

Kentucky

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**2019 KFB COUNTRY
HAM BREAKFAST**
MILLION-DOLLAR HAM TAKES CENTER STAGE

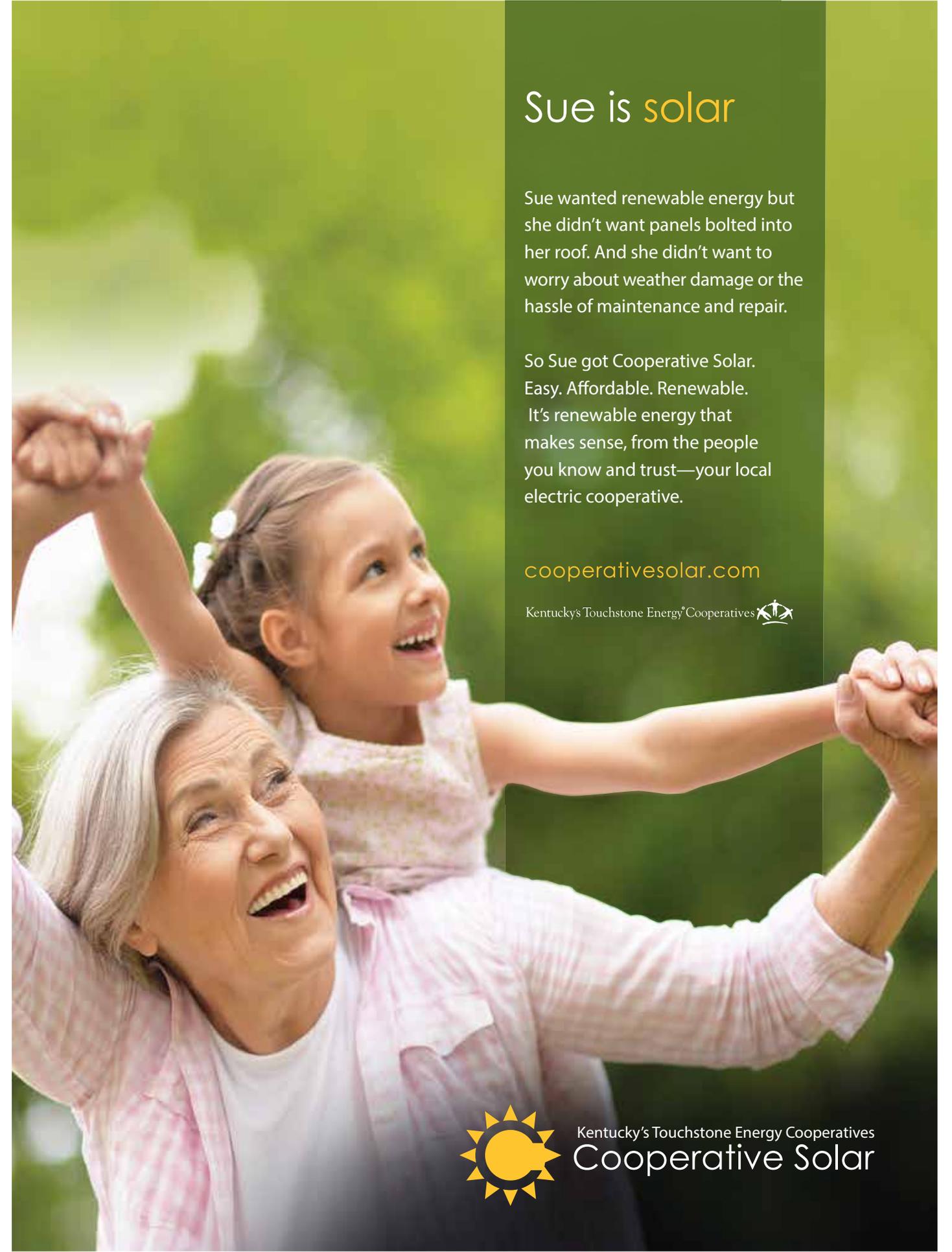
WOTUS TIMELINE
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

GRAIN CROPS UPDATE
EXPONENTIAL PRODUCTION
INCREASES SEEN OVER PAST
FOUR DECADES



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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS
Volume 18 | No. 7
September 2019

President's COLUMN



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Cover photo by Tim Thornberry
Miss Kentucky, Alex Franck, displays this year's
Champion Country Ham.

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As we approach another harvest, it goes without saying, our farm families have faced another tough growing season. We began with too much rainfall and ended with not enough. But, this weather-related scenario has caused hardships before and we do the best we can to face it whenever it may occur.

Farmers know they have no control over Mother Nature and we accept that. However, we do have control over on-farm processes that can help alleviate some of the pain caused when the growing season doesn't quite go the way we'd like, especially from a water management perspective.

Supporting initiatives to manage our water resources is something Kentucky Farm Bureau has been involved in for many years and nothing is more valuable to us, as farmers, than our natural resources.

The efforts made by our Water Management Working Group (WMWG) have evolved into programs and regulations that have made this state a national leader in addressing water issues.

We are seeing more and more on-farm projects related to water management. From harvesting this most important resource to better methods of water distribution through our farming operations, we have made tremendous strides in making sure we utilize our water supplies to their maximum potential.

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Agricultural Water Quality Act, and as we anticipate a new Waters of the United States rule being put into place, we must continue to advocate for water resource management initiatives at all levels.

We are fortunate to live in a state in which our government, research and commodity organizations work together to approach issues related to the farm. Water resources is just one of many instances in which we have all come together for the betterment of agriculture.

We need to continue to keep our eye on the end results when it comes to such on-farm projects and be willing to work in a cooperative manner. It's much more important to get a positive solution to an issue than to get credit for any part we may have played in the process.

As we continue to deal with situations Mother Nature throws our way each year, it would be much easier to have a game plan in place and implemented, than to try and react once a situation occurs, whether the issue is water or anything else. Having as much knowledge about an issue before challenges arise, gives us a better chance to keep them at bay. We feel as though we have accomplished that through our water resource management efforts.

With the continued work being done by the WMWG, our Kentucky Water Resources Board, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, our Environment and Energy Cabinet, and a long list of legislative and commodity leaders, regular proactive steps are being made to better manage our water resources.

Above all, the better we handle water issues on the farm, the better the relationship between our urban and rural neighbors becomes. We all have a part to play when it comes to water resource management, whether we know it or not. Let's remain diligent in our advocacy efforts for the benefit of all Kentuckians.

