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Cover photo by Tim Thornberry
Farmers work hard in the winter months taking care of their livestock. Jake Harrod takes hay out to the cows on his family's Franklin County farm.

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President's

COLUMN



I have often heard, from those folks unfamiliar with life on the farm, that the winter must be our time for vacations; the off-season, if you will. But farm families know that is the farthest thing from the truth.

In fact, the winter season, for some, is one of the busiest times of the year, and it certainly is not the easiest of seasons to be on the farm.

Livestock producers are constantly out checking on their animals, bringing them plenty of feed, and making sure their water supplies aren't frozen. And they are often doing this in sub-freezing temperatures.

Crop producers spend the winter working on equipment to ensure it's in perfect running condition once spring planting starts. Nothing can hurt production on the farm more than to have equipment break down at the peak of planting season.

Often, as was the case last spring, those planting windows are brief if the weather is not cooperating, and every day counts.

Producers are also examining the books from last year, looking for ways to become more productive and profitable in the coming year, often taking advantage of learning opportunities made available during the winter months at various commodity meetings.

Greenhouse owners are, many times, as busy during the winter months as any other time of the year, especially in preparing for their spring season sales.

So, it goes without saying, this winter farming season is certainly a busy time of year. That's also true for Kentucky Farm Bureau. Our organization is as active as ever with a new Congress convening in Washington and the state's General Assembly session up and running in Frankfort.

Our recent state and national annual meetings have provided a "road map" when it comes to policy and priority issues brought forth by our grassroots members for 2019. We take this process very seriously and are making every effort, at all levels, to present those priorities continuously, working to get favorable ag-related legislation passed, as well as to fend off anything that will hurt the agriculture industry.

Soon countless KFB members will make their way to Washington for our annual Congressional Tour. Here, these dedicated members will get a chance to speak face-to-face to their federal leaders to advocate, inform, as well as listen, in their efforts to keep family farms sustainable and rural development growing. Many will also make their way, during this General Assembly session, to Frankfort to do the same with their state legislators.

For the last century, KFB has done its utmost to make a difference, be it in Washington or Frankfort, for our rural communities and on the farm, where life can often become very stressful.

My promise to you is this; we will help in any way we can to alleviate some of that stress, and to help you find ways to cope, maintain and continue this farming tradition.

Please know that Kentucky Farm Bureau is going to be there for farm families during this season and every day of every season to ensure your priorities are heard and dealt with as we continue to be the Voice of Agriculture now, and for a new century to come.

Mark Haney
President
Kentucky Farm Bureau

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU 2019 STATE PRIORITY ISSUES

AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Maintain allocating 50% of the Master Settlement Agreement funds to the Agricultural Development Board, and funds be spent for the purpose of improving the net farm income of individual farmers in production agriculture.
- Support continued funding of the Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost-Share Program.
- Support an efficient, well-administered and adequately financed Kentucky Department of Agriculture.
- Support the modernization of the Grain Insurance Fund to adequately protect current and future Kentucky grain producers.

TAXATION

- Kentucky's tax code should be reformed based on sound economic principles to create a more competitive business climate.
- Strongly oppose freezing the state real property tax rate.
- Support the provisions of House Bill 44 (KRS 132.010). Revenue from property taxes should continue to be limited to 4% plus new growth. Proposals to exceed 4% should automatically go to the voters.
- Maintain Kentucky's sales tax exemptions for production agriculture.

HIGHWAYS, ROADS, AND BRIDGES

- Support the rural secondary and county road aid programs and continuation of the 22.2% allocation of the state gasoline tax revenue for rural roads.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Support efforts that will retain and attract new business and industry to rural areas of Kentucky.
- Support broadband and high speed internet service being available for the benefit of all Kentuckians.
- Support efforts and incentives to improve all telecommunications in rural Kentucky.

WATER RESOURCES

- Support the Kentucky Water Resources Board and advocate a coordinated effort to manage water resource projects across the Commonwealth.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

- Seek 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.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

- Oppose any agency exceeding legislative intent in the implementation of regulations.
- Oppose the power of eminent domain being used to take private property for private use.

FORESTRY

- Support forestry initiatives that enhance the economy and create opportunities for woodland owners.

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU 2019 NATIONAL PRIORITY ISSUES

NATIONAL FARM POLICY

- Federal crop insurance programs should be maintained at current levels to provide an effective safety net for agriculture
- Support crop insurance initiatives to maintain the integrity of crop insurance.
- Support NRCS assistance for the development of additional water resources for irrigation and livestock use.
- Support modifying USDA Rural Development broadband programs to increase access to broadband service that meets or exceeds FCC standards.

TRADE

- Support fair and open multilateral trade agreements that will open new markets and expand existing markets for U.S. agricultural products.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Support maintenance and improvement of transportation infrastructure, including rural highways, lock and dam systems, riverports, and railroads.

REGULATORY REFORM

- Support 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.
- All regulations should be based on sound, peer-reviewed scientific data that can be replicated.
- Support congressional oversight of federal agency regulatory actions to ensure rules and regulations do not exceed the intent and authority of federal law.

IMMIGRATION AND FARM LABOR REFORM

- Support immigration reform that includes restructuring the H-2A program to streamline the process making it more reliable, economical and simple for farmers to participate.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

- Support changes to current health care law that will stabilize the market, encourage competition that will reduce health care costs and increase consumer choice.

FISCAL POLICY

- In order to protect the future integrity of our nation's economy it is in our best interest to address budget deficits, which erode our ability to remain fiscally stable with the goal of reaching a balanced budget.
- Federal tax code should be reformed based on sound economic principles to create a more competitive business climate.

WILDLIFE ISSUES

- Support a producer's right to protect livestock and property against nuisance wildlife predation.
- Support a nationwide depredation order, or safe harbor provision, to take black vultures.



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

COLUMN

Boosting Kentucky's Farm Families



The challenges facing Kentucky's farmers are certainly no secret. From declining net farm income and volatile commodity prices to the severe weather that's plagued Kentucky's crops this growing season, it's gotten more difficult to make ends meet. Hearing from you, I knew that passing the 2018 Farm Bill was the best approach to support Kentucky's farm families.

Since my first day in the U.S. Senate, I have had the privilege to represent your interests as a member of the Agriculture Committee. In this role, I frequently turn to the Kentucky Farm Bureau and farmers throughout the Commonwealth to help guide my policy work on this committee.

In response to your calls for more predictability, Congress passed a comprehensive Farm Bill to help address the concerns in farm country. I was pleased to join President Trump as he signed this important bill into law in December.

A revolutionary aspect of this legislation was a provision I wrote and secured that finally legalizes the growing and processing of industrial hemp. By removing hemp from the federal list of controlled substances, farmers can explore the bright future of this versatile crop, found in everything from a coffee mug to your car dashboard. Kentucky's farmers are prepared to continue leading the nation when it comes to hemp and its potential to benefit our farm economy, and I'm hopeful that this exciting commodity can be as big of a part of our agricultural future as it has been in our past.

Also included in this Farm Bill are provisions to protect vital programs like crop insurance that provide certainty to farmers. The extreme weather in 2018 is another reminder of how easily your harvest can be threatened. I'm glad U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue approved Kentucky's request for disaster relief, and this Farm Bill promotes safety-net programs to further support farm families.

