's overall economy and what role does Rural Development play in assisting those rural communities?

The importance of our rural communities cannot be overstated. To put it simply, our farmers provide food to the citizens of the United States of America and the world. Without rural communities providing essentials like food along with fiber for our clothes, the heavily populated areas would experience significant setbacks. That is why RD is such a critical agency. RD assists rural communities in several ways through IPI. We provide low-interest loans with zero downpayment required to obtain a mortgage. Safe and affordable housing is necessary to establishing a



high quality of life in rural communities. In certain situations, we can also provide grant money to individuals desperately needing home repairs.

Our community facilities program provides grant and loan funding to build infrastructure for critical community facilities. Unfortunately, Kentucky is experiencing a serious need for medical facilities equipped to deal with the opioid crisis, but RD has the capability to help fund infrastructure for health care

buildings and equipment. RD also has money available for distance learning and telemedicine, which can provide remote counseling for an individual needing to speak with a recovery professional anywhere in the state.

Rural economies cannot grow without rural businesses, and RD can guarantee loans for the development of business infrastructure. We have programs with grant money available, and a couple recently

opened for applications. Our Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant program provides technical assistance to socially-disadvantaged groups in rural areas, and the application window is open until late July. Our Rural Cooperative Development Grant program helps improve the economic condition of rural areas by helping individuals and businesses start, expand or improve rural cooperatives and other mutually-owned businesses, and this application window is also open until late July.

How important to Rural Development is the Farm Bill?

The Farm Bill is important because it directly affects farmers. The federal budget is approved by Congress, and the Farm Bill is an additional source of funding approved approximately every five years to aid farmers. The Farm Bill allows USDA to continue record accomplishments on behalf of the American people, while providing new opportunities and creating jobs across rural Kentucky. It enables USDA to further expand markets for agricultural products at home and abroad, strengthen conservation efforts, create new opportunities for local and regional food systems and grow the biobased economy. It provides a dependable safety net for Kentucky's farmers, ranchers and growers, and ensures access to safe and nutritious food for all Americans.

Infrastructure and broadband needs are critical to farm families and rural communities. What types of programs does Rural Development oversee that deals with these areas?

I couldn't agree more about the critical need for infrastructure and broadband in rural communities. These are also important to President Trump and Secretary Perdue, so I imagine we'll be seeing some big things happening over the next few years. President Trump has made an unprecedented commitment to improving the infrastructure of rural America by investing \$50 billion in funding towards infrastructure. Broadband is a passion of mine, and

I am devoted to building the "last mile" to every household in rural communities. According to the Federal Communications Commission, 39 percent of rural Americans don't have broadband access, which is unacceptable. We know farmers need broadband just as much, if not more, than individuals in highly populated areas, vet there is an enormous disparity between rural communities and larger towns and cities. Our rural farmers need this infrastructure to farm more effectively and efficiently, and rural homes need broadband to access healthcare and education opportunities. Rural businesses need broadband to conduct both local and global businesses. This is something the Trump administration is absolutely focused on, and it is certainly a priority of mine to do everything I can to support this administration and build this infrastructure in rural Kentucky.

Many RD programs deal with developing infrastructure: our agency essentially has the ability to fund the complete development of a new city. I previously mentioned our housing and community facilities programs, but we also have a water and environmental program, which provides loan and grant money to improve existing water infrastructure or build new water treatment plants. So far this fiscal year, RD has invested over \$25 million in our water and environmental programs. And in FY17, we invested over \$55 million to improve the water infrastructure in Kentucky.

What issues do you see as currently having the biggest effect on rural development and farming communities?

The opioid crisis. It has hit our rural communities in a major way, and we need to address this issue before we can begin to thrive economically. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control identified 220 counties across the country at risk for substance misuse, and 54 of those counties are located in Kentucky. A vast number of people across our state have been impacted by this epidemic in someway, and we cannot build strong economies without a strong workforce.

Do you find that a lot of people are unaware of the many different programs offered through Rural Development?