Mark Haney
President, Kentucky Farm Bureau

2019 COUNTY ANNUAL MEETINGS

All times are local

Adair County

September 17, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Lindsey Wilson College Dining Hall

Anderson County

October 14, 2019, 5:30 p.m.
Eagle Lake Convention Center

Barren County

September 14, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Cave City Convention Center

Bath County

September 17, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Bath County Agriculture Center

Bell County

September 26, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Bell County Farm Bureau Office

Boone County

October 8, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Boone County Extension
Enrichment Center

Bourbon County

October 10, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Legion Park

Boyle County

September 17, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
The Showroom, Danville

Bracken County

October 8, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Extension Office Brooksville

Breathitt County

September 27, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Quicksand RCARS

Bullitt County

September 21, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Bullitt County Extension Office

Caldwell County

September 14, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Caldwell County High School Cafeteria

Campbell County

September 22, 2019, 2:30 p.m.
Neltner Farm, Cold Spring

Carroll County

October 14, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Carroll County Farm Bureau Office

Casey County

October 10, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Kentucky Ag/Expo Center

Clark County

October 4, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Clark County Farm Bureau Office

Clinton County

September 12, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Fairgrounds

Cumberland County

September 27, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Veterans Memorial Building, Burkesville

Fayette County

October 15, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Fayette County Cooperative Extension office.

Floyd County

October 17, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Jenny Wiley State Park

Franklin County

October 1, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Franklin County Cooperative Extension Office

Gallatin County

October 7, 2019, Open House: 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
Meeting: 2:00 p.m.

Gallatin County Farm Bureau Office

Grant County

September 13, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Alpine Dairy Farm, Dry Ridge

Harrison County

September 12, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
McCauley Building, Harrison County Fairgrounds

Henry County

October 10, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Henry County Farm Bureau Office

Jackson County

September 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Jackson Energy Farm Hwy 290

Laurel County

October 15, 2019, 5:45 p.m.
Laurel County Farm Bureau Office

Lawrence County

October 15, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Down Home Grill, Louisa

Letcher County

September 16, 2019, 4:00 p.m.
Letcher County Farm Bureau Office

Lyon County

September 13, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Lyon County Convention Center
Safety exhibits start at 5:00 p.m.

Continued on pg. 11



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COMMENT COLUMN



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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Twenty-five years ago, Kentucky Farm Bureau, on behalf of state agricultural producers, was instrumental in working to address water quality concerns in the Commonwealth and helped develop the language for what is now known as the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act. This was a pioneering approach to raising awareness and providing assistance to addressing water quality on agricultural operations, and a first-of-its-kind regulation in the country.

Now, some twenty-five years later, KFB has once again played a major role in addressing important environmental issues facing agricultural production in the Commonwealth by way of its Water Management Working Group (WMWG), to ensure there are sustainable water resources for agricultural production and all citizens of Kentucky.

Established by KFB President Mark Haney in December of 2014, this group has been hard at work to identify best management practices that farm families can implement on their farms, to improve water management in their operations.

The WMWG also has worked to identify and collect base data and information on water resources of the Commonwealth, including surface and groundwater. Doing so, promoted the need to expand this information to make it available to all water users in Kentucky. With that, the Group has developed a web page on the KFB web site, KYFB.com/Water, to share this information.

Since its inception, some of the successes that can be attributed to the work of the WMWG includes supporting efforts connected to super gauges, the expansion of the groundwater monitoring network, the Drought Early Warning System, passage of HB 529 that created the Kentucky Water Resources Board in 2016, creation of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy's On-Farm Water Management Cost Share Program, and the Kentucky Mesonet and its continuation of increasing the number of stations and stations with soil moisture and soil temperature sensors.

The Group has also worked to help promote soil health with its benefits to increasing water retention in our soils and increase technical assistance programs to assist farmers with better water management on their farming operations.

In thinking about the future direction of the WMWG, we will be trying to continue efforts to broaden the awareness of better water management practices, increase awareness of how important our water resources are to our economic development capabilities, ensuring accurate determination of water usage, and efficiencies in water use.

We will also support efforts to identify new technologies to improve water management, initiatives to better study the water resources in Kentucky, and our continued cooperation with state agencies to improve the Kentucky Drought Mitigation Plan to better respond to agriculture drought needs and increase our understanding of future agricultural water needs.

The WMWG has been successful in so many ways over the past five years but we couldn't have done it without the valuable partnerships we have with other state organizations and agencies. We can accomplish so much more when we work together to achieve a common goal.

Steve Coleman

Chair, KFB Water Management Working Group



Kentucky grain production has greatly increased thanks to continued research and dedicated producers.

GRAIN CROPS UPDATE

Exponential production increases seen over past four decades

There is no doubt that Kentucky's agricultural industry has changed dramatically over the past several years going from a tobacco-dominant ag economy to one of the most diverse agricultural environments in the country.

One area that has seen exponential growth is grain production. According to information from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Kentucky corn production has gone from 119,850,000 bushels in 1978 to 215,250,000 bushels produced last year.

But perhaps most impressive is the fact that in 1978, producers averaged 85 bushels per acre while the 2018 average was 175.

The same is true for soybean and wheat production. In 1978, 40,800,000 bushels of soybeans were harvested with an average of 30 bushels per acre. Last year, 103,480,000 bushels were produced with an average of 52 bushels per acre.

Wheat producers harvested 6,480,000 in 1978 and 24,320,000 last year. During that same period, wheat bushels per acre went from 36 to 76.

University of Kentucky (UK) College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Extension Professor for Grain Crops and Director of the UK Grain and Forage Center of Excellence Chad Lee said research efforts made in this state have certainly helped increase production, but good farming techniques have also played an important role.

"We have really good producers here who have built their soils over time, added some organic matter in some situations and they have made their waters cleaner," he said. "Thirty years of no-till and minimum till in Kentucky grains is a big reason our soils are better now. All these things have

helped producers increase their productivity."

But, as efficient as producers have become, they are still at the mercy of the weather elements around them. And this season has presented its share of challenges. Lee said, however, in looking at changing weather patterns over a period of time, better planting decisions can be made by producers as they continue to keep yields at optimum levels.

"We certainly pay attention to weather patterns and, in fact, we have moved our soybean planting dates a little bit earlier if you compare that to 30 years ago," he said. "We have found that we can plant soybeans today a little bit earlier than we used to, and we have expanded the corn maturities we grow in the state."

From a producer's perspective

Ray Allan Mackey, a producer from Hardin County serves as a KFB State Director, Chair of KFB's Feed Grains Committee and current Chair of the Kentucky Corn Promotion Council. He said advanced technology has played an important role in upping the game when it comes to grain crops production enabling farmers to pay very close attention to their crops in hopes of achieving top yields at the end of the growing season.

"Technology and mechanization have added a lot to grain production and it's all about getting that crop planted in a limited amount of time and harvesting and putting it away as efficiently as possible," he said. "Farmers have always taken care of the soil and managed fertility, but in recent years, we've done it to the point that we are putting in the nutrients when and where they need to be, and we are managing better than ever before for higher yields. At the same time, we are doing a lot to protect that crop with different varieties

that are resistant to weeds and disease. Ultimately, we are micromanaging that crop these days to expect those top yields.”

From a challenge standpoint, Mackey said his biggest concerns are related to input cycles as it relates to what kinds of yields are needed to remain profitable.

“In terms of profitability, my concerns are input costs, in that we have gotten ourselves used to or locked in managing a particular crop for better yields, which makes it a fairly expensive crop to grow,” he said. “Input prices have continued to escalate, but we have been in a pretty stagnant grain market over the past three or four years. With a few exceptions, we are just not covering our cost of production anymore unless we get these super yields.”

