

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau

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Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

March 4-5

Madison Marriott West, Middleton







Women from the Wisconsin agriculture community are encouraged to attend the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit presented by Badgerland Financial, Wisconsin Farm Bureau and University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Agenda Highlights

Friday, March 4

9-10 a.m. Registration
10-10:30 a.m. AgVocate of the Year Award Presentation
10:30-11:30 a.m. Keynote Panel: Women In Ag: Understanding Where We've Been and Where We're Heading;
Moderator: Amy Pflugshaupt, Anchor and Reporter, NBC 15 Madison
1-4:30 Breakout Sessions
7:30-10 p.m. Casino Night

Saturday, March 5

6:30-7:30 a.m. Workout: Water aerobics or boxing and cardio
8:30-9 a.m. Meet the 2016 AgVocate of the Year
9-10 a.m. Breakout Sessions
10:15-11 a.m. Brunch
11 a.m. Closing Keynote by Jerry Apps: The Importance of Writing Your Own Story
12:15 p.m. Adjourn

Register by **February 26**. For more information, visit wiagwomenssummit.com.

Eau Claire Farm Bureau Member Wins Photo Contest



Photo by Eau Claire County Farm Bureau Member Cassie Olson.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau YFA Committee held a PICit contest near the end of 2015. Voting closed on November 25.

Of the many entries that were submitted, Eau Claire County Farm Bureau's Cassie Olson took first place and received a cash award of \$100 at the YFA Conference.

Olson's caption for her photo was 'Our members don't stop until the job gets done. That's why I am #FarmBureauProud.'

Please follow Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation on Facebook to participate in the next contest!



COUNTYnews

EAU CLAIRE COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau Members Attend WFBF Annual Meeting By Steve Strey



Eau Claire County Farm Bureau members Steve Strey (left) and Alex Patten (right) served as delegates.

It is my job to let you know how the meeting went. I can't help but to think about our local FFA students when they attend an event, and report back to the alumni. It usually goes something like this. It was really cool! We saw a lot of neat stuff! Everybody had lots of fun! I guess that's it! These phrases describe my experiences, but I'll try to expand on these thoughts.

First, my wife Leslie and I arrived on Saturday and peeked in the ballroom to see the Peterson Farm Brothers perform for the YFA participants. Those boys are awesome advocates for agriculture. To farmers they are wonderful entertainment, but for the non-ag world they are excellent promoters about what we do in production ag every day using social media.

We should show the rest of the world the great job that we do producing a safe and plentiful food supply. If you haven't heard these young men, Google Peterson Farm Bros. and watch the videos. I know they inspire me to keep on farming.

Our first order of business was to attend the Producer Club luncheon. By signing up five new members, I was able to attend. The room was full of people dedicated to growing our membership.

We attended one of the six breakout sessions to become better informed agriculturists. Next it was time for a District 4 meeting to discuss policy development. District 4 leader Joe Bragger scheduled the meeting to give us time to discuss and brainstorm before the resolutions deadline. Joe's dedication to members is hard to beat. Joe is passionate about everything he does. I feel empowered and motivated being around him. Afterwards the trade show and reception offered time to network with friends. This is one of my favorite parts. The Peterson Brothers signed my daughter Heidi's FFA t-shirt. She was so excited!

That evening, we listened to Senator Ron Johnson. He provided an update of events at the national level, discussing ISIS and national security. Senator Johnson said that we are at war with our enemy ISIS, and that there are only two ways to end a war. 1. Both sides must agree to make peace and sign a treaty. 2. Or one side must over-power and eliminate the other. He added that ISIS will never make peace and sign a treaty. That only leaves one option! After dinner, we enjoyed the magic of Rick Wilcox and his wife Suzan.

The next morning, we watched the YFA Discussion Meet finals. There is leadership talent in our organization. After brunch, we listen to Lowell Catlett who is New Mexico State University's dean of agriculture, consumer and environmental sciences. Dr. Catlett was

full of interesting facts and figures and a very energetic speaker. He said that there has never been a better time to be in production agriculture and was optimistic about a bright future in farming.

Dr. Catlett said the developing countries of China and India along with Africa and South America continue to increase demand for U.S. agricultural products. He said the world population of 7.2 billion could increase to 9 billion by the year 2050. That would relate to a 50 percent increase in animal-based protein demand and suggested a large expansion in animal agriculture.

