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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS
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An icy morning in Central Kentucky

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President's Column



To say we are inundated daily with information is quite an understatement considering all the electronic devices we have.

Our phones, tablets, and computers have become magnets for everyday doses of news and opinions that circulate throughout the digital airwaves.

In a perfect world, all this information would be truthful and helpful, but, unfortunately, that is not always the case.

We have found so-called "experts" speaking up at every log-on and anyone who has access to a smartphone can become an instant reporter.

One topic related to agriculture that is likely to show up in those newsfeeds soon, if not already, is the idea that net farm income could reach its highest level in seven years. On the surface, that is a fact, but it should come with an asterisk. Much of that revenue comes from tariff relief funding, natural disaster assistance, and COVID-19 assistance legislation.

But to fully understand that farm families are in no way getting rich off government payments, you have to hear the whole story; something most internet "experts" don't provide.

Our friends and colleagues at the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) have provided some very eye-opening information that gives a more complete picture of this issue. Take a look at this excerpt from their report:

"While farm profitability will certainly be higher in 2020, it's a false positive. Farm cash receipts from the sales of all crop and livestock commodities are now projected at \$367 billion, down \$3 billion, or one percent, from 2019. Cash receipts this year will be the lowest since 2016 and they remain \$57 billion less than the \$424 billion in cash receipts received during 2014. There has been some relief in production expenses, which, at a projected \$344 billion, are down \$5 billion, or one percent, from 2019 and the lowest since 2011."

Those statistics and this information from AFBF paint a much different picture for our farm economy than some of the "surface only" reports moving about the world wide web.

The truth is, most farm families struggle to make ends meet, but they continue with the tradition and labor of farming because of their love for the land and their desire to produce the most abundant, safest, and affordable food supply in the world.

At the end of the day, the American farmer is important to anyone in this country who eats. It's as simple as that. Less than two percent of the total U.S. workforce is comprised of farmers and ranchers, and that number continues to decline. Therefore, we must understand how vital it is to keep farm families on the farm and to encourage a new generation to take up the cause.

One of our goals at Kentucky Farm Bureau is to always provide correct information about the agriculture industry, all based on scientific fact. We don't have anything to hide and the general public deserves to know the full story.

Not everything you read on the internet is true or complete. So, the next time you have a question about food production, go to the real experts – your nearby farmer.

Mark Haney, President
Kentucky Farm Bureau

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

The annual meeting of the policyholders of Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of (1) electing directors of the company, (2) to receive the annual report of its officers, and (3) to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

**NOTICE
ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING OF
THE FB INSURANCE COMPANY**

The annual meeting of the stockholders of The FB Insurance Company will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, 11:30 a.m. (Eastern), at the home office of the company, 9201 Bunsen Parkway, Louisville, Kentucky, for the purpose of electing directors of the company and to consider any other business that may come before said meeting.

 Secretary

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Comment Column

As a ninth-generation farmer, I have been surrounded by a strong farm family all of my life. Our roots in LaRue County date back to a time when Abraham Lincoln’s family lived here.

With those deep roots, the agriculture industry is more than just a family business to me. It is a passion, and tradition, and a duty to those we help feed throughout our state, our nation, and the world.

While there is no place my wife, Leanne, and I would rather raise our three boys, the farm life – with its great rewards – takes hard work, persistence, and deep faith. Each new season we pray that our crops will flourish, our land will remain fertile, and our efforts will be profitable.

One thing we have discovered over the years is the need to be agriculture advocates as part of our daily farm activities.

While we feel a calling to do what we do, we must also continually inform a public that is not familiar with how their food is grown.

It never ceases to amaze me that many consumers know nothing about how their food makes it to the grocery store’s shelf. And, it must be said, that is not the fault of the public.

As farmers, we must make this uninformed public aware of what we do and how we do it. There are many out there in social media who keep a steady stream of misinformation flowing over the digital airwaves, and we cannot allow that banter to dominate the conversation.

But confronting these folks in their open forums isn’t the answer. We can play “he-said, she-said” all day long and never get anywhere. We have to be proactive.

What we must do is tell our stories simply, factually, personally, and frequently while we go about our daily work, attend community events, and communicate through our own social media.

I have found most people are very interested in knowing the real facts about food production, and farmers have a great deal of credibility with most consumers. Through the years, we have made many new friends by sharing our story.

We must also get a new generation involved in our industry, be it directly on the farm or through the many ag-related occupations available – and needed – including those in advanced technology.

To say there is something for everyone in the agricultural industry is an understatement, and we know there are countless young people out there looking for a job where they can make a world of difference to a world in need.

I would love nothing better than to have my sons continue this tradition that dates back nine generations for the Ragland family. But that will be their choice.

My boys already understand the work ethic involved, even at a young age. They are learning to love our land and livestock and treat them both with respect.

I’m so proud of what we do and the heritage we have. Nothing would make me happier than to see this tradition continue, not just for our family but for all those who call the farm their home and all those who will ultimately find a home on the farm. I believe that “to whom much is given, much is required.” We are truly blessed to farm as a family in Kentucky, and we are compelled to share the great story of Kentucky agriculture with everyone we can reach.

Caleb Ragland and Family

- 2020 Kentucky Farm Bureau Outstanding Young Farm Family
- 2021 American Farm Bureau Federation Achievement Award Winners

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE CURBSIDE RECYCLER *in Kentucky*



Did you know that a few misplaced items can cause entire loads of recycling to be rejected? Here's how some of your curbside recycling habits could be working against you.

Recycling is a great habit, but it's important to know that those curbside bins aren't a catch-all. The key to being a responsible and effective recycler is educating yourself on what should and should not go into your recycling bin. That's right – just because something says "recyclable" does not necessarily mean it is accepted via curbside recycling, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Some items need to be taken to a special facility.

Why is it so important to learn what can and cannot go into your curbside bin? When unrecyclable items arrive at recycling centers, they can clog up the equipment and cause costly damage. Also, those non-recyclables must be tediously sorted out and sent to landfills, which is time consuming and costly for the facility, according to the EPA. A few misplaced items can cause entire loads of recycling to be rejected!

A recent example of this was a plea from the city of London, Ky., in 2019, urging residents to "recycle smarter." At the time, London's Public Works Director Steve Edge said, "We are losing all the way around. Misuse is the biggest thing. The more garbage they put in, the more we have to pay to sort it. We're losing a lot of recycled goods because of contamination." London was later forced to suspend curbside recycling indefinitely in June 2020 due to economic reasons.

A little research can get you on the right path to becoming a more conscientious recycler. Remember, it's important to check with your local recycling provider to ensure that they will accept certain items before placing them into a bin.

Here are a few ground rules that apply to most single-stream curbside recycling in communities across Kentucky:

● Do not place plastic bags in curbside recycling.

Very few communities in the U.S. accept plastic bags, wraps, and films in curbside recycling. These bags, wraps, and films get tangled up in the equipment, and once they're cut free, they're sent straight to the landfill, according to How2Recycle. Not exactly the outcome you desired, huh? This includes plastic shrink wrap (like on a 24-pack of bottled water) and the bubble wrap pouches your online orders are shipped in. The good news is that you can easily take these to a store drop-off location for recycling. On your next run to the grocery store or major retailer, gather up all your plastic bags and drop them at the bins typically located just inside the store's doors.

● Do not bag your recyclables.