Mackey added that in being “locked in” to this cycle, producers are having to invest in the crop to ensure it is a good crop, but they must have a good crop in order to pay for the inputs.

“This being the case, if something turns the wrong direction or if anything hiccups along the way, farmers at my house, in Kentucky, and across the nation are going to experience some measure of financial crisis,” he said.

Avoiding such a crisis is important to farm families across the state, and one advantage Kentucky producers have, comes from the research being conducted at the UK Grain and Forage Center of Excellence, noted Mackey.

“While it is often difficult to make investment decisions at a time when farm income is down, and trade issues are affecting farm families, it is the exact time we need to invest in the kinds of research being conducted at the UK Grain Forage Center of Excellence.”

- Ray Allan Mackey

“That research has allowed producers here to be on an even playing field with other producers around the country and gives our growers a competitive edge now, and in the future as we continue to reach for increased yield with every crop we plant,” he said.

Navigating the marketplace

The numbers don’t lie; Kentucky farm families can produce more now than ever before. But in today’s market environment, growing the crop is half the battle. Maintaining and finding new markets, especially on the soybean front, has had its share of challenges of late.

Keith Tapp, a producer from Webster County and Chair of the United Soybean Board (USB) said while there may be challenges, U.S. producers have a distinct advantage.

“There are certainly short-term challenges facing the industry, however, the future remains bright, due in part to soy checkoff investments funded by U.S. soybean farmers,” he said. “Soy checkoff investments are the cornerstones of the U.S. Soy Advantage: exceptional composition, consistent supply, sustainable farming and innovation beyond the bushel. When you bring these pieces of the puzzle together, it differentiates U.S. soybean farmers from our competitors

in the marketplace, in terms of sustainability and quality, and provides us with a competitive advantage.”

Tapp also pointed out initiatives the USB is working on to help increase markets for producers.

“As a part of these efforts to expand our markets, we launched the ‘What It Takes’ initiative in July 2018,” he said. “This strategy aims to grow U.S. soybean demand worldwide and reduce our reliance on sales to China. This means building on existing relationships abroad and investing in new ones to evolve emerging markets. While I am confident that China will once again become a major market for us in the coming years, we are also focusing a lot of our work on building new markets for U.S. soybeans in countries with large population bases, such as other nations in Southeast Asia.”

Continuing to advocate

There are opportunities for today’s producers both internationally and at home, which were not available or not widely utilized four decades ago including the ethanol and biodiesel markets. Kentucky’s livestock industry has grown considerably, as well. And because of that, both soybean and corn producers send a large portion of their crop to that industry especially to cattle, poultry and swine producers.

KFB President Mark Haney said because grain producers, along with most other farm families in this state, walk such a fine profit-and-loss line, maintaining free and open markets is critical to the success of the industry.

“We must continue to advocate at all levels for new and existing markets to keep our farms sustainable,” he said. “There’s no doubt that we can grow outstanding crops. But we can’t eat it all. Finding and keeping markets both here, at home, and internationally, is a necessity in order to maintain our farms and our rural communities.”



Kentucky wheat producers harvested more than 24 million bushels last year.



Kentucky Farm Bureau President Mark Haney addressed more than 1,500 Ham Breakfast attendees.

KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU DAY AT THE STATE FAIR

A \$1 million ham takes center stage

Another Kentucky State Fair is in the books, and, as usual, it proved to be a great event from the opening Commodity Appreciation Breakfast to the final concert.

Each year approximately 600,000 people make their way to the Kentucky Exposition Center to take part in the festivities, the entertainment and the local food that have become a staple at this massive event.

And Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) was an integral part of the fair, as it has always been, especially during KFB Day at the Fair. This year, the Grand Champion Ham, produced by Penn Country Hams of Mannsville, in Taylor County, brought an impressive \$1 million from top bidder Central Bank during the annual KFB Country Ham Breakfast and Charity Auction.

Central Bank's President and CEO Luther Deaton made the winning bid and said how proud the organization was to have won this year's award-winning country ham.

"We are grateful to Kentucky Farm Bureau for providing us with this opportunity by hosting the Country Ham Breakfast at the Kentucky State Fair for the 56th year," he said after the event. "Providing businesses like ours a chance to attend an event highlighting the best of Kentucky agriculture and its influence on our state, while encouraging charitable giving, is a great way to celebrate all that we stand for as Kentuckians. We are always excited to give back to our communities and are grateful for the chance to do so through this auction today."

Proceeds from the winning bid will be donated to a variety of non-profit organizations and charities including Transylvania University, the University of Kentucky Gatton College of

Business, the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center, St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Northern Kentucky, the University of Kentucky Athletics Program and UK HealthCare.

In addition to the auction, the more than 1,500 attendees at the breakfast were served a variety of Kentucky Proud food as they listened to speeches from some of Kentucky's top officials, including Governor Matt Bevin, Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles, and Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer. Miss Kentucky 2019, Alex Francke, displayed the award-winning ham for breakfast attendees.

KFB President Mark Haney emceed the event and noted, during his remarks, KFB's Centennial Celebration and the advocacy efforts that have been made by the organization throughout its history.

“Kentucky’s rural communities have served as a foundation for so many of us in this room today supporting the values we live by and pass on to future generations.”

- Mark Haney

"Kentucky Farm Bureau serves as an advocate for those communities and those values. That's been our hallmark for 100 years."

Haney also pointed out the many people and organizations that come together to not only help the Ham Breakfast be successful but the entire State Fair.

"I've often said how important partnerships are when it comes to achieving common goals and being successful.

The State Fair and all the events we are a part of serve as prime examples of that,” he said. “I am so thankful for the many people who come together to make our annual Ham Breakfast a premier event, including KFB staff and leadership, the Kentucky State Fair Board, all the staff at the Kentucky Expo Center, the capacity crowds that come each and every year, our legislative and government leaders, and our friends in law enforcement. You all truly make the State Fair and KFB Day a success and your contributions do not go unnoticed.”

Since 1964, the Kentucky Farm Bureau Country Ham Breakfast has raised nearly \$14 million for nonprofit organizations and charities.

Pride of the Counties

For more than 35 consecutive years, KFB Insurance has sponsored the Pride of the Counties area at the Kentucky State Fair. This area of uniquely Kentucky exhibits occupies 27,000 square feet in the South Wing of the Expo Center where exhibits provide county tourism representatives across the state with an ideal venue to promote business, celebrate heritage, display treasures, and speak to new audiences.

Each year, one of the county exhibits is chosen to be “Best Exhibit” and presented an award from KFB leadership. This year’s winner was Edmonson County.

“This is a long-standing tradition for our company’s sponsorship of this exhibit space, and we commend the entire Edmonson County crew for their exceptional display,” said KFB Insurance CEO and Executive Vice President John Sparrow.

Gospel Music Showcase

This year’s Gospel Music Showcase featured 12 gospel music acts from across the state vying for the “Best in Show” award.

KFB has sponsored a Gospel Music Contest and has had a Gospel presence at the State Fair for over 70 years. This year a few significant changes were made, including a switch in venue location and starting time, to improve the experience for both the performer and the audience.