The new law also encourages continued economic growth and development in rural communities. We prioritized grant resources for the deployment of rural broadband to bring Internet services to new areas. To combat the opioid and substance abuse epidemic, this Farm Bill spreads resources for prevention and treatment services. It also extends telemedicine programs to provide unprecedented access to care for opioid addiction. Finally, this law makes new investments for water infrastructure in rural communities like those in our state.

Because of this bill's importance to Kentucky, I used my role as Senate Majority Leader to appoint myself to the conference committee to take part in writing the final Farm Bill text. With my fellow-conferee Congressman James Comer, we ensured this law helps you and your family.

I am proud to work side-by-side with the KFB to continue to support Kentucky's agriculture communities, and I appreciate the efforts of many of you who participated in the Farm Bill working groups. To continue working together for Kentucky's farming future, please call my office at (502) 582-6304 or email me through my website (mcconnell.senate.gov).

Mitch McConnell

United States Senate Majority Leader

FARM BILL PASSAGE, A NEW WOTUS RULE, AND POSITIVE TRADE NEWS BRIGHTENED A DAMP 2018

Year-end federal actions bring some certainty to an uncertain ag economy



The Farm Bill will supply stability to producers across the country.

Having weathered one of the toughest growing seasons in quite some time, Kentucky farm families received well-deserved good news last December with passage of the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) and the issuance of a revised Waters of the United States (WOTUS) rule, all within the same week.

Add this to a new trade deal agreed upon with Mexico and Canada last September, along with the possibility of increased corn and soybean exports headed to China, and the nation's farmers may be seeing some light at the end of a tunnel that has been incumbered with continued low net farm income, uncertainties caused by trade tariffs, and the wettest year, precipitation-wise, on record in 2018.

From a state perspective, Kentucky Farm Bureau President Mark Haney said farm families across the Commonwealth are ready for some good news.

"Last year was a tough one in many ways for farming and rural areas, but this Farm Bill has come at a time when certainty is needed in the agriculture industry, as does the new WOTUS rule," he said. "With the trade deal between Mexico and Canada and a bit of a reprieve between the U.S. and China over trade differences, the agriculture industry finished strong in 2018 and we are hopeful 2019 will see its share of optimism."

Haney added that even with the possibility of some increased supplies of corn and soybeans going to China, it makes sense to look for new markets. He also pointed out the U.S., Mexico and Canada deal still has to be ratified by Congress.

"As farmers, we greatly depend on export markets and China has provided a huge market for farm families in Kentucky and across the country," he said. "But if we've learned anything since tariffs have taken place, we shouldn't put all of our eggs in one basket and we should continually seek new markets for our agricultural goods and work to make existing trade deals better."

KENTUCKY'S CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE FARM BILL

Kentucky's Congressional delegation has provided broad support for farm-related initiatives, especially Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Congressman James Comer, one of the few actual farmers left in Congress.

Both served as conferees for the Farm Bill Conference Committee and were instrumental in helping to get the bill passed in an overwhelming bipartisan manner, avoiding an extension to the legislation, as has been the case for past Farm Bills.

"All in all, this legislation is a big win for farmers in Kentucky and across our

country," said McConnell. "I'm proud to have played a part in delivering that victory. It's been my privilege to represent Kentucky farmers on the Agriculture Committee every day that I've served in the Senate. I'd like to express my gratitude to my fellow conferees, especially my colleague from Kentucky, Congressman Jamie Comer. I would also like to thank the Kentucky Farm Bureau, which has been my partner every step of the way."

Comer said the 2018 Farm Bill includes many wins for Kentucky farmers and rural America.

"It fully protects crop insurance to deliver much needed stability for producers, makes significant improvements to rural broadband to ensure we can meet the needs of the next generation, and provides important funding for research and education," he said. "This Farm Bill would not have been possible without the leadership of my fellow Kentucky conferee, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who fought tirelessly at every step for Kentucky farmers. And as I have said many times before, there are no better advocates for agriculture than the hard-working members of Kentucky Farm Bureau, who were relentless in their efforts to support this legislation all the way to the President's desk."

INDUSTRIAL HEMP, A FARM BILL HIGHLIGHT

Of the many Farm Bill programs farm families will benefit from, including continued protection of crop insurance, the authorization of substantial annual appropriations for rural broadband, and the maintaining of several provisions to help beginning farmers and ranchers, one of the most talked about is the inclusion of the Hemp Farming Act within the legislation. With the signature of the President, industrial hemp is once again a legal crop, although each state must submit a plan to the USDA within a 60-day period. Kentucky was first in line.

According to information from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, "Participants in the 2018 (industrial hemp research pilot program) grew more than 6,700 acres of industrial hemp, the most in the five-year history of the program and more than double the acreage grown in 2017."

From an economic perspective, in 2017, state licensed processors paid Kentucky growers \$7.5 million for harvested hemp and reported \$25.6 million in capital improvements and investments and \$16.7 million in gross product sales.

KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton serves on the state's Industrial Hemp Advisory Board. He said Kentucky could once again be a leader in industrial hemp production, but it may take a while to ramp that production up.

"We feel like Kentucky is well-positioned, because of the steps that have already been made in this state, and the support we have seen from our elected leaders, to once again lead the country in the production of industrial hemp," he said. "There is still a lot of work to be done from a research prospective. However, in moving forward, we see it as another valuable 'tool' in the tool boxes of our farm families as we continue to see great diversification in Kentucky agriculture."

WOTUS AGAIN

In 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers finalized a rule which expanded the definition of "Waters of the United States," under the Clean Water Act much to the chagrin of farmers and farm organizations across the country.



A new WOTUS rule will give more clarity to farmers when it comes to navigable waters on their land.

"There is still a lot of work to be done from a research prospective. However, in moving forward, we see it as another valuable 'tool' in the tool boxes of our farm families as we continue to see great diversification in Kentucky agriculture."

– Eddie Melton KFB First Vice President

According to information from the American Farm Bureau Federation, the "EPA failed to listen to concerned farmers, ranchers and business owners around the country in crafting its rule, vastly expanding EPA's and the Corps' regulatory authority beyond the limits approved by Congress and affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court."

Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has made it evident that the agency is listening now. Wheeler has been meeting with farm groups since taking office in July, listening to their concerns about a number of issues, with WOTUS being one of the most prevalent.

On December 13, the agency along with the Department of the Army proposed a new WOTUS rule that will give more clarity to farmers when it comes to navigable waters on their land. A few days after that announcement Wheeler, USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue and AFBF President Zippy Duvall met with area farmers and stakeholders in Wilson County, Tennessee to discuss what's in the regulation and what's out.

"One goal of our new proposed definition is to help landowners understand whether a project on their property will require a federal permit or not without having to hire outside professionals," said Wheeler.

Perdue said, when meeting with the men and women of American agriculture, one of their chief concerns is always the overreach of federal regulations.

"The 2015 WOTUS rule is regularly singled out as particularly egregious, as landowners have told me it impedes the use of their own land and stifles productivity," he said. "Farmers and ranchers are exceptional stewards of the environment, and states have their own standards as well. This welcome action from the EPA and Army Corps will help bring clarity to Clean Water Act regulations and help farmers know where federal jurisdiction begins and ends. President Trump is making good on his promise to reduce burdensome regulations to free our producers to do what they do best; feed, fuel, and clothe this nation and the world."