Plastic bags are curbside kryptonite. You may think you're helping the recycling workers out, but do not bag your recycling! Typically, this results in the entire bag going straight to the landfill. Instead, How2Recycle suggests freely placing items into the bin or stick them into an open-top paper bag. Recyclables will likely tumble out of the bag by the time they get to the recycling center, and in most cases, the paper bag will also get recycled, according to the nonprofit How2Recycle.

● Crinkly, flexible packaging belongs in the trash.

The vast majority of pouches, crinkly bags, and other flexible packaging, like candy or granola bar wrappers, should go into the trash because they are made of many layers of different materials, according to How2Recycle. Examples of "pouches" include the little zipper baggies that contain gummy bear candy, dog treats, detergent pods, and dried fruits. This category of non-recyclables also includes chip bags, and any squeezable yogurts, baby food, or gel snack packaging.

● When in doubt, throw those foam containers out.

Next time you are about to throw a Styrofoam cup, take-out container, egg carton, or box of packing peanuts in the curbside bin, think again! Most communities do not accept Styrofoam containers via curbside recycling, according to the Recycling Partnership. We know that's confusing, as most takeout containers have the "recycle" symbol stamped right on the bottom of them. It's true that those polystyrene containers are recyclable, but only when taken to the proper facility. Some local governments and recycling companies have drop-off locations specifically for foam packaging. A quick internet search can tell you if there are any locations near you.

● Rinse off any food particles or residue.

Do your recyclables need to be spotless? Nope! But anything with food particles or residue should be rinsed. According to Waste Management, the goal is simply to make them clean enough to avoid contaminating other materials, like paper and cardboard. Speaking of cardboard, cardboard pizza delivery boxes without leftovers or liners are recyclable...but garlic butter containers, pizza crusts, and leftover slices are not.

● Steer clear of tangles!

Tangles are items that get jammed up in the recycling discs, forcing workers to shut down the equipment and unravel the convoluted mess – a dangerous, tedious, and probably very frustrating task. So, what is a tangler? How2Recycle puts it pretty succinctly: "If it's durable and stringy and you can get it in a knot, then don't recycle it." How can you help out those workers at your local facility? The Recycling Partnership recommends that you steer clear of placing the following items in your curbside bin: Hoses, cords, clothes, wires, metal hangers, Christmas lights, headphones, and other electrical cords. Small items can also cause issues during the sorting process. The Recycling Partnership also recommends keeping objects smaller than an index card out of your curbside recycling bin. They're better off in the trash, and your local facility will thank you!

So, after that long list of no-nos, what CAN you recycle?

Plastic bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard are always a safe place to start. As contrary to popular belief as this may seem: When in doubt, throw it out! It's better to be 100% sure than to wishfully throw an unaccepted item in the bin and risk jeopardizing the entire batch!

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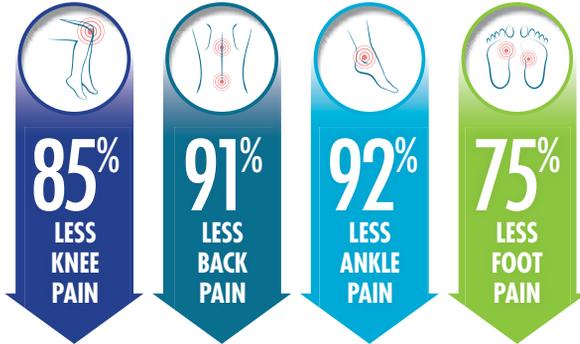
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Assisted Living Facility Residents get a Holiday Visit from an Unusual Guest

Cricket the Quarter Horse proves to be the perfect visitor at the end of a difficult year

Cricket, a 17-year-old quarter horse from Clark County, Kentucky has been all over the country competing in ranch-type events, including ranch-horse competitions and ranch roping and doctoring. In fact, she spent much of last year working on a 60,000-acre California cattle ranch.

Quarter horses make up the largest equine breed in the world and are known for their work ethic, as well as being calm and quiet, making them great people horses.

Having been around the breed most of her life, Cricket's owner Sherry Newman knows this better than anyone.

"Cricket was bred on a ranch in Montana, and I bought her as a yearling," Newman said. "I have raised and trained her, and she has been all over the country working and competing. I often say she has traveled a million miles and seen and done a lot over the years."

Newman lives on a "small-scale" farm, as she calls it, where she has her own horses along with a couple that she trains for other people. But her day-job is Culinary Director at Arcadian Cove, an assisted living facility in Richmond. In being so involved with the residents there, she wanted to do something special for them around the holidays.

"The facility director and I were having a conversation about trying to come up with a special event with all the COVID restrictions that are out there, and I suggested bringing Cricket," Newman said.

The suggestion turned into a plan that included a lot of



petting and hugs for the horse, along with photo ops with the residents, decorations, and hot chocolate to complete the perfect holiday setting for an enjoyable day.

"The original plan was to have Cricket visit the courtyard areas that are located on either end of the building, but we were experiencing 40 mile an hour winds that day," Newman said.

That presented a problem for the residents who wanted to get close to Cricket, so an alternative plan was devised that included bringing the well-mannered quarter horse inside to a large lounge area.

"My director wanted to make sure Cricket would be okay inside, and of course I knew she would be," Newman said. "She's been a million miles and done everything from A to Z. So, I knew she would be fine."

Christian Sexton, the Community Director at Arcadian Cove, admits she was a little nervous at first when it came to having a horse come inside the facility, but those

fears were soon calmed when she saw how well Cricket took to being inside and how much joy it brought to the residents.

"Cricket was so very well-behaved that I was just over the moon, and so were our residents," Sexton said. "So many of them had grown up on farms with horses that they started telling their stories to us and telling their stories to each other."

For more than two hours, residents were able to take pictures with Cricket, spend time loving on the quarter horse, and share their own farm stories. In addition to the petting and hugging, one resident even said she shared secrets with Cricket knowing she wouldn't tell!

Sexton said even though everyone maintained social



Sherry Newman and Cricket

distancing, they were all patient in waiting for their time with their special guest.

"There were so many smiles that we hadn't seen in almost a year and since all the COVID regulations started in March., We've really missed that glimmer our residents have in their eyes and those beautiful smiles they have. It was very good for them."

Newman said with all the restrictions that have been put into place, the year has been tough for many people living at the facility, as well as the staff, so the visit with Cricket couldn't have come at a better time.

"The residents shared so many stories that we had never heard before," she said. "We saw some of the biggest smiles that day and it just brightened up their Christmas and they're still talking about it today, every day."

Newman relayed one story about a resident who was unable to leave her apartment area due to being in hospice care.

"But she really wanted to see the horse, so we made a one-on-one visit and it was really a special treat for her to actually have Cricket visit with her so she could pet her and love on her," Newman said.

"It really brightened up her day — and her life — for that moment. It was very touching and emotional to see her interact with Cricket."

Horses have a long history of being beneficial for humans on many different levels.

Lissa Pohl, who works in the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and is an equine-assisted learning (EAL) practitioner, has not only seen how horses can heal people but also how they can provide insights and awareness to healthcare professionals who need to improve their bedside manners and connect with their patients.

"These types of beneficial horse-human interactions are way more common than you might think", she said. "There is an actual physiological response that occurs when we connect with horses. The bonding hormone oxytocin is released. Combine that with the size and presence of a horse then you can really experience the benefits horses bring to our lives."

While Cricket gets much of the accolades for the day, Sexton said it is the relationship Newman has with the residents and the facility itself that really

helped make the event a success.

"Sherry is more than just a wonderful chef, she really understands our mission and is such an important part of Arcadian Cove," she said. "And during this event, I saw that Sherry and Cricket have such a great connection, and it's not just a pet. It's more than that, and she was able to share it with so many people, and it was just beautiful."