Top honors went to The Master’s Trio representing Bath County. They were also chosen as Best Variety Gospel act. Best Gospel Soloist honors went to Tiffany Porter-Kennedy, representing Carter County, and Best Gospel Quartet winners were The Noblemen, from Shelby County.

Championship Drive

This year marked the second for the Championship Drive, a showcase of more than 60 4-H and FFA exhibitors coming together to exhibit their animals for top State Fair honors. KFB serves as one of the Platinum Sponsors of the event.

KFB First Vice President Eddie Melton said the atmosphere created by the event is like none other he has seen at youth livestock shows.

“It’s incredible to be a part of the excitement when the spotlight focuses on these young people and their animals,” he said. “They work so hard all year long to get to this level and they learn so much in caring for their animals. It makes me proud to be a part of it and confident in the direction in which our next generation will take our industry.”

CHAMPIONSHIP DRIVE WINNERS:

Grand Champion Steer:

Addison Arnett, Montgomery Co. 4-H

Reserve Champion Steer:

Blake Quiggins, Hart Co. FFA

3rd Overall Steer:

Macey Shelton, Bourbon Co. FFA

4th Overall Steer:

Addison Arnett, Montgomery Co. 4-H

5th Overall Steer:

Macey Shelton, Bourbon Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Champion:

Elli Ramey, Pendleton Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Res Champion:

Colby Cooper, Fleming Co. 4-H

Grand Champion Hog:

Brayden Lancaster, Meade Co. 4-H

Reserve Champion Hog:

Blair Cupps, Boone Co. 4-H

3rd Overall Hog:

Kasey Johnson, Mason Co. FFA

4th Overall Hog:

Saulyer Logsdon, McLean Co. FFA

5th Overall Hog:

Kirstin Ayer, McLean Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Champion:

Saulyer Logsdon, McLean Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Res Champion:

Kasey Johnson, Mason Co. FFA

Grand Champion Lamb:

Blake Quiggins, Hart Co. FFA

Reserve Champion Lamb:

Clayton Burks, Breckenridge Co. FFA

3rd Overall Lamb:

Carlee Church, Mason Co. 4-H

4th Overall Lamb:

Mason Miracle, Bourbon Co. FFA

5th Overall Lamb:

Macey Shelton, Bourbon Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Champion:

Mason Miracle, Bourbon Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Res Champion:

Wyatt Acey, Boyle Co. 4-H

Grand Champion Goat:

Allison Fink, Clark Co. FFA

Reserve Champion Goat:

Avery Holman, Boyle Co. 4-H

3rd Overall Goat:

Madison Goecke, Bracken Co. FFA

4th Overall Goat:

Phoenix Stacy, Greenup Co. 4-H

5th Overall Goat:

Madison Goecke, Bracken Co. FFA

Kentucky Proud Champion:

Avery Holman, Boyle Co. 4-H

Kentucky Proud Res Champion:

Chance Flach, Mercer Co. FFA

PENN COUNTRY HAMS PRODUCES THE GRAND CHAMPION COUNTRY HAM

Third generation ham producer wins his first time out

To say country ham has a prominent place at each Kentucky State Fair is perhaps an understatement. The Commodity Breakfast, which kicks off the fair, includes a champion 4-H country ham auction. The annual Kentucky Farm Bureau Country Ham Breakfast and Charity Auction has raised over \$14 million from each year's Grand Champion Ham. And, of course, the many food venues that feature country ham are found all over the fairgrounds.

The state fair is a mecca for country ham, no doubt.

But for Blake Penn of Taylor County, this traditional Kentucky food took on a new meaning during this year's ham judging. It was Penn's ham that took Grand Champion honors and it was his ham that took center stage at the KFB Ham Breakfast, and it was his ham that sold for \$1 million.

Producing the Grand Champion Ham is a high honor for any ham producer, but it came as quite a surprise to Penn.

"This is my first time in the competition and I really didn't expect to win," he said. "Last year, I didn't come because I didn't feel like I was prepared. There are a lot of big dog producers competing each year. But I've been working at this."

Obviously, his hard work paid off, but Penn is the first to admit he had some "back up."

“I've got a lot of family who have experience in curing country hams. My grandfather started the business in 1959 so I'm the third generation to carry on the tradition.”

-Blake Penn

It was Penn's father who encouraged him to enter this year, telling him it would be a good learning experience and he would get the chance to look at other hams and get an idea of what to do for next year's fair.

"I think he was telling me not to expect to win my first time competing," he said. "So, to get this honor, I really didn't expect it."

Penn's family is no stranger to state fair wins with the last one coming in 1999. But for Blake, this was his first time with a ham he cured. To walk away with Grand Champion honor is difficult for the most seasoned pro, but to win at your first try came as a huge surprise to him.

"I just about fell over when they called my name. My dad told me I would be able to look over the other hams and



Blake Penn and the Grand Champion Country Ham

get an idea of what to look for next year and not to expect to win the first time out. But I never thought it would happen this year," he said.

Penn said his grandfather learned to cure hams as a young man in the 30s and 40s in a smokehouse that was behind a family store in Mannsville.

"He's 84 now and still works with us and it was his dad, my great grandfather, who helped him build his first ham house," said Penn.

Whether it is curing country hams or working in some other capacity on the farm, family traditions are a significant part of rural communities, as is the case for the Penn family.

"Keeping up this tradition with my family is important. There was a point when we could have allowed the business to be bought. But my dad and I stepped in and took over and things have worked out," he said.

Producing a grand champion ham is the pinnacle for country ham producers, noted Penn. And it comes with a lot of pride being a part of this tradition that includes two other Grand Champion Hams for the family; the first in 1984 that brought \$32,000 and the second in 1999 with a winning bid of \$118,000.

But this first win for Blake Penn is extra sweet, as he adds his name to the long list of top country ham producers who have graced the stage at the annual Ham Breakfast.

"For the next year at least, I'll be the big dog, I suppose," he said.

2019 COUNTY ANNUAL MEETINGS

All times are local

Magoffin County

October 14, 2019, 4:30 p.m.
Magoffin County Farm Bureau

Marion County

October 14, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Knights of Columbus Hall

Martin County

October 11, 2019, 9:00 a.m.
Martin County Farm Bureau

Mason County

September 30, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Extension Office, Maysville

McCracken County

October 2, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Saint John's Knights of Columbus Building

Meade County

August 19, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Meade County Farm Bureau Building

Mercer County

September 9, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Mercer County Extension Office

Metcalfe County

September 12, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Metcalfe County Extension Office

McCreary County

September 19, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
South KY RECC

Monroe County

September 26, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Monroe County Extension Office

Montgomery County

October 03, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Montgomery County High School Cafeteria

Morgan County

October 17, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Morgan County Extension Center

Owen County

October 11, 2019, Open House: 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Meeting: 4 p.m., Owen County Farm Bureau Office

Pendleton County

September 26, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Farm Bureau Office

Perry County

October 8, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Perry County Tourism

Pike County

September 19, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn

Pulaski County

October 3, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Pulaski County High School Cafeteria

Rockcastle County

September 20, 2019 Dinner: 6 p.m. Meeting: 7 p.m.
Roundstone Elementary School

Scott County

September 17, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Scott County Extension Office

Shelby County

October 5, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Shelby County Cooperative Extension Office

Spencer County

September 30, 2019, 7:00 p.m.
Spencer County Extension Office

Todd County

September 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Petrie Memorial UMC

Warren County

September 21, 2019, 5:00 p.m.
South Warren High School

Wayne County

September 30, 2019, 6:00 p.m.
Aspire Center

Woodford County

September 17, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
Versailles Baptist Church



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WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

After many legal battles and much debate, what happens next to WOTUS?