During the afternoon, we attended more breakout sessions and learned how the FBI is continually watching for agroterrorism in Wisconsin. Later, we enjoyed more beer and the awards banquet. It was neat to see the talent, passion and dedication of fellow farmers who were recognized. It shouldn't surprise me because farmers need these qualities to function.

President Jim Holte, Chief Executive Officer Dale Beaty and Rural Mutual Insurance's Peter Pelizza gave their perspectives on Farm Bureau. A few one-liners stuck in my head. 'In agriculture, if you're not green and growing, you are ripe and rotten.' 'We must remember where we've been and know where we're at, so we can decide where we're going.' 'We must be forward looking, and not chained to our roots because this is not our grandpa's world anymore.'

On Monday, the district caucus finalized our position on proposed policy changes. Fellow delegate Alex Patton and I represented Eau Claire County. The meeting went smoothly with good discussion on debated topics. Democracy at its best. The majority won. A bylaw change passed making the Woman's Committee the new Promotion and Education Committee. The most debated topic involved how to fund much needed improvements to our local roads and bridges to better serve larger farm trucks and machinery.

Thank you for letting me serve as a delegate. For me it truly is an honor to represent Eau Claire County. I recommend that every member should serve as a delegate to experience the grass roots of Farm Bureau.



Eau Claire County Farm Bureau member Cassie Olson (left) talked with Darcy and Jamie Goplin (center).



Eau Claire County Farm Bureau members Leslie and Steve Strey (left) and Lisa and Paul Pettis (right) talked during the WFBF Annual Meeting.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

2 President's Perspective
District Board Report
National Ag Day

3 YFA Members Attend
Volunteer Opportunity
New Member Benefit
Board Contacts
Member Benefits

President's Perspective



This is a great time of year to be thankful for our blessings.

What a wonderful profession we have. Is it easy? No. Is it without pain? No. Is it without hardship? No. Is it rewarding? Absolutely. Is it a great way to raise a family? Most definitely.

I believe farming is the most honest and honorable way a man can spend his time on this earth. I believe that by my hard work and good stewardship I am giving more back to the world than I am taking from

it. I believe farming teaches more about life's lessons than any other occupation. I believe that when a man grows old and looks back on his life, he should be able to stand tall and feel proud of what he has accomplished. I believe in farming because it makes this possible.

We do have a good job, in a great state, in the best country in the world. Many generations have shed blood, sweat and tears to make this possible for you and me. Let us not forget the past when examining the present.

There are evil forces in our world looking to strip this away. We must prepare for the future. Give our children the chance to do what we do. We must pay attention. Know what is happening in the world economy. We must remain educated.

Embrace change to be sustainable. We must be involved. Take action and fix problems. We must be advocates. Teach others what we do. We must work together.

Good farmers achieve great things. Great farmers help other farmers achieve great things. We must prioritize. Faith, family and farming.

I believe my children and grandchildren have the right to give thanks for their blessings. Remember, only the chosen few are blessed with the opportunity to feed and clothe the world.

Steve Strey
Eau Claire County Farm Bureau President

District Board Report



I recently had a conversation with a Farm Bureau member who posed the question; why do we sell milk with the labels 1% fat, 2% fat, skim and whole? The member went on to say, "Who else sells their product advertising on the label something people have been taught to avoid, even when you

purchase ground beef it is labeled 70% lean not 30% fat." Would anyone buy beef if it were labeled 30% fat?

So I experimented. I attended a meeting at our school and was working on an issue with an accountant from a company that does work with school districts in Wisconsin when I noticed a health bar. You know the ones I am talking about (all natural/non GMO, gluten free; the fastest growing market in the food industry, I mean even beer is going gluten free for crying out loud), low glycemic, good source of fiber (my cows or horse might be interested) very low sodium, dairy free (God help us), cholesterol free, no soy, no trans fats, no sulphur dioxide, no hydrogenated oils. Can this product be any more complete? They covered all of the market fads, I thought; but wait there is more. 'Ingredients you can see and pronounce,' when I looked at the ingredient list I saw it contained, to my horror, D-alpha tocopheryl acetate and ascorbic acid. I don't know about you, but I struggle with the pronunciation.

Back to the aforementioned lady with the health bar; I asked her if she drank milk, she said yes that she often drinks milk. "Skim" I asked? To which she replied yes because she was concerned about ingesting too much fat. I was delighted with the response, so I queried how you would feel about 98 or 99% fat free, after all, whole milk is for sure 96 to 96.5% fat free? She was immediately excited and asked me if this was available and where? I assured her I was working on getting this new product to market.