Duvall said farmers and ranchers are committed to protecting America's waterways and drinking water, and the new Clean Water Rule will provide them the regulatory certainty they need to farm confidently with those natural resources in mind.

"For more than five years we have advocated for a new water rule that protects clean water and provides clear rules for people and communities to follow," Duvall said. "This proposal promises to do just that, by giving farmers and ranchers the clarity they need to farm their land while also ensuring the nation has clean water. Farmers should not have to hire an army of consultants and lawyers just to work their land."

2018 KFB EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE WINNERS

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.

During the 2018 Kentucky Farm Bureau Annual Meeting held last December, Ben and Savannah Robin from Bourbon County won top honors in the contest with second place going to Mike and Shelley Meyer of Harrison County, with third place awarded to Evan Michael Tate of Hancock County.

Ben and Savannah both grew up on family farms understanding the efforts needed to keep those farms sustainable. They currently maintain their own farm, a cow/calf operation along with a cut flower business in addition to off-farm jobs. Ben is an Information Systems Coordinator for an agricultural lending institution, while Savannah is the Internship Coordinator for the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Both are active in various agricultural-related programs in their community including their local Farm Bureau.

For the win, the Robins represented Kentucky in the national competition at the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) annual convention, held in New Orleans, LA, January 11-16, 2019. The Robins were also presented with a John Deere Gator, courtesy of Farm Credit Mid-America, and an expenses-paid trip to the AFBF annual meeting.

The Meyers were awarded \$400 courtesy of KFB and Tate received \$300, also from KFB.



Pictured from left: Mark Haney, President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Ben and Savannah Robin; Farm Credit Mid-America's Jonathan Carter; Drew Graham, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; and John Sparrow, Executive Vice President and CEO, Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Company.



Pictured from left: Mark Haney, President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mike and Shelley Meyer; Farm Credit Mid-America's Jonathan Carter; Drew Graham, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; and John Sparrow, Executive Vice President and CEO, Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Company.



Pictured from left: Mark Haney, President, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Evan Michael Tate; Farm Credit Mid-America's Jonathan Carter; Drew Graham, Executive Vice President, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; and John Sparrow, Executive Vice President and CEO, Kentucky Farm Bureau Insurance Company.

KENTUCKY'S GRAIN INSURANCE FUND MODERNIZATION CRITICAL TO PRODUCERS IN CURRENT AG ECONOMY

Kentucky Farm Bureau has adopted policy and made it a state legislative priority to support the modernization of the Grain Insurance Fund to adequately protect current and future Kentucky grain producers.

In a state where grain production accounts for at least 30 percent of all ag-related cash receipts, giving those producers a certain level of assurance and protection is imperative. That's exactly what the creation of the Grain Insurance Fund, which dates back to 1984, intended to do as it relates to off-farm grain storage and sales.

Specifically, the fund protects grain producers from grain elevator failures or other licensed businesses that buy and/or store grain in the state.

In Kentucky, any person engaged in the business of buying grain from producers for resale, milling, processing or the storing of grain requires a license and must have a bond, certificate of deposit, or an irrevocable letter of credit.

Since its inception, the fund has been financed solely by grain farmers and is supported by an assessment of one-quarter of one percent (.0025) of the value of grain purchased from producers.

Currently, there is a \$10 million cap on the fund and assessments would not be collected unless the fund drops below the \$3 million mark.

Over the years, there have been some adjustments to the original legislation, also known as the Grain Insurance Law, which created the board and the fund. Under proposed legislation in this session, oversight of the fund would move from the Grain Insurance Board to the Kentucky Board of Agriculture.

If passed by the General Assembly, this legislation would also clarify that any grain producer in this state that produces a "fund covered grain" would be covered under the new law regardless if that producer has ever contributed to the fund in the past.

But the premise of the statute has always remained the same, said

Kentucky Farm Bureau President Mark Haney. "This original legislation has always been a good bill and helpful to our farm families," he said. "But there comes a time when even a good piece of legislation needs some modernization and we feel Kentucky agriculture is at that point when it comes to the Grain Insurance Law."

KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton, a grain producer from Webster County, said at a time when farm families need all the protection they can get for situations out of their control, it only makes sense to update this valuable piece of legislation.

"As a grain producer, I have seen the volatile swings in the market when it comes to grain prices," he said. "The best case scenario is the Grain Insurance Fund will never be needed however, knowing we are protected in the event of a grain elevator or grain storage business failure helps alleviate some of the stress we face each and every day on the farm. It's the right time to update this legislation, and it's the right thing to do."

Melton serves as chair of the KFB Resolutions Committee and said several county Farm Bureaus made it clear they wanted to see this legislation modernized.

"Being a grassroots organization, we get our policy and priority issues from our farm members all across the state

and the message was loud and clear last November when this committee met; update the Grain Insurance Law," he said.

"We are fortunate to live in a state where so many of our legislators have an inherent love and support for the agriculture industry."

– Mark Haney KFB President

Haney said he believes this proposed legislation will be well received in the General Assembly but noted that advocacy efforts would make a difference when explaining to those non-farming lawmakers how important this bill is to farm families and rural communities.

"We are fortunate to live in a state where so many of our legislators have an inherent love and support for the agriculture industry," he said. "But it is our job at Kentucky Farm Bureau to continue our advocacy efforts and to help explain the need for such legislation, emphasizing that when our rural communities do well, so do our urban business neighbors. We support the modernization of this law and look forward to working with legislators as they move forward on this proposal."

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KFB President Mark Haney walked across the stage carrying the state flag during the opening session of the convention

2019 AMERICAN FARM BUREAU CONVENTION CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

NEW ORLEANS-For the second year in a row, a sitting president was on hand to address the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Convention. President Donald Trump became one of only two chief executives to come to the event twice during their presidency. President George H.W. Bush was the other.

This along with remarks from USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue and a host of other state and nation leaders from government and agriculture set the stage for a memorable and productive 100th Annual Convention that drew more than 6,000 attendees from Farm Bureau's across the country and Puerto Rico.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall addressed the opening session telling members while there were many challenges in 2018 for agriculture, there were also some big victories, as well.

"Most of us are happy to see 2018 in the rear-view mirror, but on the policy

front 2018 could go down in our history as a huge success story," he said.

Some of those victories included tax reform, which lowered tax rates for almost every farmer and rancher and featured a doubling of the estate tax exemption for farm families; passage of the 2018 Farm Bill; reform of expensive and overreaching regulations; and the new Clean Water Rule proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers, replacing the flawed and unworkable 2015 WOTUS rule.

"Farmers and ranchers want clean water and clear rules, and we know we can have both," said Duvall. "We believe this new Clean Water Rule is rooted in common sense, will protect our nation's water, and allow farmers to farm their land without having to hire a team of consultants and lawyers."

He closed his remarks saying Farm Bureau members throughout history, and still today, have always

answered the call to feed, fuel and defend our nation.