There is nothing more important to the life of a farm than the precious water needed to raise crops and care for livestock. But the subject of water took on new meaning when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Army Corp of Engineers finalized the 2015 Clean Water Rule which was supposed to provide clarity as to what Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) were regulated under the Clean Water Act and would fall under federal jurisdiction.

What it did, however, was create a firestorm of confusion and controversy that has extended more than half a decade later.

“Farm families were left not knowing what lands would fall under regulatory oversight, pertaining to the 2015 rule,” said Kentucky Farm Bureau President Mark Haney. “And ultimately that definition covered anything from a pond to certain field conditions, leaving the agriculture industry reeling and angered over such overreaching regulatory enforcement.”

Haney added that Kentucky was already ahead of the curve when it came to managing water resources with the passage of such regulations as the Agriculture Water Quality Act and The Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program.

“Our farmers here and across the country have long been aware of the importance of caring for their natural resources and we certainly didn’t need a government regulation that would interfere with our efforts and place many producers in questionable legal situations; that’s exactly what the 2015 WOTUS rule did,” he said.

The published rule immediately came under scrutiny by ag organizations across the country including the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), with multiple court cases

popping up nationwide.

Much has happened in the ensuing five years including the publishing of a new revised WOTUS regulation currently awaiting finalization. The most recent action related to the 2015 rule came in August when, “the court for the Southern District of Georgia found the agency overstepped not just the CWA (Clean Water Act), but also the Administrative Procedure Act, which lays out the most basic rules governing how agencies may propose and establish federal regulations,” according to information from AFBF.

“The court ruling is clear affirmation of exactly what we have been saying for the past five years,” AFBF General Counsel Ellen Steen said.

She added that the court found fault with the EPA’s interpretation of some of the most basic principles of the CWA, most importantly which waters the federal government may regulate, and which waters must be left to states and municipalities.

The revised rule is set to be put into place by the end of the year but will likely not come without more litigation.

“**We feel good about this revised rule, but our members should remain diligent in their advocacy efforts related to WOTUS to ensure we have a clear, concise rule that is fair to all farm families.**”

- Mark Haney

WOTUS TIMELINE

- April 21, 2014:** The 2015 WOTUS rule submitted for public comment.
- April 28, 2014:** AFBF launches the #DitchtheRule campaign to provide key information about the WOTUS rule.
- June 29, 2015:** The 2015 WOTUS final rule published and is immediately challenged in court. June and July 2015: Dozens of legal challenges to the rule are filed. AFBF coalition files suit in Texas.
- August 27, 2015:** North Dakota district court blocks WOTUS implementation and grants a preliminary injunction blocking implementation of the rule in 13 states.
- October 9, 2015:** Sixth Circuit stays the 2015 WOTUS rule.
- November 4, 2015:** Senate disapproves WOTUS with a joint resolution of disapproval.
- December 14, 2015:** Government Accountability Office finds EPA violated law on WOTUS.
- February 28, 2017:** President Trump issues executive order to withdraw the 2015 WOTUS rule.
- June 27, 2017:** EPA and the Corps move to rescind 2015 rule.
- November 22, 2017:** EPA and the Corps propose a rule to add an applicability date to the 2015 WOTUS rule, delaying its implementation for two years while the agencies consider whether to repeal and replace the rule.
- January 22, 2018:** U.S. Supreme Court decision lifts nationwide stay.
- February 6, 2018:** EPA and the Corps publish delay rule, which is immediately challenged.
- February 7, 2018:** AFBF asks Texas district court for nationwide injunction against the 2015 rule.
- February 28, 2018:** Sixth Circuit lifts stay of 2015 WOTUS rule complying with Supreme Court mandate.
- June 8, 2018:** Georgia district court blocks WOTUS in an additional 11 states.
- June 8, 2018:** AFBF files amicus brief supporting permanent invalidation of the WOTUS rule.
- June 29, 2018:** AFBF joins Georgia case challenging the WOTUS rule
- July 12, 2018:** EPA releases supplemental notice on repeal of the 2015 WOTUS rule.
- August 16, 2018:** Court strikes delay rule, reviving WOTUS rule in 26 states.
- August 20, 2018:** AFBF seeks reprieve from order reviving flawed WOTUS rule.
- August 31, 2018:** AFBF coalition, state plaintiffs seek permanent invalidation of WOTUS rule by Georgia court.
- September 12, 2018:** Texas court grants stay for additional three states but denies nationwide relief.
- September 26, 2018:** AFBF asks Georgia court to expand WOTUS stay to remaining states.
- September 28, 2018:** AFBF secures aggressive schedule for briefing before Texas court.
- October 18, 2018:** AFBF coalition, state plaintiffs seek permanent invalidation of WOTUS rule by Texas Court.
- December 11, 2018:** EPA and Army Propose Revised "Waters of the U.S." Definition.
- February 14, 2019:** Proposed rule published on Federal Register.
- April 15, 2019:** Comment period ends for revised WOTUS rule.
- July 17, 2019:** Revised WOTUS rule is moved to Office of Management and Budget.
- August 23, 2019:** Southern District of Georgia found the agency overstepped CWA and Administrative Procedure Act.

Editor's note: Thanks to AFBF for their assistance with this timeline.

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TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AGRICULTURE WATER QUALITY ACT

by Secretary Charles G. Snavely

Having been Secretary of Energy and Environment for Governor Bevin for almost four years, I have been amazed to see all the advances made in environmental stewardship in Kentucky. In virtually all industries, we in Kentucky go about our work in a smarter, more thoughtful manner than in the past. We have learned that the land, air, and water are our most important assets and that our future success depends upon our current actions. Nowhere is that more evident than in the agriculture industry. Farmers know that the health of their land and water resources is their future.

Some 25 years ago, Kentucky's agriculture industry realized that its future depended upon the preservation of the land and protection of the waters that both feed, and are fed by, the land. Thus began the discussion of legislation that was to become the Agriculture Water Quality Act (AWQA). The goal was to protect surface water and groundwater from pollution resulting from agriculture and forestry activities. Concurrently, Kentucky was facing a change in the make-up of our agricultural landscape as the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement was being developed and more Kentucky farmers were looking to transition away from raising tobacco.

As a result, a forward-thinking group of legislators, agriculture professionals, university researchers, and state government representatives collaborated to create rules and guidelines for farming. It was unlike anything that Kentucky had ever done before and was something that has rarely been seen in any other state. Even now, the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act is unique within the United States.

The Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act, KRS 224.71-100 to 224.71-145, became effective on July 15, 1994. The law authorized a diverse group of 16 individuals to serve on the Agriculture Water Quality Authority and help develop the first Statewide Agriculture Water Quality Plan. Today, members of the Authority help to identify and implement new best management practices to be added to the statewide plan. Members represent state agencies, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency, the Kentucky Geologic Survey, the Kentucky Farm Bureau, and the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts, as well as having three members representing agriculture operations and one representing environmental organizations.

The law establishes the requirement for individual farmers with 10 or more acres to develop a plan for their farm, listing the best management practices that they choose to implement to prevent soil erosion and protect water quality. Although the administration of the Agriculture Water Quality Authority is done by the Kentucky Division of Conservation,

enforcement of the Act is the responsibility of the Kentucky Division of Water.

“**The Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act has been a successful tool in the protection of water quality across the state.**

- Charles G. Snavely

With data-driven innovation, we have shifted from conventional row crop agriculture to no-till planting. Advances in technology, now more accessible to farmers, have enabled the widespread use of precision agriculture where planting and fertilization are done with the use of GPS technology, integrating soil testing and harvest yield data. Cover crops are proving to be very effective in preventing erosion while increasing soil fertility and the ability to absorb rainfall. Rotational grazing establishment in livestock operations has increased yield while maintaining cover and preventing soil erosion. And the installation of livestock water availability systems across the state has provided clean water for the animals that increases herd health while preventing animals from polluting our water.

While we have made much progress in the past 25 years, there is still a long way to go. Kentucky is part of the Mississippi River watershed. All of Kentucky ultimately drains to the Mississippi River and that water eventually reaches the ocean at the Gulf of Mexico. In part, because of the nutrients in the Mississippi River watershed streams and rivers, there is a dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico that is larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island put together. This area is sometimes referred to as Gulf Hypoxia.

The Gulf Hypoxia zone happens when nutrients cause algae growth that uses so much oxygen at night that fish and shellfish do not grow in the area. The rivers that drain to the Mississippi have had harmful algal blooms over the past few years due to the presence of these same nutrients. These nutrients get into the water through stormwater runoff from urban and rural areas, from wastewater treatment plants and septic systems, from lawn and crop fertilizers, agricultural activities, as well as from pets and livestock. If it is on the ground, it eventually reaches our water.

As a participant in the Gulf Hypoxia Task Force (one of 12 states that participate), Kentucky is updating our nutrient reduction strategy to help prioritize watersheds that contribute the highest amount of nutrients and identify tools to assist in addressing that load. We are also updating the Statewide Agriculture Water Quality Plan to make sure it includes websites and hotlinks to provide additional information to

farmers, including an update to the Agriculture Water Quality Workbook to make it easier to use.

Everyone has a part in protecting the water quality in Kentucky and in the Gulf of Mexico. The Agriculture Water Quality Act is only effective in preventing water quality issues if it is implemented on your farm. The AWQA best management practices are also beneficial to you in preventing loss of soil and nutrients from your operation. If you do not already have a plan, we encourage you to develop one. It is the law, after all. If you already have a plan, it is important to review your plan as you change practices on your farm. A review may be helpful every few years as additional best management practices are added to the statewide plan. Financial assistance is available for the implementation of best management practices on your farm including USDA Farm Bill programs, County Agriculture Investment Programs and State Cost Share. Your local conservation district office or USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office may be able to provide technical assistance.

After 25 years, it is good to reflect on our success. It is also a good time to renew our commitment to implement the Agriculture Water Quality Act. We all depend upon our land, air and water resources. As stewards over these precious resources, we all must do our part to protect and sustain it for future generations.



Secretary Charles G. Snively, Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet



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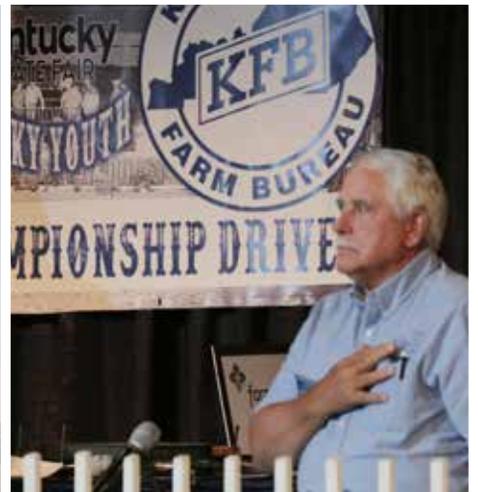
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SCENES FROM THE 2019 KENTUCKY STATE FAIR





COUNTY CORNER

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



Boone County

Boone County Walton hosted a cookout allowing insurers and new people to get a look at the new building.



Bracken County

Pictured is the Bracken County Farm Bureau Board at their annual fish fry. Over 300 people attended the event.



Carter County

Carter County Farm Bureau purchased animals at the 2019 Carter County Fair from the FFA and 4-H livestock sale. Each participant was given the towels shown in the photo, to commemorate their participation.



Christian County

Christian County Farm Bureau celebrated their Annual Meeting with a picture of the board members around the KFB 1919 Model T.



Bourbon, Harrison, & Mason Counties

This group from Bourbon, Harrison and Mason Counties attended the District 9 Young Farmer Outing.



Fleming County

Fleming County Farm Bureau President Chris Mitchell took a ride during their annual meeting with Dwight Greenwell in the KFB 1919 Model T.



Grant County

Grant County Farm Bureau sponsored One Price Car Load Nite at the Grant County Fair. Pictured are Kay Cummins, Natasha Rhoton & Marie Arnold.



Hardin County

Hardin County board members celebrated Cecilia Days with the KFB 1919 Model T.



Laurel County

Laurel County Farm Bureau sponsored an event called "Lights Over London" featuring a host of activities including the selling of lanterns that were released at dark on the night before the fireworks show celebrating July 4th. The KFB Model T was there along with many Farm Bureau members.



Lewis County

Mackenzie Thomas from Season 15 of The Voice was sponsored by Lewis County Farm Bureau for Farm Bureau Night at the Tollesboro Lions Fair.



Rowan County

Rowan County Farm Bureau Federation donated \$2000 to each fire department of Rowan County: Cranston Route 377, Hayes Crossing/Haldeman, Elliottville & Farmers Sharkey.



Shelby County

Members of Shelby County Farm Bureau attended the District 5 Young Farmer Outing in Newhaven.



Warren County

This year's Warren County Farm Bureau scholarship winners are at left, Madison Feria and on the right, Anna Sweets. Each student received a \$4,000 scholarship. Also pictured is Warren County FB Board Member Norma Cohron.



In Kentucky, being grassroots is fertile ground for success.

With more than 70,000 family farms in Kentucky, agriculture is a vital part of the Commonwealth's culture, values and economy. Every year, farm families work together at the grassroots level to identify shared challenges and achieve common goals. Kentucky Farm Bureau reflects these challenges and goals in our policies, and we're proud to advocate for farmers across the state in everything we do. Why Farm Bureau? Because Kentucky's success depends on improved farm income, better economic opportunities, and enhanced quality of life for all.