While Cricket has no desire to retire from quarter horse work or competition, she did seem to enjoy the attention she received from her many new friends, Newman emphasized.

"I'm hoping to bring her back this Spring, if not before. I mean, if they want her back sooner, I'll take her back anytime," Newman exclaimed.

Cricket most likely agrees.

For more information on the different types of Equine-assisted Services (EAS) that incorporate horses to benefit people, go to: <http://bit.ly/EAS-UKY>.

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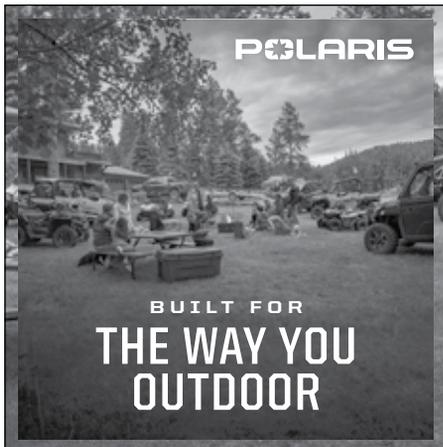
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Kentucky Production Agri-Tech (KPAT) Initiative

In an effort to bring more awareness to advances in technology issues within the state's agriculture industry, and keep the state's agricultural and governmental organizations apprised of these issues, Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) and ag commodity groups throughout the state have joined together to form a state Coalition of Production Agriculture (CPA).

One of the first moves from coalition members was to introduce the Kentucky Production Agri-Tech (KPAT) Initiative with a white paper detailing the group's concerns related to agri-tech, particularly those related to production agriculture. The following is that white paper in its entirety.

The backbone of Kentucky's agriculture industry is the existence of family-owned production farms and supporting businesses located in every region of the state. Often small operations, these entities make up the majority of the ag industry in the Commonwealth, therefore representing a significant portion of the state's overall economic development structure.

As the modern world continues to become increasingly dependent on technology, very few industries can successfully compete and move forward without greater digital connectivity. This is especially true for agriculture, which relies upon technology for core business functions. Agri-tech has become the common denominator when describing the needs of farming operations and all the factors involved in getting a crop from the field to the consumer.

The Kentucky Production Agri-Tech (KPAT) Initiative has been developed to bring attention specifically to production agriculture's growing needs in this world of advanced technology. Kentucky Farm Bureau has spearheaded the KPAT efforts, which are driven by a collective commonality and represented by every commodity leader in Kentucky agriculture, all experts in their respective areas.

The mission of KPAT is to bring forth a recognition of farming and business needs as it relates to ag-based technology, to engage with other statewide initiatives similar in nature, to ensure Kentucky production agriculture remains included in these initiatives, as well as remaining sustainable and relevant as new digital initiatives are implemented across the Commonwealth, and to foster an environment of collaboration that allows technologically-driven success in this industry to be achievable by all.

KPAT Top Priorities

Broadband

At the top of any list of priorities related to agri-tech is the need for adequate broadband service throughout all areas of the state. Those in the agriculture industry have advocated for increased efforts, including funding, to make this a reality for years. Now, as COVID-19 has suddenly increased the need for remote work and learning capabilities, the issue has taken on a higher priority across all sectors of the economy and education.

Some issues brought forth by KPAT relating to broadband service include: GPS and regulations that could hinder its reliability, data systems, high speed internet, on-farm marketing, reliable and affordable service, data management, and broadband infrastructure.

The production agriculture field needs broadband connectivity to operate at optimum levels. These farmers rely upon connectivity to operate modern equipment, use cellphones and computers, and keep up with daily changes in market prices, among many other core business functions.

KPAT is urging all stakeholders connected to this issue, including government leaders, to make the effort to understand just how necessary broadband is to any agri-tech initiative, and to recognize that without this needed service, production agriculture will continue to struggle with day-to-day operations and long-term success. Through the use of existing infrastructures and current laws and regulations supporting broadband services, reaching the last mile of connectivity can be realized. But it will take a collective effort by all stakeholders at all levels to come together with the common goal of delivering this service to all.

Education

As technology has changed and advanced, so has the educational needs that go with it. With new equipment and processes being developed daily, the educational component to go with these advances should stay in stride.

In doing so, there are sectors within the state's educational structure that can be very beneficial to the advancement of agri-tech. Some advantages Kentucky already has when it comes to these needs include a comprehensive group of secondary student organizations which extend classroom learning, extensive agricultural education programs that allow secondary students a head-start on many technology-based programs, and an array of colleges and universities, along with a statewide system of community and technical colleges, that give students—both traditional and non-traditional — multiple opportunities to learn new skills.

KPAT suggests that the educational piece of any agri-tech initiative include:

- A statewide program for training technicians focused on all aspects of technology in agriculture
- Hands-on mechanical training

- The availability of online training
- Recruiting top talent into the agriculture field
 - Continued use of education through extension
 - Agriculture-specific information technology classes
 - Supporting education at all levels to promote technology-based programs to bring young people to the agriculture industry

Marketing

The Oxford Dictionary defines marketing as, "The action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising."

As simple as it may sound, the world of marketing has changed dramatically over the past few decades due to advancement in technology. No industry is a better example of how beneficial strong marketing can be than agriculture.

Kentucky's ag sector has diversified greatly over the past 20 years, and the way it is marketed should follow suit. Hard copy ads and brochures are no longer coveted marketing materials as we now live in the era of podcasts and social media. Farm families have been more than willing to meet the challenges of this "new" way of marketing and market development, but with it comes many challenges.

KPAT participants see many issues pertaining to marketing including:

- The traceability aspect in which consumers can clearly see and understand where their products are coming from and how they are produced
- Connecting to large scale marketing and manufacturing efforts
- Partnering with state economic development groups to promote Kentucky-grown products
- Maintaining sustainability for on-farm production, including international trading opportunities
- Cost effectiveness
- Diversification as it relates to consumer trends
- Infrastructure needs to meet local food demands
- Direct marketing to the consumer
- Product development and consumer research
- Building stronger data systems and collection abilities

All levels of agriculture depend on marketing abilities and knowledge as year-to-year production decisions are made and month-to-month budgeting efforts are met.

Any agri-tech initiative must acknowledge these marketing challenges and address them in a way that benefits production agriculture, as well the smaller-scale farm market sector.

Research

Long before advanced technology showed up on our doorsteps, the key to most successes in the business world, particularly in the agricultural sector, has been research. Without it, new advances in animal husbandry would not have been met, the super crop yields of today would have taken multiple growing seasons to be achieved, and the ability to sell around the world would have been a months-long process, as opposed to the minutes it takes to reach to the other side of the planet via internet selling.

The agriculture industry has relied heavily on research for many years especially as it relates to crop production and equipment, and with the technology that exists today, these advances can come much faster and are much broader than the

research efforts made decades ago. In recognizing this growing need, KPAT issues related to research include:

- Advancements in production efficiency
- Developing new efficiencies and advancements in production
- A focus on value-added efficiencies and opportunities
- New robotics technology and environmental technology
- Processing capacities
- Livestock monitoring capabilities

There are technological advancements taking place already connected to many of these issues, including electronic ear tags for livestock, existing technical training in many areas of robotics, and university studies connected to plant genetics and production.

Recognizing what is already taking place today helps in moving toward the future through increased educational efforts, recruitment of top young talent, and the ability to connect to digital communications in every region of this state.