"I am grateful for this wonderful organization," said Duvall. "Its founding 100 years ago was truly a breakthrough in American history. The founding fathers and mothers of our nation and of Farm Bureau were guided by a divine hand, a hand that still guides us today."

KENTUCKY IS WELL REPRESENTED

Nearly 500 Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) members made their way to the convention to celebrate its centennial, network with other Farm Bureau members from across the country, attend the various workshops offered, and to see advocacy in action as national policy and priority issues for the year were approved.

In fact, Kentucky brought one of the largest groups to this year's convention, something KFB President Mark Haney says is indicative of the membership's dedication to advocacy.



Top left: KFB President Mark Haney, First Vice President Eddie Melton and Second Vice President Sharon Furches participated in the business session of the annual convention. Right: AFBF President Zippy Duvall made remarks during the opening session.



"Having so many members here will let people know that Kentucky participates and it's a good example of how we operate here," he said. "We are the fourth largest Farm Bureau state in total membership which gives us a seat at the table many times. But it also allows us to have a good number of delegates here at the convention and some influence in that arena."

As is the case with AFBF, KFB is also moving through its Centennial Year and something Haney said is something to be proud of.

"Being an organization that is 100 years old is very impressive," he said. "We have a lot of heritage, a lot of expertise and we in Kentucky know what we need to do for the next 100 years, and that's continue to be a grassroots organization, representing and advocating for our members, and continuing to be the Voice of Agriculture."

During this year's AFBF Convention KFB state winners in the Discussion Meet, Excellence in Agriculture and the Outstanding Young Farm Family (AFBF's Achievement Award) participated with their peers from across the country representing Kentucky well.

Haney recognized their efforts in speaking to how important these young people are to agriculture and to Farm Bureau.

"I am so proud of these young people who made the trip with us and did such a good job of representing KFB," he said. "This younger generation will take the reins one day on the farm and in our agri-businesses and it's important we do all we can to help them in their efforts."

Those participants included KFB's 2018 Outstanding Young Farm Family Drew and Liz White of Union County, along with Discussion Meet winner Brian Welch of Hopkins County, and Ben and Savannah Robin of Bourbon County, KFB's Excellence in Agriculture state representatives.

2018 AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

From an organizational perspective, KFB took home several awards presented at this year's American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Centennial Convention. Each year state Farm Bureaus are presented these awards in different categories related to several programs and initiatives.

KFB was honored with AFBF Awards of Excellence in all four categories given, including: Advocacy; Engagement and Outreach; Leadership and Business Development; and Membership Value.

"It is my pleasure to accept these awards on behalf of our organization," said Haney. "Many volunteer leaders and staff work very hard each year to earn these awards," he said. "It takes a team effort to be the Voice of Kentucky Agriculture."

CONGRESSMAN JAMES COMER

Kentucky Congressman James Comer (KY-1) received the inaugural Outstanding New Member of Congress award presented to him by Duvall and Haney during a recognition event held during the convention. Comer was also recognized during the KFB Kentucky Breakfast.

The award is presented to one first-time representative or senator, regardless of party affiliation, whose philosophy and record demonstrate a commitment to the private enterprise system, sound agricultural policies supported by AFBF, fiscal conservatism and reduced federal regulation of business and individuals.

"Congressman Comer knows firsthand the many challenges in agriculture today," said Haney. "We are grateful for his dedicated service to agriculture and rural America."

KFB nominated Congressman Comer for the award because of his commitment to agriculture and rural life in Kentucky and across America.

ADOPTING POLICY

While convention attendees and delegates enjoyed an array of learning opportunities, state and national speakers, a visit from the President, and recognition of members for their efforts throughout the past year, their main purpose was to witness and adopt policy to guide the organization's work during its centennial year.

According to information provided by AFBF, some of those policies included:

TRADE

Delegates voted to favor negotiations to resolve trade disputes, rather than the use of tariffs or withdrawal from agreements. They also voted to support the United States' entry into the Comprehensive

2019 AFBF Convention continued on page 19



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KENTUCKY WINTER WEATHER PROOVING TO BE A ROLLER COASTER RIDE, SO FAR

Recent cold snap not all that uncommon in the state

Mark Twain once said, "If you don't like the weather in New England, just wait a minute, it'll change." Since he first spoke those words, many other regions and states across the country have adopted that saying, including Kentucky, where it seems to be truer during this winter season than ever before.

Within the span of a week in January, the state saw temperatures go from 50 degrees, to below zero temperatures, only to rebound back to the 50s within a few days.

Dr. Stuart Foster, State Climatologist for Kentucky said large temperature swings are much more common during the winter months than the summer. And even though the temperatures were some of the coldest realized in quite some time, those kinds of lows are not all that unusual in the Commonwealth.

"I think the term of the day was the Polar Vortex which sort of caught on a few years ago and is basically a large outbreak of cold air coming from the polar region," he said. "It happens every once in a while, and if you look back at our climatological records, we've seen temperatures drop down to zero or below about every two or three years in this state. So, it's not incredibly uncommon but certainly we had been off to a fairly mild start to this winter."

It was perhaps that mild start that made the big drop in temperatures feel even colder, but Foster pointed out that the cold snap experienced that last week of January was far from the state record low.

"If we look back, our statewide record low temperature occurred in 1994. That January, we had a strong frontal system that brought ice and snow, with record cold air coming on the backside of the system," he said. "A record low temperature was set in Shelbyville at minus 37 degrees on January 19 of that year."

While this latest cold weather event didn't compare to that record, wind chill readings were certainly in the ballpark.

Foster said that in looking at those records, one thing people should take note of is Kentucky has not seen a prolonged cold winter in a number of years.

"It would actually be truly remarkable if the climate was not changing or fluctuating in cycles. Wintertime in Kentucky is an interesting time and if we look historically, year-to-year, at our climate, there's much more variation in terms of warm and cold periods through the winter months than what we have in the summers. While winters are expected to become warmer in the future, we can still expect to see those fluctuations of warm and cold."

– Dr. Stuart Foster
State Climatologist for Kentucky

"We have not experienced an extremely cold winter for about 40 years, going back to the late 1970s," he said. "But, what we are seeing now is the result of a fluctuation in the position of the Polar Jetstream."

Foster added that this "roller coaster" type of weather with periods of above, then below normal temperatures are often more typical in the winter months. He also said that changes in the atmosphere can be caused by many things including land uses and oceanic conditions.

"These things are constantly changing, and the atmosphere and the ocean are constantly in motion and we are constantly changing land use patterns," he said. "It would actually be truly remarkable if the climate was not changing or fluctuating in cycles."

Wintertime in Kentucky is an interesting time and if we look historically, year-to-year, at our climate, there's much more variation in terms of warm and cold periods through the winter months than what we have in the summers. While winters are expected to become warmer in the future, we can still expect to see those fluctuations of warm and cold."

One thing Kentucky has now that wasn't around 40 years ago is the Kentucky Mesonet, a network of automated weather and climate monitoring stations developed by the Kentucky Climate Center (KCC) at Western Kentucky University.