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MARKETS

BEEF AND PORK EXPORTS ADD VALUE TO CORN AND SOYBEANS

U.S. beef and pork exports added 85 cents per bushel to the price of soybeans and a total of 39 cents to the corn price in 2018, according to an updated report by World Perspectives, Inc. (WPI). The original WPI report used 2015 data to estimate the impact of U.S. beef and pork exports on corn use and value in 2016. The current report was funded by the U.S. Meat Export Federation which is supported by nearly 300 members organizations, including Kentucky Farm Bureau and several Kentucky commodity organizations. In 2018, exports accounted for 14.6 percent of total U.S. beef production and 25.7 percent of U.S. total pork production and accounted for 459.7 million bushels of corn utilization – with a market value of \$1.62 billion at the average market price – and two million tons of soybean meal disappearance, which is the equivalent of 84.2 million bushels of soybeans with a market value of \$783 million. Over the next ten years, meat exports are forecast to generate a projected \$30.8 billion in cumulative annual market value to corn and soybeans based on USDA's long-term forecast for crop prices.

FOOD USE OF U.S. WHEAT FALLS ONE PERCENT

After showing strength in the early months of the 2018/19 marketing year, monthly food use estimates regularly fell below use figures from the prior year. Based on successive shortfalls for monthly food use, the annual food use was trimmed in March, May and August. At 954.6 million bushels, the 2018/19 food use estimate is nearly 10 million bushels, or one percent, below the 2017/18 estimate. USDA economists cite several factors thought to have contributed to the sharp year-to-year decline in food use including above-average flour extraction rates and reduced demand for bakery products in spring and early summer. Cool weather is associated with improved extraction rates and more efficient milling. Milling efficiency may have also resulted from closure of older mills and more continuous milling at the newer mills. 2019 weather also appears to have reduced consumer demand for grilled

hot dogs and hamburgers. According to Milling and Baking News, in the year ending June 16, 2019, hamburger and hot dog buns sales were down 2.3 percent from the previous year.

LAMB AND MUTTON PRODUCTION AND IMPORTS DOWN

Second-quarter lamb and mutton production totaled 40 million pounds, a 3.6-percent increase over

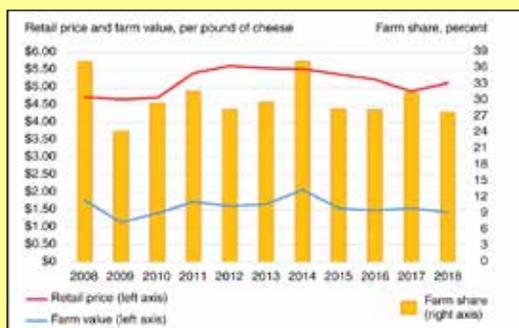
2018. Commercial harvest was up by ten percent year over year, while live weights were down five

percent. The increase in second-quarter market receipts can likely be attributed to the two biggest lamb-consuming holidays of the year. Year-to-date commercial production is estimated at 76.7 million pounds, down one-half percent year over year. For the rest of 2019, production is expected to be down year over year, based on fewer lambs being available and lower live weights. 2019 annual production is forecast at 150 million tons, down two percent from 2018. While imports were up 4.8 percent year over year in the first half of the year, 2019 annual imports of 270 million pounds is forecast down one percent from 2018 due to reduced exports from Australia, the main supplier to the United States.

U.S. CORN EXPORTS FACE STIFF COMPETITION

In the August WASDE report, USDA updated its corn export projections. U.S. corn exports for the 2018/19 September-August marketing year were reduced 100 million bushels to 2,100 million bushels. Corn exports slowed down abruptly this summer. USDA also lowered its 2019/20 corn export forecast by 100 million bushels to 2,050 million. The larger 2018/19 corn harvests and exports from Argentina and Brazil, coupled with a record Ukrainian harvest, are producing strong competition for U.S. corn exports now and going into the 2019/20 marketing year.

Farm Value, Retail Price, and Farm Share for Cheddar Cheese



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, Price Spreads from Farm to Consumer data product

China Soybean Import Share



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service, Chart Gallery

MONTGOMERY COUNTY WINS THIRD JUNIOR CHEF CHAMPIONSHIP

LaRue County Is Runner-Up in Annual High School Culinary Competition

The Montgomery County 4-H Junior Chef Team prevailed for the third time in the seven-year history of the Kentucky Proud Junior Chef program in the championship cook off against LaRue County on Friday at the Kentucky State Fair.

“Congratulations to Montgomery County and to all the teams across the Commonwealth that participated in the Junior Chef program this year,” Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles said. “Junior Chef is a wonderful learning experience for students to pick up valuable life skills and possibly even start a career in the culinary arts. This program would not be possible without the support of the parents, teachers, and coaches of the competitors, and Sullivan University, which has stood behind this program from the beginning.”

The Montgomery County team – Cheyenne McCall, Lance Munday, Haley Stinson, and Megan Stinson – prepared a sheet pan chicken quesadilla with Patricia’s green apple salad and honey lime salsa. Montgomery County was coached by Lee Etta Greer. Each member of the team received a \$16,000 scholarship offer from Sullivan University.

The LaRue County Junior Chefs – Amy Hammers, Victoria Perry, and Lorelai Sherrard – finished second with their Hawks beefy chips and dip. LaRue County was coached by Shelia Skaggs. Each team member was awarded a \$10,000 scholarship offer from Sullivan.

Harlan County and Henderson County were the other semi-finalists.

Story continued on page 25



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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, Jacob Tamme, a cattle producer and wealth management advisor from Boyle County discusses life on the farm after a storied football career at the University of Kentucky and in the National Football League.

Most of the people who know you are familiar with your football career. Could you talk a little about that and how you ended up on your farm?

The experiences we've had as a family, and the experiences that I got to have as a player of the game of football are things that you can only dream about as a kid. My goal was to go to UK and play football there. To accomplish that and do what we did with the program during those years was a dream come true. Nine years in the NFL was really icing on the cake along with all of the relationships that we built and friendships we made during that time. Getting to be a part of some really good teams, and going to three Super Bowls, that was beyond anything I could have imagined as a player. From a farming perspective, I didn't grow up on the farm, but my father did, and I spent many summers on my grandfather's farm which has been in my family since 1910. During those times, I learned a couple of important things. I learned to follow directions and work hard. So, I knew I always wanted to come back to this place.

Talk about the farming operation at Tamme Valley Farms.

My family has done a lot of things on this farm, going back nearly 110 years. But the one thing that has been constant, is the cattle business. And I wanted to jump into it, as well. So, we raise registered Angus seedstock and really try to raise and create a premium



Jacob Tamme

product, both from the maternal cow side, to an end-product that can be something the consumer really wants and prefers. Our first goal is to have females that can go somewhere and end up being great producers, and bulls that can be a part of a commercial or registered operation and really do the job they are supposed to do. We want to produce cattle that have longevity, better than sufficient pounds, and all of those maternal qualities that producers want. It is a passion of mine, trying to produce that great animal. That part of it has been so much fun for me and I love it.