Existing Opportunities

To be involved in production agriculture in Kentucky is to be at the pinnacle of the agricultural world. With the investments that have been made at the county and state levels by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board, this state has moved beyond a one-crop dominant ag economy to one of the most diversified agricultural states in the nation.

The foresight in using half of the state's share of Master Settlement Funds for reinvestment into the farming operations and businesses that serve them has been a windfall for farm families who have fought to keep the tradition of the family farm alive for a new generation.

Add to that the system of universities in Kentucky that have provided invaluable research efforts, and the commodity groups that exist to promote and support their respective sectors, Kentucky is poised to be a model for other states to emulate.

Another advantage is the way agricultural organizations work together in Kentucky to achieve common goals. From commodity groups to state universities, to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and the advocacy efforts of Kentucky Farm Bureau, the opportunity exists for Kentucky to be the leader in the agri-tech arena, especially with so many of the pieces to this picture already in place.

Looking Ahead

Agri-tech is not new, but it has been living in this state for a number of years. While it may have been referred to by different names in the past, the idea of agriculturally based advanced technology has been alive and well in the Commonwealth for quite some time.

Now, it is time to move this initiative forward for the betterment of the agriculture industry. But moving forward together, as a collective industry, with common goals, is a necessity in order to achieve optimum results.

Any agri-tech initiative will be more successful when all stakeholders are brought to the table. KPAT is poised to connect with any and all such initiatives to ensure future farming generations will be aided by technology on their road to success. We are all counting on it.

Kentucky Farm Bureau's 101st Annual Meeting

"TOGETHER WE GROW" SERVED AS THIS YEAR'S THEME

The 2020 Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Annual Meeting took on a new look with all components of the meeting being held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. But the purpose of the meeting remained the same as KFB leadership conducted the business of the organization, which serves more than 460,000 members.

KFB President Mark Haney said while holding the meeting in such a way was disappointing, no pandemic was going to stop the organization from fulfilling its mission to serve members and the agricultural communities throughout the state.

"We saw many changes take place throughout 2020 due to safety regulations and restrictions, but our farm families never stopped," he said. "Those outside the agricultural world discovered what we have known all along: how essential our industry is to everyone, everywhere. Many thanks go out to our state commodity and governmental leaders, as well as our KFB staff who have all worked so hard to ensure the needs of our members and citizens of the Commonwealth have been met during these unprecedented times."

Haney added that KFB has served as the Voice of Kentucky Agriculture for more than 100 years and has never failed to conduct an annual meeting regardless of worldly events.

"As an organization, we have come through depressions, recessions, wars, and turbulent times in the agriculture industry, and we never let any of that stop us from our duties in this organization," he said. "We'll see better days ahead and will continue to move forward, as we always have, in providing the best services to our members and the best advocacy for our agriculture industry."

The meeting included board elections, approving of policy and priorities, announcement of competition winners, and guest speakers that included American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall and Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Dr. Ryan Quarles, both of whom spoke remotely. Virtual guests also heard from KFB leadership throughout the three-day event.

Duvall said the theme for this year's annual meeting is so appropriate as it relates to working together with KFB.

"I think, as we have gone through this pandemic, we have grown together, became stronger together and we set forth the perfect example to this country that when you (do) work together how strong you can be and how much you can accomplish," he said. "It has been an honor to work with the leadership team at KFB, and I value their opinions each and every day."

Quarles said rarely does a day go by that he is not talking to or working with someone from Farm Bureau on issues related to

agriculture.

"This year put a lot of tests on our food supply systems and other issues across our Commonwealth, and the strength of KFB and its coordination with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture really shined through during this pandemic."

Quarles also noted KFB's grassroots way of implementing policy which starts from the ground up, something he called a hallmark of good governance and democracy.

Board elections

Eight new members were elected to the KFB Board of Directors this year: Mitchel Logsdon of Hart County will serve as a District 3 representative to the Board, PJ Milburn of Nelson County will serve as a District 5 representative to the Board; Tim Goodlett of Casey County will serve as a District 7 representative to the Board; Scott Barnes of Garrard County will serve as a District 8 representative to the Board; Tyler Ferguson of Johnson County will serve as a District 10 representative to the Board; Mary Jayne Cannon of Fleming County will serve on the Board as the Chair of the KFB State Women's Advisory Committee; Heather Graham of Wolfe County will serve on the Board as Chair of the KFB State Young Farmer Advisory Committee; and Ricky Arnett of Green County will serve on the Board representing the Kentucky Association of County Agricultural Agents.

Returning Board Members are: Brandon Davis of Franklin County, Marshall Coyle of Bath County, David McGlone of Carter County, Shane Wiseman of Clark County, Dr. Nancy Cox of Fayette County, Glenn Howell of Fulton County, Mark Kinsey of Grant County, Larry Clark of Green County, Ray Allan Mackey of Hardin County, Larry Thomas of Hardin County, Roger Fannin of Harlan County, Don Miniard of Harlan County, Alex Barnett of Harrison County, Cloyce Hinkle of Knox County, Joe Paul Mattingly of Marion County, Kelly Thurman of McLean County, Scott Davis of Monroe County, Mary Kate Kordes of Muhlenberg County, Stewart Hughes of Scott County, Scott Travis of Spencer County, Terry Lawson of Rockcastle County, and Victor Rexroat of Russell County.

The new Vice Chair of the Young Farmer Committee is Taylor Jones of Gallatin County, the new secretary is Kristin Hildabrand of Logan County, and the social media chair is J.E. Pryor of Christian County.

Lisa Osborne of Greenup County is the new 1st Vice Chair of the Women's Committee, and Betty Bean of McCracken County is the new 2nd Vice Chair.



KFB President Mark Haney

KFB BOARD OF DIRECTORS SETS

Priorities for 2021

While the recent Kentucky Farm Bureau annual meeting was held virtually for the first time, the requirements of the meeting were fulfilled completely, including the approval of 2021 priorities by its board of directors.

KFB President Mark Haney, who was re-elected to that position by the organization's voting delegates for a thirteenth time, said approving priorities sets the stage for the coming year's advocacy efforts.

"As we continue to be the Voice of Kentucky Agriculture, these priorities, approved by our board, are incredibly important and serve to guide us as we advocate for our agricultural industry and rural communities in 2021 and beyond," he said.

KFB priorities are set for state and national issues each year during the annual meeting. This year, those state priorities include:

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.

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 funding for the broadband deployment fund.
- Support efforts and incentives to improve and provide all telecommunications in rural Kentucky.
- 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.

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.

National priorities include:

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 restructures the H-2A program to make it more streamlined, reliable, and economical, in addition to limiting legal liability for farmers.

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.



KFB leadership conducted a business session virtually, as part of the 2020 annual meeting.

ANN MARGARET HUGHES WINS KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE AWARD

Ann Margaret Hughes from Wayne County has won top honors in Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) Excellence in Agriculture Awards program for 2020.

Each year, the KFB Excellence in Agriculture competition awards first, second, and third place distinctions 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.

Hughes is the Feed Conversion Manager for Cobb-Vantress, a primary breeder in the broiler industry. She has been active in Farm Bureau for a number of years and was a founding member of her collegiate Young Farmer and Rancher program. She and her husband both work full-time, while still maintaining a beef cow-calf operation.

Hughes enjoys being active in her community and church. She has served both within and outside of the ag industry in numerous volunteer leadership roles at the local, state, and national levels.