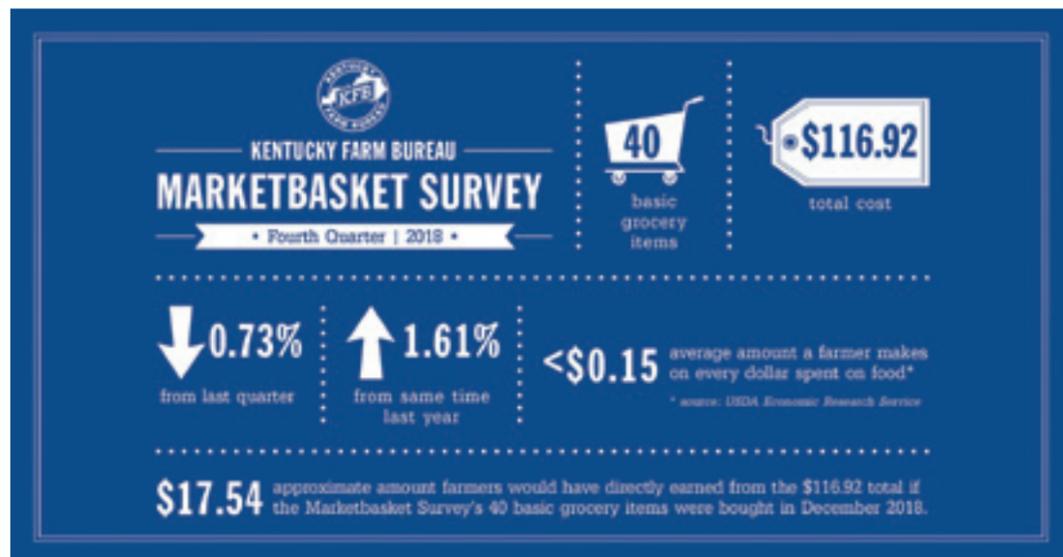
"With the Mesonet, people have locally accurate weather information from the 70 data stations we have located all across the state, the newest being in Webster County," said Foster. "Through time, we have a record of that information, so we can go back and compare how weather, for instance in January, compares with weather at the same time of year in the past."

Foster emphasized that while the long-term data is helpful in a number of ways, that ability to see current information available on the Mesonet website can be a big advantage to farmers as they make decisions in caring for livestock, as well as making decisions for themselves in the face of extreme weather conditions.

For more information about the Kentucky Mesonet, log on to the website at <http://www.kymesonet.org>.

KFB MARKETBASKET SURVEY SHOWS SECOND STRAIGHT QUARTERLY DECLINE IN FOOD PRICES

Last quarter food prices dropped slightly, but overall food costs were up in 2018



The final Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Marketbasket survey of 2018 showed a second straight quarter of food-price declines, although food costs still rose over 2017 levels.

The average cost of the 40 basic food items surveyed each quarter showed an overall increase for the year of \$1.85, going from \$115.07 in 2017 to \$116.92 in 2018. However, the final 2018 survey total is still lower than the average of \$118.87 from 2016. In fact, the last time surveyed items were below this most recent mark was in 2012, when the average cost was \$115.05.

The most recent third and fourth quarter declines were minimal at .83 and .73 percent, respectively, following first and second quarter increases of 1.35 and 2.19 percent.

The KFB Marketbasket Survey is taken as a way to monitor overall and categorical trends in foodprices across the Commonwealth in six categories including beef, pork, poultry, dairy, fruits and vegetables, and grains.

And generally speaking, what has been experienced in Kentucky this year somewhat mirrors national trends. According to information from the

Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index Summary (CPI), the food index rose 0.4 percent last December, the largest increase since May of 2014.

CPI SPECIFICS

"The food at home index rose 0.3 percent, as the index for fruits and vegetables increased 1.7 percent. The index for fresh fruits rose 1.3 percent and the fresh vegetables index increased 2.6 percent. The index for cereals and bakery products advanced 0.4 percent, and the indexes for dairy and related products and for nonalcoholic beverages both increased 0.3 percent. The index for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs was unchanged."

MARKETBASKET SURVEY SPECIFICS:

Fourth quarter prices of specific items and commodities remained a mixed bag with several items showing price decreases while others increased. Most notably, the price of pork products decreased 4.91 percent, while beef costs increased for the sixth consecutive quarter.

The cost of grains declined by 2.76 percent, fruits and vegetables saw a

price increase of 1.56 percent and poultry prices rose 2.32 percent during the fourth quarter.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS IN FOOD PRICES:

Whether or not U.S. grocery prices fluctuate from one quarterly survey to the next, Kentuckians and all Americans continue to enjoy some of the lowest food prices in the world. Shoppers in the U.S. spend only about seven percent of their disposable income on food each year. Those costs remain far lower than any other country in the world thanks to many of the agricultural efficiencies utilized in America. Today the average U.S. farmer produces enough food and fiber to provide for about 154 people – a number that has continuously grown since 1940 when the average was 19 people per farmer.

Due to more food being produced on less land, the farmer's share of the retail food dollar in America is down. According to the USDA's Food Dollar Series, a farmer earns less than 15 cents per dollar spent on food, which is down significantly from the 31 cents earned in 1980 and is the lowest amount since the Food Dollar series began.

KENTUCKY LEOPOLD CONSERVATION AWARD SEEKS NOMINEES

Know a Kentucky farmer or forester who goes above and beyond in the care and management of natural resources? Nominate them for the 2019 Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award®.

Sand County Foundation, the nation's leading voice for conservation of private land, presents the Leopold Conservation Award to private landowners in 14 states for extraordinary achievement in voluntary conservation. In Kentucky, the \$10,000 award is presented with the Kentucky Agricultural Council and the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes landowners who inspire others with their dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat management on private, working land. In his influential 1949 book, "A Sand County Almanac," Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage.

Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves. The application can be found at: <https://sandcountyfoundation.org/uploads/Kentucky-CFN-2019.pdf>

The application deadline date is April 1, 2019. The committee prefers application materials to be sent electronically. To do so, please e-mail materials to colemansteve51@gmail.com.

Materials may be mailed to:
 Leopold Conservation Award
 c/o Franklin County
 Conservation District
 103 Lakeview Court
 Frankfort, KY 40601

The 2018 recipient of the award was Trunnell Family Farm from Utica.

The Kentucky Leopold Conservation Award is made possible thanks to the generous support and partnership of:

- Kentucky Agricultural Council
- Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts

- Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture
- Kentucky Corn Growers Association
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture
- Food and Environment
- Kentucky Woodland Owner's Association
- Kentucky Tree Farm Committee
- Kentucky Cattlemen's Association
- AgriBusiness Association of Kentucky
- Kentucky Pork Producers
- The Nature Conservancy in Kentucky
- U.S Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For more information on the award, visit www.leopoldconservationaward.org.



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10 KENTUCKY AGRIBUSINESSES TO RECEIVE GRANTS FOR MARKETING NEEDS

Ten Kentucky agribusinesses have been awarded United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm to School Producer Engagement grants for training, equipment, and other needs to enable farmers to develop or enhance their farm-to-school marketing efforts, Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles announced today.

"These grants will enable these Kentucky farm families and agribusinesses to improve their marketing to schools across the Commonwealth," Commissioner Quarles said. "There's nothing better for our students to eat than Kentucky Proud foods provided by the hard work of Kentucky farmers and agribusinesses. I would like to thank these recipients for applying to this program. I am also grateful to the Kentucky Department of

Agriculture's Farm to School Program leadership for continuing to pursue opportunities that help Kentucky punch above our weight class."