I certainly wish more people were aware of our programs, which is why I'm consistently out talking to local leaders, speaking to civic and community organizations, along with residents across the state to discuss the need to focus on IPI. I encourage anyone with innovative ideas to call me and discuss how we can partner together to bring RD programs to their community. If we concentrate on IPI, we can truly improve the quality of life inside our rural communities.

How important are relationships with organizations like Farm Bureau to the success of Rural Development?

Extremely important. RD will not be successful unless we focus on IPI, so partners like Kentucky Farm Bureau are essential to our success. This interview is a prime example of how IPI can work. Your previous question asked if there are people unaware of RD programs, and I imagine some people are reading about RD for the first time. Our partnership with Kentucky Farm Bureau provides me the opportunity to reach out to those people, and let them know RD is ready to work with them to build infrastructure in their communities, and I'm looking for innovative ideas to do that. And for those who are already familiar with RD. I challenge them to start thinking of new, innovative ways we can partner together. and start thinking about doing things a little bit differently than have been done in the past. I strongly believe concentrating on IPI can enhance the ability of RD programs to improve the lives of farmers and rural citizens, and sincerely appreciate the opportunity afforded by Kentucky Farm Bureau to share my goal of partnering with local communities to increase quality of life across the Commonwealth. I encourage anyone with ideas to call my office at (859) 224-7300. As a proud member of Kentucky Farm Bureau, I know there are many great people who will read this interview, and I thank you for the opportunity to reach out to my fellow members!



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SPARK COMMUNITY CAFÉ SPARK COMMUNITY CAFÉ

WOODFORD COUNTY'S SPARK COMMUNITY CAFÉ

FIGHTS HUNGER FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE



- The issue of hunger is not always easy to see and unfortunately, approximately one in five Kentuckians suffer from some level of food insecurity. Because of statistics like this, many initiatives are being conducted in this state to help combat the problem.

Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles has made this issue a top priority and began a Hunger Task Force comprised of various individuals, including representation from Kentucky Farm Bureau, coming together in hopes of finding answers that would alleviate the problem and to bring attention to its magnitude.

programs popping up around the state to help bring attention to the fact that many citizens are hungry. A group of young people in Woodford County are taking somewhat of a different approach to do their part in seeing that hungry people have access to healthy meals.

By way of a community café, these college students along with a long list of local supporters are looking to make a difference in their hometown. The idea of becoming involved actually began in

a high school class led by now retired teacher Kyle Fannin.

"I created a class call "Community Activism" in which we would look at problems in the community and the students would go out and try to solve them; not as a service project and not as any kind of school project but, in the real world to solve the problem," he said.

Even though Fannin has retired, the class lives on through teacher Andy Smith and with that "problemsolving" mindset, his students took a long, hard look at their community. Through "community building" events that included a pop-up coffee shop and festivals, they found the existence of a There are also local projects and food insecurity issue in a place known more for its majestic horse farms.

> Fannin said the perception is that Woodford County is a "rich" county, but the reality of its county seat Versailles is, free lunch levels at the public schools are approximately 50 percent and in the city itself, poverty is more prevalent than most realize.

> In learning this, the students wanted to find a way to bring food to those who need it, finding themselves ready to take on this real-world issue in a big way.

After some of the students attended a national conference which focused on food insecurity issues, Smith suggested visiting an existing facility in Danville known as Grace Café which would serve as a model. From there the Spark Community Café was born.

This pay-what-you-can type of restaurant is part of a growing network of similar cafes located across the country known as the One World-Everybody Eats initiative.

As part of the process, the students created an official non-profit organization complete with a board of directors to guide the project.

THE PAY-WHAT-YOU-CAN IDEA

Tristan Ferrell, serves as the café's co-executive director along with Fannin and is a student at the University of Kentucky (UK). He was also one the "Community Activism" students who discovered that issues such as hunger can be combated and done so by a younger generation. He along with fellow Spark board members, former high school schoolmates, and other community members have taken on this task.