Hughes was presented with a John Deere Gator, courtesy of Farm Credit Mid-America. Second place in the contest went to Daniel Carpenter of Hardin County who was awarded \$400 courtesy of KFB. Donovan and Terra Pigg of Clark County placed third and received \$300 from KFB.

Hughes was born in North Carolina and began her agricultural and Farm Bureau journey there on the family farm. After graduating from North Carolina State University, the next part of her professional journey would take her to Tennessee working for Cobb-Vantress, a primary breeder in the poultry business.

Today, she is the Feed Conversion Manager at Cobb's Monticello facility. In addition to her professional life, Hughes and her husband own Hughes Farms, a cow-calf and hay production operation in Wayne County.

Wherever she has lived, Hughes has been involved in Farm Bureau. She said having grown up in a family that was involved in the organization, it was only natural for her to be active, as well.

"I've been involved in Farm Bureau since almost before I could walk," she said. "My grandpa had taken me to board meetings growing up."

As part of that involvement, Hughes said agriculture advocacy is a very important part of what she does in her professional and personal life.

"Advocacy is definitely integral in my life, and it's important to teach and share with somebody else, be that your best friend in school or a whole group of first graders," she said. "I love getting to share the knowledge I have in agriculture with others. And not only that, but learning what their passion is, and having them share it with me. I love to share our



Ann Margaret Hughes

story and learn what others love about it, as well."

In competing at the national level, Hughes said it was nerve-wracking but well-worth the entire experience. She finished third nationally at the American Farm Bureau Federation virtual convention in January.

"It's extremely exciting to represent everybody that has poured so much into me over the years and be able to represent the people that have taught and given so much to me," she said. "I get to represent Kentucky because that's my home state, but also I feel like I get to represent a little bit of Tennessee and North Carolina as well, because they've been part of my journey."

BRANDON GILLES WINS KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU DISCUSSION MEET

Brandon Gilles of Daviess County won first place in the final round of Kentucky Farm Bureau's (KFB) Discussion Meet, a debate-styled competition for young farmers that relies on an individual's skill in reasoning and logical discussion of issues. The topic was: "Connectivity underpins the modern economy. What mix of investment and policy initiatives can provide reliable broadband access to farmers, ranchers,

and rural America?"

Gilles participated with four other entrants in the final event, winning a Kawasaki MULE donated by Southern Farm Bureau Life and Jacobi Sales. Gilles represented Kentucky in the national competition at the 2021 American Farm Bureau virtual convention in January, and where he finished in the top 16.

Runner-up in the state Discussion Meet was Ben Prevette of Hopkins County who

received \$1,000 from KFB. The three other finalists in the state-level contest were Jade Sadler of Hardin County, Danielle Milburn of Fayette County, and Mackenzie Wright of Carroll County. They each received \$200 cash awards from KFB.

KFB's Discussion Meet tests entrants on their basic knowledge of critical farm issues and their ability to respond in a panel-type discussion.

GINNY LYLE AND BRADY LAWSON WIN OUTSTANDING FARM BUREAU YOUTH CONTEST

Ginny Lyle of Franklin County and Brady Lawson of Morgan County were awarded top honors in the Kentucky Farm Bureau 2020 Outstanding Farm Bureau Youth contest.

Lyle and Lawson were selected from 22 district finalists, 11 male and 11 female, out of approximately 350 young people who competed in county and district contests over the past several months. At each level, the competition consists of two portions: a personal interview and a two-minute prepared speech related to agriculture or Farm Bureau. Contestants are judged by three people with backgrounds in youth work and/or agriculture.

This year's contest was held virtually via Zoom. Judges heard speeches and spoke with finalists for personal interviews, awarding points for each contestant's leadership record, conversational ability, and scholastic achievement. KFB gave both winners a \$3,000 college scholarship, a luggage set, and a watch for winning the contest.

Runners-up in the contest were Kennedy Little of Fayette County and Colby Dye of Warren County. They each received a \$300 cash award and leather portfolio.

The 22 district finalists who competed at KFB's annual meeting included: Ava Kelly (McCracken County), Cooper Long (Trigg County), Lexie Miller (Muhlenberg County), Austin Randolph (Muhlenberg County), Jenna Logsdon (Hart County), Isaiah Pruitt (LaRue County), Lindsey Brinkley (Logan County), Colby Dye (Warren County), Kennedy Little (Fayette County), Ben Williams (Nelson County), Ginny Lyle (Franklin County), Avery Stivers (Henry County), Gracie Johnson (Casey County), Cooper Garmon (Russell County), Ansley Cornelius (Madison County), Jake Lyons (Boyle County), Kaitlyn Wiseman (Clark County), Randall Sparks (Bourbon County), Riley Warner (Bath County), Brady Lawson (Morgan County), Emma Thornsberry (Knott County), and Jarrod Cornett (Laurel County).

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

Ginny Lyle

The 17-year-old Western Hills High School student said it was her FFA advisor who first encouraged her to become involved in the KFB contest.

"My advisor really wanted me and other students to get involved and I participated in this competition, for the first time, my sophomore year," she said. "Of course, then, I actually was speaking in front of a group of people, which was one of my most nerve-racking experiences, but mainly because I had never really done public speaking before. However, moving to this year on a virtual format, it was not only different speaking to a computer screen, the whole experience was different."

Luckily, Lyle had participated in other virtual speaking completions in 2020 through her involvement in FFA, something she credits with helping her in the Outstanding Youth competition.

Her topic for the KFB contest was about the impact COVID-19 has had on Kentucky farmers, specifically those in the beef industry.

"I knew I wanted to talk about the impacts of COVID-19, because I feel like it's a very relevant and important topic right now in Kentucky and all over the world," she said. "And seeing how the beef industry is so prevalent in Kentucky, it just all clicked in my head and this topic made sense."

Brady Lawson

This Morgan County High School senior had experienced the OFBY competition before, having competed in 2019, when he finished as runner-up. And like Lyle, it was his agriculture teacher who encourage him to enter in the first place.

"It all started with that conversation with my advisor about this contest; what it means now, and what it could mean in the future," he said. "It's a great honor, to have been chosen the winner and I absolutely loved being involved."

Lawson has an extensive background when it comes to gaining leadership skills thanks to many extracurricular activities at school including participation on the academic team, student council, FFA, as



Ginny Lyle



Brady Lawson

well as service on many advisory councils and committees.

"I really value my education and what I do, as well as my extracurricular activity," he said.

The pandemic situation has caused him and most other students to participate in activities virtually as opposed to attending events in person. But Lawson said that can produce some positive outcomes.

"It definitely produces more opportunities for people that maybe can't or don't travel to events," he said. "So, when you can bring it to them virtually, it opens up doors to those who might not necessarily get those kinds of chances otherwise."

LARUE COUNTY'S RAGLAND FAMILY WINS STATE AND NATIONAL FARM BUREAU HONORS

KFB's 2020 Outstanding Young Farm Family is also named AFBF's Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award winner during 2021 virtual convention

Farming nearly 2,300 acres of row crops and tending to a large hog operation is no easy task for a farm family, but Caleb and Leanne Ragland wouldn't have it any other way.

The 2020 Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) Outstanding Young Farm Family (OYFF) winners have made the farm life a true way of life for themselves and their three young sons.

The OYFF announcement was made during KFB's recent virtual annual meeting. Honoring a young farm family each year is a KFB tradition that dates back for decades. Each year, the organization recognizes an individual or couple between the ages of 18 and 35 as the OYFF of the year.

As state winners, the Raglands went on to compete during the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Virtual Convention where they took home top honors as this year's AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award winners.