- The 10 Kentucky agribusinesses are:
- Salad Days Farm, applicant Maggie Dungan in Woodford County
 - Moonlight Meat Processing, applicant Anne Bays in Whitley County
 - Need More Acres Farm, applicants Nathan and Michelle Howell in Allen County
 - Struttin Rooster Farm, applicant Ryan Emmick in Butler County
 - Livers Farms, applicants Mark Livers and Audrey Livers (manager) in Union County
 - Kentucky Horticulture Council for Clark County Farmers Group, applicant Cindy Finneseth in Clark County

- Crooked Row Farm LLC, applicant Robert Eversole in Fayette County
- Butler Farms, applicant Kathleen Butler in Bourbon County
- Cumberland Extension District Board for Cumberland Farmers Group, applicant Chelsey Anderson in Cumberland County
- Lee's Plant Farm, applicants Scotty and Robin Lee in LaRue County.

Sixteen applications were submitted to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) and were reviewed by a grant committee. Applicants were evaluated according to financial need, measurable outcomes, community commitment, and project sustainability.

Each grantee will receive a \$7,000 grant after attending one of two farm-to-school workshops. The workshops are scheduled for Feb. 19 in Woodford County and Feb. 21 in Cumberland County.

In June, KDA's Farm to School Program was awarded a \$99,913 grant from USDA to expand its efforts to help Kentucky schools serve local foods to their students. Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government was also awarded a \$100,000 grant to increase access to local foods for Jefferson County Public Schools students and their families through its Farm to Table Program and The Food Literacy Project at Oxmoor Farm.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) awarded a total of 73 grants that will serve more than 6,006 schools and 2.8 million students nationwide.

The KDA's Farm to School Program helps connect Kentucky school systems with local farmers and small businesses. Kentucky schools spent nearly \$8.9 million on local food products in 2013-2014. More than 700 schools in 77 Kentucky school districts had programs in place to buy local Kentucky foods for their school cafeterias, according to the 2015 Farm to School Census compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Many students take part in planting school gardens, visiting farms, and turning the cafeteria into a classroom.

SMALL RUMINANT GRAZING CONFERENCE SET FOR FEB. 23 IN MOREHEAD

Kentucky's sheep and goat producers enjoy quality grazing opportunities because of the state's ample forage base. Each year, the Kentucky Small Ruminant Grazing Conference aims to provide educational opportunities to new and established producers.

The University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment along with Kentucky State University, the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office, the Kentucky Goat Producers Association and the Kentucky Sheep and Wool Producers Association will offer the 2019 conference Feb. 23 at the Derrickson Agricultural Complex at Morehead State University.

"Each year we move the conference around to different areas of Kentucky to try and reach the most people," said Tom Keene, UK agronomy specialist. "We will offer science-based research that producers can apply in their own operations."

The daylong event begins with a registration at 7:30 a.m. EST. The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. with a welcome and a market update. Focused sessions begin at 9 a.m. Morning topics include: record keeping, watering systems and grazing management. Keene will present information on plant identification during lunch. Afternoon sessions include producing and storing high quality hay and a producer panel. The conference officially ends at 2:30 p.m. but interested participants may stay for an optional FAMACHA training at 2:45 p.m. FAMACHA is a program designed to help producers of small ruminants diagnose parasite infection.

Preregistration, due Feb. 21, is \$40 for the conference and an additional \$20 for the FAMACHA training. The program and registration are available online at the UK Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability website: <http://cars.ca.uky.edu/small-ruminant-grazing-conference>.

Those who do not want to register online may send their name, address,

"Each year we move the conference around to different areas of Kentucky to try and reach the most people."

- Tom Keene KFB First Vice President

phone number and email address along with payment to UK Robinson Center for Appalachian Resource Sustainability, attn. Jackie Allen, 130 Robinson Road, Jackson, KY 41339. To pay with credit card, contact Allen via phone: 606-666-2438, ext. 291.

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MARKETS

U.S. AG TRADE SURPLUS IS SHRINKING

Fiscal year (October/September) 2019 agricultural exports are projected by USDA at \$141.5 billion, down \$1.9 billion from fiscal year 2018 and \$3.0 billion from the August 2018 forecast, largely due to decreases in soybeans and cotton. Soybean export volumes are down because of declining Chinese purchases from the U.S. The grain and feed export forecast is raised to \$33.8 billion, driven by higher corn and wheat volumes. Livestock, dairy, and poultry exports are down slightly to \$30.1 billion. Declines in poultry and dairy products offset increases in beef and pork products. Horticultural product exports continue to grow, now forecast at \$35.3 billion. Ag exports to China are forecast at \$9.0 billion, down from \$16.3 billion in fiscal 2018 and the lowest since fiscal 2007. U.S. ag imports in fiscal year 2019 are forecast at \$127.0 billion, down \$555 million from fiscal 2018. The U.S. agricultural trade surplus for fiscal 2019 is forecast at \$14.5 billion, down \$1.3 billion from fiscal 2018.

SOYBEAN CRUSHING CAPACITY EXPANDING

According to an article on the U.S. Soybean Export Council's web site, USSOY.org, there will likely be two new soybean crushing facilities opening in

2019 – in South Dakota and Michigan. A third crushing plant is expected to be running by the end of 2021 in North Dakota. These plants are expected to crush 100,000 to 120,000 bushels per day. This would expand U.S. crushing capacity by 6-10 percent and process an estimated 120 million bushels per year. This results in 2.8 million short tons of soybean meal and 1.4 billion pounds of soybean oil. Market impact will depend in part on possible closures of older, less-efficient facilities, domestic livestock production, and the availability of export markets for the meal and oil.

2018 CORN QUALITY IS ABOVE AVERAGE

The U.S. Grains Council (USGC) reported its eighth annual corn quality survey findings in the 2018/2019 Corn Harvest Quality Report. The representative samples tested indicate the overall quality of the 2018 corn crop was better than the average of the previous five crop years on many attributes. Nearly 94% of the samples met the standards for U.S. No. 2 grade; over 77% of the samples all grade requirements for U.S. No. 1 grade. The 2018 U.S. corn crop is entering the market channel with lower average total damage, broken corn and foreign material (BCFM), moisture and stress cracks; and higher average test weight, oil concentration, 100-kernel

weight and true density relative to the five-year average. The average test weight of 58.4 lb/bu is equal to the 2017 crop. The average U.S. aggregate total damage in 2018(1.5%) was higher than in 2017 (1.3%), but well below the limit for U.S. No. 1 grade (3.0%). The detailed report is available at GRAINS.org.

U.S. HOG HERD IS GROWING BY TWO PERCENT

The latest Quarterly Hogs and Pigs report confirmed that the U.S. hog herd continues to expand. The inventory of breeding animals at 6.33 million head increased 2.4 percent over the year-earlier inventory. The breeding herd has essentially been increasing since the significant reductions of 2008-2010. Productivity of the breeding inventory, as measured by pigs per litter, continued to increase in the fall quarter. The September-November rate of 10.76 pigs per litter is the highest recorded since the series began in 1970. Kentucky's December 1, 2018 breeding inventory totaled 37,000 head, down 18 percent from a year earlier. For the 12 months ending December 1, 2018, Kentucky produced 9.88 pigs per litter, compared to 10.67 pigs for the nation. During the December-February 2019 and March-May 2019 quarters, U.S. hog producers intend to farrow two percent more sows than during the year-earlier period.