"We really didn't know a hunger issued existed here and it has been eve-opening to discover that many people suffer from it," he said. "But the beauty of the community café is that it is a place where all are welcome and we want it to be a welcoming space."

In keeping with the mantra, "a hand up not a hand out," the café invites those who can, to pay a meal forward for those who can't. Those who can afford something, can pay only what they are able to, and those who cannot pay at all, can volunteer their time to the café to "pay" for their meal. And the method by which one handles their payment is done in a way that is unknown only to each individual person.

"The payment process will look no different whether a person is paving forward or if someone is volunteering to pay for their meal," said Ferrell.

Rachael Kral, also a UK student, serves as the Spark board treasurer. She said pride often keeps people from reaching out for help, but Spark can break that pride factor.

"Food insecurity is an invisible epidemic. There are no stereotypes or a model or a poster child, and it can affect many different people. But most people think if you're hungry you are homeless and that's just not true. It could be your neighbors or your classmates or even your teachers," said Kral.

Keegan Elvidge, serves as the vicechair of the Spark board in addition to being a UK student, as well. He said the issue of hunger isn't always easily seen.

"I think part of the reason is because people are ashamed to get help, so we, like so many others didn't realize there is a food insecurity issue here," he said. "But we have spent a year educating our community about the café and how it will work."

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

That communications effort is paying off. In addition to the mentorship given by Fannin and Smith, many other community members, including business owners, bankers, and the local Farm Bureau agency, have stepped up to become involved.

Maria Bohanan also has provided input to the group based on her experience as a former local business owner and as a member of several local committees and initiatives.

"I am crazy about the program Mr. Fannin started with these students long ago. My daughter was in the first class of 'Community Activism' and was one of the leaders of the Spark movement." she said. "If there was a worry about the future, all you have to do is look at what these young people."

Bohanan also said the space where the café is being located was home to her business for many years and now it has been given a new life by this project. Other notable locals coming to the table to help and Kentucky restaurateur Ouita Michel.

THE LOCAL FOOD FACTOR

While finding a perfect place and the right people to initiate this project was important, finding the right food was also critical. The Spark board felt as though a healthy local food supply would be the best bet to ensure patrons would be getting a nutritious meal whenever they visited the café.

Jesse Frost and Hannah Crabtree. owners of Rough Draft Farmstead located in Anderson County, have agreed to supply food for the café as well as Frost serving as its executive chef.

"Hannah and I started working with Spark Community Café because we fell in love with the idea and the concept," he said. "As organic farmers, often our produce is too expensive for people who may want to eat better but can't afford it, and we found this idea to be attractive in that we could possibly get our food to people who usually couldn't afford to buy it straight from us."

Ferrell said the idea of bringing local food to the café is something that is really at the center of the project.

"It was really important to us that the food served in the café would not only provide comfort to those who eat there but would be a nutritious meal for them, as well," he said.

HOW AN IDEA BECAME A SPARK

The young people involved in this project may have never dreamed their idea would lead them to a project of this magnitude, but it has along with providing a lesson is how to bring a community together to make the idea

Fannin said it's exciting to see include Rural Sociologist Dr. Lori Garkovich the initiative the students are taking in making this project happen but it takes all the community partners.

> "I don't know that we would have had the confidence to do this without them." he said.

Ferrell said the journey has provided a good dose of reality in recognizing all that is needed to bring Spark to fruition.

"We have been a little surprised to find out how much certain things cost that are crucial to the operation of the café, including \$40,000 for an oven hood," he said. "But we have never been daunted by the details and we couldn't ask for better community partners and the support they continue to give as we bring this idea to life."

A recent open house was held to give local citizens a glimpse of the café at this point. A grand opening is planned for August.

The Spark Board: Kyle Fannin, Tristan Ferrell, Rachael Kral, Keegan Elvidge, Katie Beth Craig, Reagan Jobe, Lori Garkovich, Ouita Michel, Andy Smith, and Maria Bohanon.

To learn more about Spark Community Café, visit their website at https://www.sparkcommunitycafeky.org.