"It was such an honor to be named this year's national winners," said Caleb. "We have dreamed of this for so long and can't thank our local Farm Bureau board and Kentucky Farm Bureau family for all the support they have given us over the years."

Carrying on a tradition

Caleb Ragland represents the ninth generation on the family farm, one that was originally deeded about the same time Abraham Lincoln's family was settling on land nearby.

"We've got deep roots in LaRue County and in Kentucky, and we're proud of that," he said. "Through the years, our family has always been farmers. There's been different crops and different livestock, but we've always adapted and been able to stay involved in agriculture."

That has not been an easy task for many in the industry, especially in the midst of a pandemic, and the Raglands acknowledge



Kentucky Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company (KFBMIC) Executive Vice President and CEO John Sparrow honored the Ragland Family as they received this 2020 Kubota Tractor Corporation RTV courtesy of KFBMIC for being named the 2020 KFB Outstanding Young Farm Family.

that, but they operate in a way to help alleviate some of the challenges.

"The farm economy's been very difficult in recent years, but I take pride in the fact that we've been able to develop a lot of niches that go toward the different things we produce on our farm. For example, with our pigs, we sell breeding stock and have developed a relationship with a genetic company, adding value to every pig that we produce," he said. "We also have seed production soybeans on our farm, which helps bring in some extra income, and have found a niche market here with the bourbon industry for our wheat and corn."

By finding these different ways to bring more revenue to the farm, Ragland said the operation is fulfilling the potential of all they produce on the farm.

Leanne Ragland did not come from a farming background but has adapted well to the lifestyle and sees the value in sharing the story of agriculture.

"Since I didn't grow up on a farm, I see the need to share with consumers or share with others about farming; learning the crops, learning how we grow them, learning what they look like," she said. "I see the importance of snapping a picture and sharing it on social media with people who aren't on the farm so we can make that connection that we are real people, we have real struggles, and we're just a normal family."

Being involved

From an ag industry perspective, Leanne said it's important to be involved in organizations that can help farm families.

"Get involved, don't isolate yourself, because it's really easy to do out here on the farm," she said. "But with all our

groups and organizations we are a part of, those people are not only involved for the greater good of farming and agriculture, but they are also friends and that is good for us emotionally."

The Raglands are active in community activities, as well as in Farm Bureau at all levels. Caleb also serves on the board of directors for the American Soybean Association. They credit this type of involvement as being a huge help to them on the farm and to the industry itself. They also praise Farm Bureau for being a leader in ag advocacy.

"At Farm Bureau, that name is the gold standard when it comes advocacy, and I believe with all my heart that the Farm Bureau policy book is like the Bible for agriculture," Caleb said. "It has been written over the years by previous generations who contributed greatly to it."

In looking to the future, the Raglands would love to see the tradition carried on by their children, if it is something they want to do.

We're going to do our best to have our farm in a position where the next generation can take it and run with it if they want to. That's our goal," Caleb said.

For more information about the KFB Young Farmer program, go to <https://www.kyfb.com/federation/young-farmers/>.

Editor's note: The Raglands shared state nomination honors this year with Tyler Buckley of Anderson County, and Jonathan and Jessica Gaskins of Adair County.

American Farm Bureau Virtual Convention

American Farm Bureau's Virtual Convention kicked off with an opening address by AFBF President Zippy Duvall from his farm in Georgia.

"When we started planning this year's convention in February, we chose the theme: Stronger Together," Duvall said. "Little did we know how appropriate it would be. The past year has shown us just how true that theme is."

"Clearly, 2020 was a year of challenges," Duvall continued. "Farmers and ranchers faced high expectations to keep America – and much of the world – fed during a global pandemic."

Farmers and ranchers rose to meet those expectations, Duvall noted.

"We also took steps to keep our employees and families safe, while still working to grow the food our nation depends on. We managed unprecedented changes in food demand and wild swings in farm prices," he said.

Duvall touched briefly on wins for agriculture in 2020 in his remarks, including relationships built with Congress and the administration that helped deliver \$38 billion to help the nation's farms survive and continue producing the nation's food supply; replacement of the Waters of the U.S. rule with a new Navigable Waters Protection Rule that complies with the law; tax reforms enacted in 2017 that have helped farmers keep more of what they work so hard to earn, so they can reinvest in their farms and ranches; and new trade agreements that promise brighter days ahead for exports of farm goods.

The virtual convention included many of the same events as an in-person meeting would have. There were several virtual workshops available, covering a number of ag-related topics. The competitive events featuring state winners were still conducted from remote locations across the country.

And nationally known speakers provided information and insight to attendees including a discussion with AFBF President Zippy Duvall and Land O' Lakes President and CEO Beth Ford who explored the challenges and opportunities for agriculture and the food chain.

Convention attendees also heard an inspiring keynote address from Navy SEAL Commander Rorke Denver, who has run every phase of training for the U.S. Navy SEALs and led special-forces

missions in the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. Mike Rowe, who is the country's leading advocate for skilled labor and the CEO of the mikeroweWORKS Foundation, participated in a fireside chat, as well.

The convention wrapped up with a business session that provided policy approval from delegates representing all state Farm Bureaus.

Kentucky Farm Bureau was well represented at this year's AFBF event. Three counties were highlighted as part of the County Activities of Excellence Awards program.

Greenup County was recognized for "Bee Keeping," the establishment of junior bee keeping clubs in elementary schools and related projects.

Harlan County was recognized for "Farm Bureau Forestry Days" in which members taught fifth-grade students about forestry.

Daviess County was recognized for "Tomato Plants to Grow and Feed Your Family," an educational outreach to children about growing vegetables and nutrition during the pandemic.

Ann Margaret Hughes, the 2020 KFB Excellence in Agriculture winner finished third nationally; Brandon Gilles, the 2020 KFB Discussion Meet winner made it to the round of 16 during the AFBF competition; and Caleb and Leanne Ragland who were named national winners of the Young Farmer and Rancher Achievement Award.

The Raglands are the winners of a new Ford truck, courtesy of Ford. In addition, they will receive paid registration to the AFBF FUSION Conference, which will be held virtually in March, also courtesy of Ford.

KFB President Mark Haney congratulated all of the state's participants who represented the Commonwealth and the organization so well.

"We are so proud of our KFB members who participated during this year's AFBF Virtual Convention," he said. "I especially want to give special recognition to our Young Farmer Program participants, and Caleb and Leanne Ragland for being named national winners. The honor is so well deserved, and indicative of the hardworking and talented young farm families we have in this state."



LANDON YOUNG'S STORY OF Faith, Family, Farming, and Football



Photos courtesy of UK Athletics

The standout former UK football player shares his journey thus far

It hasn't been that long ago that Landon Young was spending half of his school day at Locust Trace AgriScience Center, participating in FFA events as a chapter president, and honing his skills as a standout senior football player at Lexington's Lafayette High School.

At that time, the University of Kentucky football star was about to embark on a stellar college career which would include many state and SEC conference honors both on and off the field, ultimately leading to a chance of continuing on to the National Football League.

Fast-forward to today, and after his five-year career as an offensive lineman at UK, the Grayson County native is now preparing for the NFL Scouting Combine that will give him a chance to be seen by NFL coaches from across the country.

But Young credits his lifelong commitment to his faith, family, and farming as being the things in his life that have guided him through this journey thus far and will continue to do so.

"I can't thank God enough for blessing me with the opportunity to do what I'm doing," he said. "But He has a bigger plan than any of my plans at the next level. And He's using me as an outlet, and that's what I want him to do."