I have been doing my own research buying up milk and health bars (health bars that I will never eat, they scare me) so that I can compare labels and advertising. I have noticed some interesting trends. Most of the bars have somewhat of a nature 'outdoorsy' label and will not only make me a better person (good

luck), they will improve the environment and society with their ethical processes. Most of them put considerable effort into describing what they are not and of course they always contain whole grains. (Remember whole milk?) On one box it states; 'contains no sugar alcohols.' I wasn't interested but apparently this is critical information to some consumer somewhere. Every one of the health bars that I have read the label on contained more fat per serving than a serving of milk, yet consumers gobble them up in search of a better life while we restrict the serving of extra milk in our schools. I recently turned off the milk dispenser in our school after listening to it running empty of milk, humming away for months in not so silent protest to the new rules that no longer make it possible to offer more than an eight-ounce serving to students.

I once bought several pallets of sugar in 50 pound bags and even they stated on the bag that sugar contained 0% fat with a heart healthy symbol. With such a public aversion to things fat, why do we continue the nonsense, why do we not use the same tactics our competitors use and start to market this new healthy 95 to 99% fat free milk? (Side note: on one jug of milk it states '2% fat reduced: 37% less fat than regular milk,' my god how much is there in regular milk? This label is not helping!)

I recently started to discuss this with leaders in agriculture and the dairy industry and they indicate that there is a rule they know about somewhere but can't find it for me. A rule somewhere? Does this sound like a reason to just roll over and take it? Folks, we have been able to get the powers that be to recognize the importance of skid steers to our farms and the necessity of safety training for our youth younger than 18 even though the former interpretation of the RULES said we could not. Farm Bureau members spoke and our excellent staff got it changed. Maybe we need to step up and change the rule on how we label milk?

Next time you have a glass of wholesome milk, (one ingredient, pronounceable) think of me and please share your thoughts as I would like to keep the discussion going.

As always, "enough is too much."

Joe Bragger
District 4 WFBF Director

Preparing for National Agriculture Day

Celebrate National Ag Day March 15

Did you know that it can take up to 500 years to make an inch of **soil?**

Farmers use conservation practices to protect this resource.



March 15 is National Ag Day, a time when producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others across America gather to recognize and celebrate the abundance provided by American agriculture.

As the world population soars, there is even greater demand for the food, fiber and renewable resources produced in the U.S. The National Ag Day program believes that every American should:

- Understand how food, fiber and renewable resource products are produced.
- Value the essential role of agriculture in maintaining a strong economy.
- Appreciate the role agriculture plays in providing safe, abundant and affordable products.
- Acknowledge and consider career opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber and renewable resource industries.

Agriculture provides almost everything we eat, use and wear on a daily basis and is increasingly contributing to fuel and other bio-products. Each year, members of the agricultural industry gather to promote American agriculture. This effort helps educate millions of consumers.

By far, the most effective part of this program is the role you play in helping spread the word. A few generations ago, most Americans were directly involved in—or had relatives or friends involved in—agricultural-related endeavors.

Today, that is no longer the case. That is why it is so important that we join together at the community level...our voices, in concert, become a shout that carries our message a great deal further than any one of us can do alone! We are pleased that you have joined this effort to promote American agriculture.

Download more helpful tools at www.agday.org! You'll find:

- Talking points about the importance of agriculture.
- Ag Day logos.
- Sample presentation speech.
- Press release (to download and modify for your event).
- PSAs (to download and modify for your event).
- Print advertisements.

For more information, please visit wfbf.com/programsevents/nationalagday.



There are Benefits to Your Farm Bureau Membership:

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- Supplies and Products**
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 - Grainger
 - Polaris
 - Office Depot

- Communication**
- AgriVisor
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- Insurance**
- Rural Mutual Insurance Company
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- AAA
 - AVIS Car Rental Discount Program
 - Choice Hotels International, Inc.
 - Wyndham Hotel Group

- Financial**
- AgriPlan Medical Reimbursement Program
 - Farm Bureau Bank
- Protection**
- \$500 Reward Protection Program
 - Accidental Death Policy

For complete details visit wfbf.com/benefits-membership.

Eau Claire County YFA Members Attend State Conference By Alex Patten

The YFA Conference was held December 4-6 at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells.