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COUNTY CORNER

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



The Bourbon County barbeque cookoff was held on May 12.



OHNSON, MAGOFFIN AND WOLFE COUNTIES

Candidates for the 97th Representative District and County Presidents of Johnson, Magoffin and Wolfe County hosted a Measure the Candidate Forum.



KNOX COUNTY

Hundreds of students and the general public were exposed to a "live cow milking" at the Knox County Farm Bureau Ag Day by the Southland Dairy Farmers Mobile Classroom. Knox County Farm Bureau supports dairy farmers.



MONROE COUNTY

Monroe County Farm Bureau held a Legislative Appreciative Meeting on April 28 at the Monroe County Farm Bureau office.



RRECKINRINGE COUNTY

Breckinridge County Farm Bureau members learned about the Ky. Proud Beef program, which is bringing local beef to Kroger stores. during its May meeting. Pictured from left: Tareena Horton, county Farm Bureau agent; Stacy Sipes, KFB Area Program Director; Bobby Foree, KY Cattleman's President; Jean Kaye Foree, Bobby Bell, Breckinridge County Cattleman's President; Brad Norsworthy, county Farm Bureau agent; and Greg Moore, Breckinridge County Farm Bureau President. Photo courtesy of The Breckinridge Herald-News





The Favette County Farm Bureau Young Farmer's put on a Burger Bash April 13th as a way to get potential new members. Kline Palmer and Courtland Watson were this year's Burger Bash Cook-off winners. Bottom photo: Pictured from left: Ron Mack Executive Director of Legacy Equine Academy accepting a donation check from Sean Millard, Fayette County Farm Bureau President.





FRANKLIN COUNTY

Pictured from left: Ed McClure, Agency Manager; Sharon Spencer, Franklin County Farm Bureau President; and J.O. Osborne, Agency Manager attended the Franklin County Farm City Banquet at Lakeview Park.



PENDLETON COUNTY

Pictured are Pendleton County Farm Bureau President Rob McClanahan and Agency Manager Steve Ammerman. They passed out Farm Bureau giveaway items and member benefit brochures during the Pendleton County Senior Bash for Senior citizens 55 and over.



TRIMBLE COUNTY

Members of the Trimble County Farm Bureau Board, along with Agency Manager Barbara Costello and CSR Bethany Fugate attended their Measure the Candidate forum on April 24.

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Down the Backroads 77



was lucky enough to have had several writing classes offered as part of a curriculum known as "Phase Elective English." I'm not sure that idea is still around but it was right up my alley back in those days. I was able to participate in so many different English classes ranging in topics from composition to term paper writing, but my favorite was Creative Writing. It really lit the proverbial writer's fire in me and I learned to express emotion in my written words while taking that class.

My next stroke of educational luck came from a college English professor who taught me her version of the free-their stories in much the same way as I write; an exercise in which one would

uring my high school years, I stopping to think about it. "Pour your a variety of places, who spoke about a heart out," she would say. And that I did. almost to a fault.

> I never forgot those lessons. I would learn to think a story through with my head, but write it from my heart. I must admit, I had a few editors in the early days who hardly agreed with that philosophy. I remember one of them telling me, "You write like you talk, and that's not a compliment!" But, despite that criticism. my writing style has served me well for the most part, especially when I began than 20 years ago.

I found that most farm families related wrote them; from their hearts. Over the number of issues, evoking many different emotions from happiness to heartache.

Together we have seen our agriculture environment change, but the reasons families stay on or come to the farm are simple and the same as it has always been. Be they fifth generation farmers or first-timers, these agriculturalists have a passion to grow our food and care for the land; a passion that is generally inherent, but often discovered and always genuine.

As more and more people move to cover the agriculture industry more further from their agricultural past, it would seem to me telling the story of those still on the farm is more important than ever. And regardless of what my early editors said, I will likely always "write like I talk," from write furiously for five minutes without years I have talked to many of them in my heart, as I travel down the backroads.





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