Young said he is excited to be able to play the game he loves

and do it at a higher level, crediting a work ethic taught on the farm by his father and grandfather.

"We had a farm in West Kentucky where my dad and my granddad raised pigs and cattle, and I was there for the first couple of years of my life, before we moved to Lexington," he said. "But we always kept the farm and wanted to make sure that we could still introduce some of that into my life."

Young said he was always taught from an early age that if you set your mind to it, you can do it. If you're going to start something, you better finish it.

"Being able to go out and work in the summer with my dad and working some long days on the farm and being able to finish up jobs on the farm, as I've got older, I've realized more of the importance of it now that I have more responsibility on that farm than I did when I was younger," he said. "I definitely think it gave me a good work ethic because if things don't get done around the farm, you get cattle out or you get grown-up fields or things go haywire. There's always something to do on a farm."

It would be his experience as a "farm kid" that led him to attending Locust Trace and joining FFA.

"That was one of the best times of my high school experience, above everything, just being able to get out and meet kids with

like minds, like values, and like morals," he said. "I was able to learn in a hands-on environment at Locust Trace and learn something that I can take into my professional career one day. I'm not much of a guy that likes to sit at a desk all day, and I like to actually get my hands-on things and learn how to do it the practical way."

Young said one of the most useful skills he received from his experience in FFA while in high school was the gift of leadership, specifically public speaking, a skill he continually uses.

"My speaking skills and doing impromptu speeches, doing prepared speeches, going to camps, meeting new people, and being able to tell them about my background and what we do at Locust Trace, those things were so beneficial and things I can now apply to regular-day life," he said.

As is the case with so many high school ag students, they are able to bring a set of diverse skills to the next level.

"While at Locust Trace, I learned the textbook side of farming and about agriculture, taking several classes learning about horticulture classes and aquaculture, as well as animal science," he said.

Carrying that knowledge with him into classes at UK, Young graduated with a major in animal sciences and a minor in ag-economics allowing him to understand the business side of farming as well as everyday operations.

"I feel as though I can also help other people realize some things about their farms, which is a potential for them to be able to do something bigger or something better, or be more economical," he said.

Young definitely sees himself as an advocate for agriculture and has discussed it with many of his peers. In doing so, he has learned a lot about his teammates and their backgrounds, as well.

"I've tried to spread the word about agriculture as much as I could," he said. "The guys on the team were pretty fascinated by being able to sit down and talk about something that they didn't know much about. I liked having those conversations because I always learned something about them, as well.

As part of his advocacy efforts, Young said he has encouraged those teammates to try working in the ag field or take related classes because the industry needs a younger generation to become involved.

"We definitely need more people to get into agriculture in order to continue to provide for a growing population," he said.

As Young has moved to this next chapter in his life, he recalls many fond memories and a few sad ones from his college playing days.

"I was hurt my 2018 season, but that time gave me some perspective. It allowed me time to be with my faith, to be able to walk back in on that and get closer with God, and it also allowed me to learn the game a little better and prepare my body a little

better," he said. "And then, of course losing one of the most beloved men in my life, (UK Assistant Coach) John Schlarman. That was a big hit for the team. I loved the man, I love his family, and I can't ever thank him enough for the impact that he's had on my life and my career. But more than just coaching me, he taught me how to be a man."

Young, who has been recognized nationally for his volunteer service work, has taken those lessons to not only excel on the field but in his community. He relayed a story about a fan, Mr. Biggs, who sat near the team's field entrance and always had a good word or a "hello" to share.

"One day he asked if I would like to visit Cambridge Place, a nearby nursing home, and I said absolutely," Young explained. "I got to spend quite a bit of time there over the last couple of years as a way to give back something to these folks, but I never did any of those things for the awards or the recognition. I did it because I wanted to; because I wanted to give something back."

Young credits his parents and grandparents for instilling that sense of "giving back" and treating people the way you want to be treated. But the real foundation for Young is his faith in God.

"I love being able to spread the word of God and tell people about how great He is and everything that He's done," Young said. "And if that saves one person's life or plants one seed, then I feel like that was a job well done. As many people as I can bring to faith and as many people that I can tell about my faith, the better, and I know that's what God would want for me. I know that's what my grandparents and parents would want me to do."

As he continues to prepare for the next step in his football career, Young brings with him a treasure chest of memories and lessons learned throughout his journey thus far. But he also looks toward the future and knows he will one

day be coming back to the family farm.

"I want to be able to come back at some point, whether I have a one-year career or it's a five or ten-year career in the NFL," he said. "I couldn't see myself coming back to anywhere but Kentucky and I just love the state. I love the people. I love being around family and friends and the farm's something that I could never give up in my life."

Young added that his family and wife know how much it means to him to do that.

"And I know how much it means to my dad. It's been in our family since about 1932," he said. "I want to be able to go back and do it justice, and put my own cattle back into it, and be able to go back to the farm lifestyle.

For Landon Young, he says it's not about a great living but it's about a great life. Amen!

"I couldn't see myself coming back to anywhere but Kentucky and I just love the state. I love the people. I love being around family and friends and the farm's something that I could never give up in my life."

Landon Young



CANDID CONVERSATION

KFB Candid Conversation presents a discussion about the topical issues related to KFB priorities, the agricultural industry, and rural communities, in a question and answer format. In this column, Dale Moore, executive vice president, American Farm Bureau Federation, discusses working with a new administration coming to Washington and agriculture priorities in 2021.

Having spent several years in Washington working with lawmakers and administration officials on both sides of the aisle, what actions do you believe the new administration will take early on related to agriculture?

A key action that must be taken quickly to show attention and concern for agriculture will be to follow through on implementation of the COVID-19 assistance package finished in the final hours of the 116th Congress. There will also be significant attention focused on ensuring farmer, rancher, and worker safety in the agricultural and food supply chain.

I anticipate there will be several familiar faces among the political appointments made for agriculture and rural programs to show that President-elect (Joe) Biden appreciates and recognizes rural America. His early announcement of who he intends to nominate for the U.S. Trade Representative position shows that trade will be a focal point from day one.

There have been a lot of discussions in the ag community about issues that could be on the forefront of the new administration's "to-do" list important to agriculture like trade, infrastructure, and the environment. What are some of the key points ag advocates need to make when it comes to these or similar topics?

An advantage of Farm Bureau's grassroots policies and AFBF board of directors' oversight of issues that are national and international in scope is that the key points do not change with the administrations.

International trade's impact on virtually all agricultural commodities is well documented. For example, we've seen first-hand the disruption caused by China's unfair retaliatory tariffs on our commodities and farm goods. We need fair trade and quick resolution of trade disputes and protection against non-tariff trade barriers.

On the infrastructure front, a key issue is emerging needs relative to technology, such as broadband. Addressing long-standing (and long-neglected) bridges, locks, dams, harbors, etc., that are critical to transporting vital inputs to the farm as well as moving commodities to market is also vitally important.

On the environmental front, we need to keep pushing for balance, collaboration, and consideration of the great work that farmers, ranchers, and livestock producers do day-in and day-out. Did you know that if we had tried in 1990 to produce the same amount of food we did in 2020, we would have needed 100



Dale Moore

million more acres? That's how much more productive farmers have become. They've also committed more than 140 million acres to conservation – more than the land mass of California and New York combined. There are many other examples I could cite, but the point is farmers and ranchers have long been committed to sustainability and are making impressive progress.