Many people who aren't familiar with farming, don't understand the relationship that farmers have with their animals. What do you tell those people about what you do as a caretaker of your cattle?

There is a lot of misinformation out there about agriculture, specifically about cattle farming, cattle handling, and animal welfare, in general. I would encourage people not to be swayed by this misinformation. If you grow up around farmers and you become one and you spend time with them, you

learn, first of all, this is a livelihood for them. So, they care deeply about what they are doing. Secondly, there is a connection with the animals that most folks don't get the chance to understand. We are fortunate here. In raising seed stock, we get to see our animals go out and do great things for other producers, in their herds, extending the relationship that began with us. We get to see these momma cows stay here and have calf after calf taking care of them, and for the most part they are fine on their own. But last summer we had a calf born over eight weeks early. For the next 17 days, 24 hours a day, we did all we could to keep that calf alive. We ended up losing it and I'll be honest with you, I bawled my eyes out because there is something special about the work you put in and giving them to opportunity to survive, thrive and flourish and it hurts to lose one. Unless you do this, most people have no idea how we feel about our animals.

What do you think about the farming life so far?

Farming cattle can be the ultimate, and I love it. I have so much respect for people in this industry because it really

never stops. When I was playing football, I thought it'll be nice one of these years to ride the tractor around and bush hog and just breathe a little bit. I'll tell you there has not been a single day since I stopped playing football where I got to get on the tractor to bush hog and breathe a little bit! If I am on the tractor, I've got 15 other things to do. I have discovered that farmers never really slow down.

We are fortunate enough to live in a state that has so many resources for farm families to utilize and learn from. What has been your experience with some of those resources?

When we started this operation, I had a lot to learn. My family has been in it forever, but I personally had a lot to learn and that was a great challenge for me. But I completed the Master Cattlemen's program through extension last fall, and it was so fun to see the folks in there like me who were just ready to learn; just ready to soak it up. And it is true, we are fortunate here to have great resources through UK and otherwise. And because of those resources, the cattle industry here has grown so much. One of the fun things that I get to do is talk to folks about how Kentucky has the most cattle east of the Mississippi. In the Angus business, you meet a lot of people from other states like Montana, Kansas, Nebraska, and Texas where things are different in a way. But

they have a lot of respect for what we do here in this state. They know how much the cattle industry means to us and we are excited to continue to be a part of that and a promoter of that.

On a scale of 1 to 10 how rewarding has this farming life been for you and what would you say to other young farmers looking to get into farming?

It's been a 10 for me because of my family history. There is really nothing more special than that to me. It has also been a phenomenal challenge, which I needed leaving the game of football. One thing Roger Staubach said years and years ago was, when you leave the NFL, you have to go 1000 miles per hour in another direction. If you aren't going to coach or play another year, you have to move in another direction for your mental health. The farm has been that for me. And I would tell others to remain tough even in the difficult times. Surround yourself with a community; your family, and other farm families and remember you never have to go it alone.

Going to raise your kids on the farm?

Absolutely!



The view of Jacob Tamme's cattle farm



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Each member of the Harlan County and Henderson County teams received a \$6,000 scholarship offer from Sullivan.

Montgomery County will go on to compete in the third annual Southeast Region Junior Chef Competition in May 2020 at Sullivan University in Louisville. The Southeast Region Junior Chef Competition pits the champions of states in the southeastern U.S. in a cook off for scholarship offers from Sullivan.

Junior Chef encourages participating students to learn how to cook by using local ingredients to prepare healthy meals while teaching students about agriculture, marketing, organization, teamwork, and community involvement. The Junior Chef season begins with district competition in the spring and continues with regional matches to determine the 16 teams that will advance to the state tournament.

The Junior Chef competition is part of the Kentucky Proud Farm to School Program, which helps Kentucky schools purchase local foods to serve to their students. Children get fresh, nutritious local foods to help them grow up healthy and strong. Local farmers get another market for their farm products. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) administers the Farm to School Program and the Junior Chef competition.

Other sponsors of the Junior Chef competition besides the KDA and Sullivan University include the Kentucky Department of Education Family and Consumer Science; the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service.

Students who are interested in competing in the eighth season of Junior Chef must form their teams by March 2020. Students are advised to see their school's food service director or consumer science teacher for more information.

To find out more about the Junior Chef program, contact Tina Garland, the KDA's Farm to School Program administrator, at (502) 382-7505 or tina.garland@ky.gov, or visit kyagr.com/junior-chef.

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DOWN THE BACKROADS

By Tim Thornberry

My youngest son recently moved back to college with the help of good ole mom and dad who graciously allowed him to try apartment living for the first time instead of a dorm.

After getting everything into place, his first request (actually it was a complaint) was to help him get logged on to the supplied Wi-Fi.

After several attempts we were unable to complete the mission and he began to get panicked. But we promptly called the owner who assured us we would have Wi-Fi the next day.

You would have thought they told us next month by the look on my son's face. It was then I made the mistake of saying, "Can't you live one day without being connected to the internet?"

He promptly told us how badly he needed to check his school email, how badly he needed to make sure all was ready for his upcoming online class, and how badly he needed to do a little research about soil sciences to be ready for his classes due to start the following day.

There's nothing like waiting till the last minute! By the way, I did not say that out loud. However, his need for connectivity was obvious and I thought to myself, how badly these students really did need to have this service available.

The discussion also made me think back to my youth when we didn't have such a thing. Heck, I remember living in a house with no telephone. And those neighbors who did have a phone usually were on party lines.

I don't expect anyone under the age of 40 or 50 to know what a party line is or was, but it was anything but fast and often times unavailable, which sounds like the internet service in my neck of the woods but that is another story, for another time.

My point is, we didn't have such connectivity when I was younger, nor did we really need it, or so we thought. I found it to be a big deal when my dad installed a CB radio in the car. Suddenly, we could communicate with folks all over the area with a simple click of a mic key.

I thought that was the coolest thing in the world. Granted,

it was useless for research unless you were checking in with our resident CBer know it all, and yes, we all knew who he was.

The CB wasn't great for conversing late at night when everyone was asleep. And it didn't have the greatest range in the world. You had to move into the world of ham radios to get any real distance.

But that radio was a connection to my small world when I got one in my first car. Incidentally, the radio outlasted the car. As archaic as it sounds now, the old CBs were a way to connect to other people in other places while on the move, until the invention of cell phones.

In remembering how valuable it seemed to me at the time, I realized how necessary Wi-Fi and connectivity is to my son and his fellow students, now.

“ **And to them, a day without it seems unbearable. Don't get me wrong, I think we could all do with a little less logging on and a lot more of face to face interaction. But in this world so reliant on technology, I suppose we all need to be connected. We have come to depend on it so much.**

Just so you know, my son got his Wi-Fi working and he survived fine without it for 24 hours. I did however make one more suggestion to him before I left him at school that day. I suggested he ride out to the nearby truck stop and invest in a CB. They still make them, you know. Regardless of the method, I hope we all stay connected, as we travel down the backroads.

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