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2019 KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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2019 DISTRICT MEETINGS

All times are local

DISTRICT 1 March 11 7:00 p.m. <i>Majestic Pizza & Steak House, Benton</i>	DISTRICT 5 March 26 7:00 p.m. <i>Nelson County Civic Center</i>	DISTRICT 8 March 4 7:00 p.m. <i>Madison County Farm Bureau Office</i>
DISTRICT 2 March 5 6:30 p.m. <i>Ballard Convention Center</i>	DISTRICT 6 March 19 7:00 p.m. <i>Oldham County Farm Bureau, LaGrange Office</i>	DISTRICT 9 March 18 6:30 p.m. <i>Blue Licks State Park</i>
DISTRICT 3 March 21 6:00 p.m. <i>Rough River Dam State Resort Park</i>	DISTRICT 7 March 11 6:00 p.m. <i>Russell County Auditorium/ Natatorium Center</i>	DISTRICT 10 March 12 6:30 p.m. <i>Bath County Extension Office</i>
DISTRICT 4 March 25 6:30 p.m. <i>Barren River State Park Lodge</i>		DISTRICT 11 March 19 6:00 p.m. <i>Clay County Community Center</i>

Kentucky Feeder Cattle Cash Prices (2014-19)



Source: "Weekly Kentucky Livestock and Grain Market Report", Kentucky Department of Agriculture, January 22, 2019

Kentucky Monthly Corn Marketings 2017-18 Marketing Year vs Previous 3-Year Average



Source: Agricultural Prices, USDA-NASS, November 2018

CANDID CONVERSATION

KFB 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, Congressman James Comer talks about the Farm Bill, which includes legislation to bring back industrial hemp as a production crop and advocating for agriculture at the Congressional level. Congressman Comer was honored with the inaugural American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Outstanding New Member of Congress Award presented at the recent AFBF Annual Convention.

In being named the Outstanding New Member of Congress, how important is the connection to organizations like Farm Bureau when discussing and advocating for the agriculture industry?

"Farm Bureau is the Voice of Agriculture and Farm Bureau is the main reason we finally got the Farm Bill through. It is very important that farmers consider themselves grassroots activists and lobby their members of Congress and band together to have more power in trying to overcome a lot of the obstacles we have in passing legislation. There are always special interest groups that don't agree with us and have other ideas of where tax dollars should go. So, it's important that we in agriculture stick together through groups like Farm Bureau. For me personally, Farm Bureau has meant a lot. I grew up participating in all the Farm Bureau contests. After I graduated from Western Kentucky University with an ag degree and moved back to Monroe County and I started farming, I was on the Farm Bureau board. It has been a big part of my development over the years and I look forward to working with the organization for many more years to continue leading agriculture in the right direction."



Congressman James Comer, center, was presented the inaugural AFBF Outstanding New Member of Congress Award by AFBF President Zippy Duvall, right, and KFB President Mark Haney at the recent AFBF Annual Convention.

In looking at the Farm Bill vote, there was clear bipartisan support in both the House and Senate for this bill. Does that give you a certain level of optimism that this new Congress will demonstrate some of the same bipartisanship in other pieces of legislation?

"The Farm Bill is the one major bill, in the two years that I've been in Congress, that I can say was bipartisan. Hopefully we'll have more because with this new Congress, everything is going to have to be bipartisan. Both ends of the political spectrum are going to have to realize that every piece of legislation is not going to be very liberal or very conservative, but more to the middle. I think that if we are sincere about governing, we're going to have to have bipartisan compromise."

In talking about the new Farm Bill, in your estimate, is there something you see in that bill as most important and will be of immediate help to farm families?

"The most important part of the Farm Bill, as far as I'm concerned, is the federal crop insurance program. With the current price of corn and soybeans, it was imperative that we have a stable, reliable federal crop insurance program for our next growing season or there were going to be a lot of farmers, especially young farmers, who would have difficulty getting lines of credit to plant their crops. And I hope that we have a bill that has created, with this bill, an environment where farmers will find, when they go to their Farm Service Administration office, for whatever

business they have, that it will be a little easier and a little less bureaucratic to do business with."

The Hemp Farming Act was included within the Farm Bill legislation. How do you think that industry will look in Kentucky?

"For those growing the fiber type of industrial hemp, that will be done on larger farms to justify growing this type of crop and it will take more land. It's more like corn and soybeans in that usually, to be successful with those crops, you have to do it on a pretty large scale. If you are growing the type of plant for CBD oil, then I see that as an alternative for small farmers because it's a lot like tobacco. In fact, it's probably more labor intensive than tobacco. It's actually more like a horticulture crop. The good thing about hemp is, you'll have two different types of hemp farmers who will emerge. And I'm always looking for opportunities for small farmers. Hemp has been an interesting issue from the start and there has been a lot of interest. The session we held at the AFBF Convention was standing room only. I was shocked at how many people show up but it's a tough environment in agriculture right now. A lot of farmers are trying to find an alternative crop to grow."

As a farmer yourself, and one of the few in this Congress, do you find yourself having to educate some of your colleagues about the ag industry?

"It's very difficult and frustrating at times in Congress because very few of the members have any idea what a real farm looks like. They either have the image of a few chickens running around in the front yard or they view every farm as a mega-corporation. They don't realize what the average farm in Kentucky is all about and what the average farmer is all about. So, what I tried to explain, when talking to a skeptical colleague about passing the Farm Bill, was to ask if we wanted to outsource our food production much like we did

with some of our manufacturing. Do we really want to buy food from third-world countries? We should produce our food in the United States, and I think that, in the end, that convinced a lot of people to support the Farm Bill. I was very pleased with the final vote and I give Farm Bureau much of the credit in getting it across the finish line. The organization also does much to help educate the members of Congress about issues related to agriculture and rural America, as well as educating the media on how important agriculture is and the challenges we have in the industry."

As you have watched your colleagues go through the process of passing this Farm Bill, how do you think they really feel about farmers in this country?

"No one is 100 percent satisfied with what was included in the Farm Bill, but, at the end of the day, I think farmers are one group of people who have overwhelming support in Congress whether you are Democrat or Republican; whether you live in the city or a small town. People respect farmers and respect our work ethic and they respect our values."



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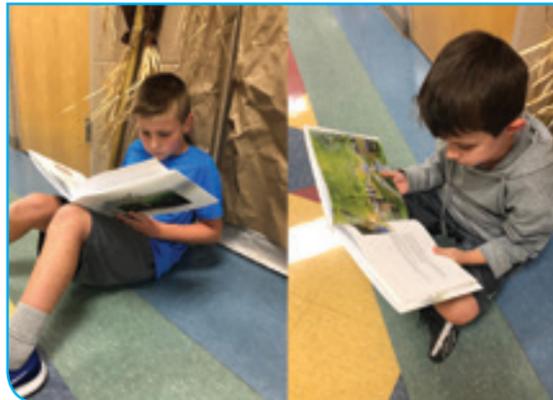
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COUNTY CORNER

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



ROWAN COUNTY

McBrayer Elementary students reading the Kentucky Farm Bureau book by Mitchell Tolle which was donated by KFB Federation member Lorrina Mabry White. Pictured at left is Collin Owens and on the right is Maddox Burkhart.