One area still begging for progress is ag labor. Demand for a legal, stable, and readily available workforce continues to grow, yet the solutions remain locked up in the legislative process. We need relief that is long-term and recognizes that farmers must be able to afford the solutions or they will be put out of business with the job losses that entails.

The House and Senate ag committees each have new leaders in the 117th Congress. How will this affect the work of both committees as we move forward in 2021?

While three of the four leadership positions on the authorizing committees will have new titles, the individuals certainly are not new to the committees, nor are they new to agriculture.

Our state Farm Bureaus in their home states have worked

closely with them and have strong relationships back home. At the AFBF level, we've had the opportunity to work directly with them. Sen. John Boozman (R-Ark.) will be leader on his side and joins Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) who has served as both chair and ranking member. On the House side, Rep. David Scott (D-Ga.), the incoming chairman, has long-standing relationships with Georgia Farm Bureau leaders. This includes AFBF President Zippy Duvall, a former president of Georgia Farm Bureau. Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-Pa.), who will serve as Republican leader, has been a champion for farmers and livestock producers for many years, working closely with his home-state Farm Bureau.

Agriculture will also benefit from returning chairs in Senate and House Agriculture Appropriations subcommittees including Sen. John Hoeven (R-N.D.) and Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-Ga.).

Do you think the nomination of Tom Vilsack to reprise his role as USDA Secretary, someone with experience and someone Farm Bureau has worked with before, gives the ag industry an advantage?

Tom Vilsack returning to the Agriculture Cabinet position should provide farmers, ranchers, and rural communities with an advantage as the new administration transitions in. He has continually worked among farm, livestock, and commodity groups throughout his career, and, most notably, he spent eight years as secretary of agriculture under President Obama. In short, once confirmed by the Senate, he will be able to start running USDA on his first day. He knows the agencies, the career officials, and the broad scope of the department's authorities.

What are some of the key issues Farm Bureau wants to address with the new administration?

Our issues of concern remain grounded in our grassroots policy and the key objectives outlined by AFBF's board of directors in our Strategic Action Plan.

Protecting the regulatory relief gains achieved over the past four years is very important. The new water rule that replaced the WOTUS regulations is just one example. Continuing efforts to expand deployment of broadband technologies and service to rural areas, particularly underserved areas, is also critical.

Endangered Species Act reforms and related Western lands issues are also key. The federal government owns significant portions of our nation's Western states. Federal controls and mandates have far-reaching impacts on the ability of ranchers and farmers to economically sustain their agricultural businesses.

Regulations and related reforms attendant to biotechnology, renewable energy sources, and technologies are also top-of-mind. And I have to mention trade. Congress does have a role, but the day-to-day management of trade -

whether negotiating new agreements, optimizing existing ones or resolving trade disputes with foreign nations - lands squarely in the Executive Branch.

The key to success in all of these (and any additional issues) is to ensure that agriculture has a seat at the table as a full partner in the new administration's agenda.

Is there any advice you could give Farm Bureau members as they prepare to continue their work as agriculture advocates with a new administration and new Congress?

There are 60-plus new U.S. representatives, at least eight new U.S. senators, and the wholesale filling of Executive Branch appointed positions. This provides opportunities to reach out and welcome newly elected and appointed federal officials, as well as touching base with those members of Congress that were re-elected.

I had the privilege of working in the House for well over a decade. The people I most enjoyed visiting with, the people I made sure to call back first, were those who had taken the time to reach out with a welcome and get-to-know-you visit. Then when the prairie fires popped up (a nearly daily D.C. occurrence) and a constituent or their organization called for help, it was not the first time we'd visited.

In my current role at AFBF, I would also note that while I have had a lot of opportunity to visit with elected and appointed officials, they all want to know "what the folks back home are saying or wanting." Our grassroots members, county Farm Bureaus, and state Farm Bureaus are their constituents and who they are working for. Just like me.

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Down the Backroads

By Tim Thornberry

It's like real fruit on your cereal

If you are like me, I am very comfortable with consistency. I get up at the same time, go through the same morning routine, eat the same breakfast...well, you get the picture.

Now, just because I am a creature of habit doesn't mean I won't take a walk on the wild side and try something different, like sleeping an extra half hour or putting real fruit on my cereal.

But I do think we all desire a bit of uniformity in our lives. And in thinking that way, when something different comes along, I personally feel a bit uncomfortable at first, even if the change is a good thing.

I say all that, to say this: We've made an editorial decision at KFB News, and we are trying something a little different for these winter months. This year, our normal February edition is a February/March issue, in case you didn't notice the date on the cover. In addition to this combined issue, we are also planning to produce a digital-only edition in March that will be available on kyfb.com.

The idea of a digital magazine is nothing new. We have posted the magazine on the KFB website dating back several years.

But we see some definite advantages when publishing a digital version of the magazine. As more folks get their info straight from a smartphone or tablet, the ability to supply those mediums in this on-demand way is needed.

I'm telling you wonderful, faithful readers all about this now so when you don't see a copy of your normal March issue in the mailbox, you will understand that this is intentional experimentation.

Don't worry, we have no plans of

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replacing our printed magazine for digital-only version. There is still something I enjoy about having a newspaper or magazine in my hands to read and I know many of you enjoy that as well.

For me, that will never change. But as we move forward, an occasional adjustment in our methods of publishing the magazine will come along, always with the best intentions in mind.

For those concerned about this change, rest assured that we plan on going back to our normal production schedule beginning with the April issue. That doesn't mean we won't continue to experiment with a more versatile digital version in the future, but we have no plans of going from a printed version to all digital, all the time.

As the last 12 months have brought about so many unexpected changes, I just wanted to make sure you, our faithful readers, weren't caught off guard with something that has been so consistent for you over the years.

By the way, I'm always happy to hear from you about anything that pertains to the KFB News, and I look forward to trying a few new things in the future. It will be like putting real fruit on my cereal; different than what I normally do, but really, really good.



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County Corner

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



Bath County

Bath County Farm Bureau had a great turnout for their 2nd Annual Veteran's Appreciation Lunch, as they served over 150 prepackaged lunches to veteran's in the community. Things looked a little different this year, but they still had fun!



Montgomery County

Montgomery County Farm Bureau was honored to sponsor the Mt. Sterling-Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Farm Family of the Year Award. Congratulations to the 2020 Recipients, Tommy & Brenda Murphy.



Breathitt County

Breathitt County Farm Bureau President Holden Williams presented Erik Holbrook with a certificate for Farmer of the Year in Breathitt County.



Lincoln County

Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation donated \$2,500 to the local FFA chapter to help pay membership dues for students to join the FFA affiliate chapter.



Rowan County

Rowan County President Danny Mabry proudly displaying the installed WiFi signage at their local office. "We are proud to offer such a great service to our community."



Lyon County

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell recently visited Lyon County and met with local Farm Bureau members. Pictured in top photo from left: Lyon County Farm Bureau President Glen Kinder, Leader McConnell, and Lyon County Farm Bureau Women's Chair Becky Kinder. In bottom photo from left: Kelma White, Lyon County Farm Bureau Agency Manager Kim White, Leader McConnell, and Glen Kinder.

Clark County

Clark County Farm Bureau Agency Manager Rick Mink, Board Member Harold David Rupard, KFB Board Director Shane Wiseman, and Clark County Farm Bureau President, Thadd Taylor worked with Clark County FFA students to pass out USDA Farm Food Boxes to Clark County Residents. There were over 1,200 30lb boxes on this truck, with 13 more trucks planned before year's (2020) end.



Cumberland County

The Cumberland County Farm Bureau office was decorated for a local fall decoration contest.



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