As a new Farm Bureau member and Eau Claire County's YFA chair, I attended the YFA Conference. What a great experience. The conference had great things to do including: meeting other YFA members from around the state, contests, speakers and workshops and entertainment.

Visiting with other YFA members was one of the highlights. This included catching up with those who I knew from college as well as other organizations. It was great to see what others have been doing, whether it was the next step of involvement on the family farm or their careers in agricultural. The conference also gave attendees time to socialize and meet others at the county, district and state levels.

Great speakers are an important part of every conference, and the YFA Conference had just that. Attendees listened to speakers including the Peterson Farm Brothers. The Peterson Farm Brothers are known for their hit YouTube video song parodies. It started in 2012 when the brothers decided to create a parody titled 'I'm a Farmer and I Grow It.' The video went viral and received more than five million views in two weeks. The Peterson Farm Brothers explained how they got started making their videos, and all of the opportunities that it has provided.

Another speaker was Lowell Catlett, a regents professor at New Mexico State University, gave a presentation on the future of agriculture. His peculiar but catchy presentation provided insight in the changes we have seen in agriculture as well as the future outlook and opportunities.

Workshops were another highlight. No matter what your interests, there was a workshop for you including a viewing of the *Farmland* documentary presentations by the FBI on agriculture counterterrorism and a workshop on precision agriculture technologies.

Last but not least, you can't forget about entertainment. On Friday night, attendees enjoyed the music of Rockstar Rodeo. They provided a great show and everyone had their opportunity to show off their dancing skills.

On Saturday night, there was illusionist Rick Wilcox. It was a great performance that had everyone at the edge of their seats.

The YFA Conference was great. It is a great experience for all YFA members who are interested in being active on the county, district and state levels.

If you weren't there, you really missed out!



Participants in the District 4 YFA scavenger hunt included: (L-R) Tim Herricks (Monroe), Director Joe Bragger, Cassie Olson (Eau Claire) and Austin Laufenberg (Jackson).



Cassie Olson met with fellow member Michael Schmitt during the YFA reception.



Cassie Olson (Eau Claire), Tim Herricks (Monroe) and Austin Laufenberg (Jackson) spelled YFA to check off another one of their photo scavenger hunt items.

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, Steven Strey 715.597.6096
 Vice President, Lisa Pettis 715.533.4459
 Secretary/Treasurer, Jane Mueller 715.878.4058
 Women's Chair, Lisa Pettis 715.533.4459
 YFA Chair, Alex Patten 715.703.0767

Director, Brandon Boettcher 715.597.5004
 Director, Chad Dobberstein 715.878.9534
 Director, Tami Geske 715.877.2603
 Director, Alvin Kohlhepp 715.874.6024
 Director, Matthew Krenz 715.877.3413
 Director, Patrick Schaffer 715.878.9082
 Director, Devin Schlewitz 715.877.3403

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau 888.644.8329
 WFBF Board Director, Joe Bragger 715.530.0466
 District 4 Women's Chair, Darby Sampson 715.299.1409
 District 4 YFA Chair, Derek Husmoen 608.863.0105
 District 4 Coordinator, Steve Boe 866.355.7344
 RMIC District Manager, Ken Truax 715.514.4477

Volunteer at Country Jam

Mark your calendars for **July 21-23!** Eau Claire County Farm Bureau will be working at Country Jam in Eau Claire. This is our county's big fundraiser for the year.

We are looking for volunteers to help with VIP security. Please join us if you have six or eight hours to work with fellow Farm Bureau country music enthusiasts.

Headliners include Jason Aldean, Jake Owen, Florida Georgia Line, The Band Perry and Colt Ford, just to name a few, and of course Country Jam's favorite LoCash Cowboys!

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Lisa Pettis at 715.533.4459.

Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest

Maple syrup flows through this year's book of the year and essay contest from Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program.

Sugarbush Spring by Marsha Wilson Chall is the 2016 Book of the Year. 'Tell us about producing maple syrup in Wisconsin' is the topic of the annual essay contest.



Third and fourth grade essay submissions must be 100- to 300-words in length and will be judged on content, grammar, spelling and neatness.

All contest rules, lesson plans and sample classroom activities are located at wisagclassroom.org or by contacting 608.828.5644.

Essays need to be submitted by **April 1, 2016**.

In May, the members of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Women's Committee will select a state winner from nine district winners.

The contest is sponsored by Insight FS, We Energies and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation. Last year, nearly 2,900 students participated in the contest.