LAWRENCE COUNTY

Sherry Compton, Lawrence County Farm Bureau Secretary, presented a check to help sponsor a meal for the Lawrence County High School Football team as they competed in the playoffs.



HENDERSON COUNTY

Henderson County Farm Bureau's Women's Committee, Chair and Co-Chair, Alice Skaggs and Brenda Williams are pictured with representatives of the Henderson Fire Department, Chief Scott Foreman and Captain Brad Mattingly making a donation of \$650 for "Stop-the-Bleed" kits for the schools.



TRIMBLE COUNTY

Trimble County's Farmer of the Year recognition. Pictured from left: Tina Buchanan, Elly Buchanan, Steve Buchanan, and Jerry Oak, Trimble County President.



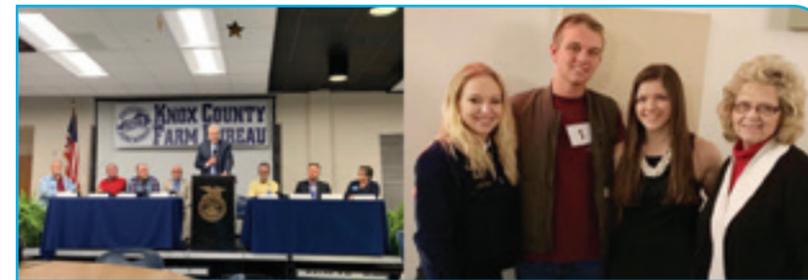
LETCHER COUNTY

Agency Manager Mark Wright and County President Howard Stanfill recently recognized State Representative Angie Hatton for her commitment to "Lead Where You Stand."



BARREN COUNTY

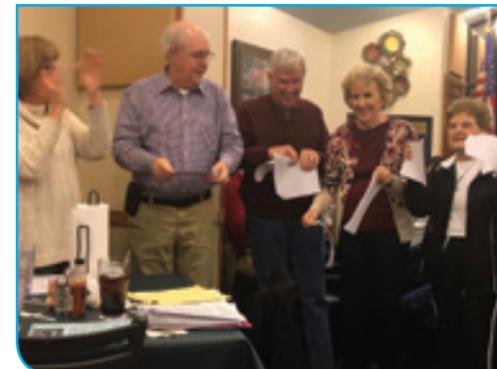
Barren County Farm Bureau Board of Directors recently honored Jay Coleman for his 16 years of service as President of Barren County Farm Bureau. Pictured from left: new Barren County Farm Bureau President Chris Schalk and Coleman.



KNOX COUNTY

Recent Knox County Farm Bureau events included first ever "Measure the Candidate" Forum in October at Knox Central High School which included seven candidates for various offices. KFB's Jeff Harper served as moderator while the Knox Central and Lynn Camp High School's FFA members set up the meeting room and directed visitors as they entered.

Knox County Farm Bureau also entered three contestants in the District 11 Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth Contest held in Perry County on November 1. Pictured are Madison Logan, Keith Payne, Tawny Nelson, and Judith Hinkle, Knox County's Co- Women's Chair.



DAVIESS COUNTY

Daviess County Farm Bureau Past President Danny Ebelhar along with his wife Sharon, past County Secretary Brenda Camp and her husband Bob, and current Daviess County President Joan Hayden participated in the DCFB South Agency note shredding.



BOURBON COUNTY

Members of the Bourbon County Farm Bureau are pictured at their Legislative Appreciation breakfast with several elected officials.



SCOTT COUNTY

Donzetta and Stewart Hughes of Scott County recently attended their very first American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in New Orleans. Stewart is the Scott County FB President.



ELLIOTT COUNTY

Elliott County Agency Manager Bobby Adams, Elliott County President John-Paul Skaggs are standing with Elliott County 4H Extension Agent Katie Wallace in front the ham house purchased by Elliott County Farm Bureau. The first hams were placed in the house on January 21, 2019.



UNION COUNTY

Union County Farm Bureau donated \$300 of food to the local food pantry for food check-out week. Ava Arnett, Sydney Thomas, Will Wells and Jack White carried in the food and stocked the shelves.



PENDLETON COUNTY

Pendleton County's Measure the Candidate forum included Rep. Mark Hart at podium on left, Greg Coulson who is seated and County President Rob McClanahan.



WOLFE COUNTY

Wolfe County President Carroll Amyx and Vice President Pam Pilgrim presented Wolfe County Agriculture Extension agent Heather Graham with Farm Bureau's "Lead Where you Stand" award. This award recognized Mrs. Graham as a leader in the community.



Down the Backroads

By Tim Thornberry

For some reason the changing of the seasons has always fascinated me. Watching the colors of the earth change from summer to fall to winter and on to spring, is such an amazing gift the good Lord has given us.

But I must admit, the winter season has become a little less desirable to me, as I get older. Don't get me wrong, I love a beautiful snowfall as much as the next person. But working out in the cold and snow is a little harder to do now than it was 40 years ago!

With that said, I found myself traveling off the beaten path during our last snowfall looking for the scenic vista that shows the beauty of this season from the comfort and warmth of my four-wheel drive.

In doing so, I saw many people from a variety of occupational backgrounds

working out in the cold weather and suddenly I found myself feeling a little guilty for being warm and protected from the elements.

I think it is easy to forget that life goes on for those who work outdoors no matter what the weather is like; be they first responders, transportation workers, construction folks or really, whatever job brings you out into the elements. But I feel that the "perils" of working outside during this time of year are most evident on the farm.

I saw farmers moving hay to the fields for their livestock. I saw them checking water supplies to make sure they weren't frozen, so their animals could have plenty to drink.

I saw them working in their cold barns on equipment to ensure it

still operated when the temperature dropped below freezing.

I saw them mending fences and performing other repair work, some of which comes with the non-growing season.

And these are just some of the visible things you and I would see going on at the farm at this time of the year. What we don't see are the hours of research and preparation these farm families are putting in as they prepare for spring planting, which will come around sooner than you think.

We don't always see the ongoing educational endeavors they must undertake to stay current on new farming trends and technology; something that is generally done during the winter months.

If you spend a day on the farm during this season, you'll soon realize there is as much, if not more work to be done even though they are not planting or tending to their crops.

Oh, I forgot one more thing I experienced while out on this snowy day. I saw smiles and heard laughter. I saw wives and husbands working together and children following along throwing a snowball or two. I saw a togetherness that is indicative of farm families.

I know firsthand that farming is not for the faint of heart and that becomes even more true during the winter months. With that said, it was more important to me than ever before to say thank you to the folks I saw on that day.

I realized they don't do this for the money or the glory or the recognition that is due them, I saw that these families love their land, their animals, their crops and each other in these rural places where they live and work.

Suddenly the aches and pains I sometimes feel in cold weather didn't feel so bad and the occasional complaint about how cold it is, ceased for a while, as I traveled down those backroads.

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