



Oconto 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.

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.





COUNTYnews

OCONTO COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Oconto County Farm Bureau Members Attend WFBF Annual Meeting By Russ Brock



Russ Brock visited with WFBF President Jim Holte in the trade show.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau had another year of increased enrollment. This makes eight years in a row of increased dues paying members.

It seems like this would be an impossibility when you think about the fact of how farm numbers are decreasing. Rural Mutual Insurance also reported a great year with policy holders numbers up and renewal rates running at more than

90 percent. What this means to you and me is that our ideas will be heard in the political arena.

Barbara and I returned from the WFBF Annual Meeting. Once again I was honored to be your delegate to the meeting. We enjoyed a privilege, but we certainly are open for someone else to attend. This year Kayla Steffel and I were the voting delegates. There were more than 500 Young Farmer and Agriculturist members who attended the YFA Conference and 900 who attended the WFBF Annual Meeting for a total of more than 1,400 attendees.

This year, the workshops were: Farm Bureau estate and business succession planning, county fair food stands, the threat to the agricultural sector presented by the FBI and the *Farmland* documentary. This is the part where a lot of information can be gathered as the speakers are all pros in their field. There is always ample opportunity to ask questions that pertain specifically to your own lifestyle. I enjoyed renewing friendships as well as making new friends. Sena-

tor Ron Johnson was at the meeting so I spoke with him one on one. I've never had the opportunity before. Naturally, I had a conversation with our state president and friend Jim Holte. He is a very real, genuine, interested and responsible leader for our organization. That is true for all of our board members. I also spoke with Peter Pelizza, Chief Executive Officer of Rural Mutual Insurance, at the request of one of the Oconto County Farm Bureau members.

I am sure Kayla will cover the YFA Conference, but I want to add this, if you want to get your spirits raised and see the positive side of agriculture and a positive look to what the future will bring in ag, you need to attend one of their events. It's very uplifting. We have some talented, hard-working and responsible young farmers and agriculturists in the state.

To answer your question about whether I spend my time in the water park and game room, the answer is no. I have much more enjoyment conversing with the other members.

The resolution of the most concern is the funding to keep our highways and local roads maintained. We voted on a resolution that gives them a list of opportunities to increase the state's revenues. The resolution from our Oconto County Farm Bureau increased the gasoline tax by five cents per gallon.

We believe it is the most fair, as those who use the roads should be paying for them. Time will tell, but I'm certain that we can't just keep borrowing to pay for our roads. The state aid for town roads has remained relatively flat for the last 10 years and we know that the cost has increased tremendously.

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WFBF YFA Conference Wrap-Up By Kayla Steffel



The Peterson Farm Brothers autographed photos for their fans during the YFA Conference.

and a cornhole (bean bag toss) tournament to help raise funds for the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation.

Saturday morning there was time to watch the discussion meets. The YFA brunch was a highlight with keynote speakers the Peterson Farm Brothers. They had everyone laughing and motivated to help promote agriculture. Afterward they had a special breakout session to get behind the scenes knowledge.

The YFA Conference at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells had something for every young farmer and agriculturalist. The people were excited and the atmosphere really made a person feel like a part of the large organization that Farm Bureau is. Friday night was kicked off with district meetings followed by a dance with the band, Rockstar Rodeo

The YFA Conference wasn't all work, there was plenty of time to check out the resort and make connections with other YFA members.

Thank you to Rural Mutual Insurance and the Oconto County Farm Bureau for my sponsorship to the event.



Members participated in the District 7 YFA meeting during the YFA Conference.

District 7 Board Report



Happy New Year! I hope that the weather has improved by the time that you are reading this.

I hope that you attended the WFBF Annual Meeting because I think it was one of the best that we have ever had. If you were unable to attend, Mike Austin, who has covered ag news and events in TV and radio for more than 30 years in our broadcasting area, received the Distinguished Service to Wisconsin Agriculture Award. He gave an interesting and humorous acceptance speech.

Senator Ron Johnson also attended the WFBF Annual Meeting. He gave an interesting speech and spoke of finding common ground and a need to work across party lines.

In January, the Council of Presidents was held on **January 26 -27**. It was an opportunity to express viewpoints and concerns. On January 27, members talked to legislators during Ag Day at the Capitol. This keeps our legislators informed of ag issues and our concerns.

The Wisconsin Ag Woman's Summit will be **March 4-5**. Ladies, try to attend this informative and fun event.

Following our strategic plan, the WFBF Board of Directors is working with other organizations to form alliances where we have common ground and concerns. We found that we have many similarities in our discussions. When organizations work together, we have a much greater impact.

Wayne Staidl
District 7 State Board Representative

The H Is Still Going By Russ Brock



Russ Brock stands behind the family Farmall H.

On a sunny day in September of 1951, the morning chores were done and breakfast was eaten and I came out of the house to the sound of a tractor backfiring.

My father and his two brothers were attempting to get grandpa's 1938 John Deere A running so they could chop corn silage. The A didn't have a battery ignition, it had a magneto and you started it by turning a big flywheel on the left side. Uncle Kenneth was strongest and he could really spin it, but to no avail. It was then that grandpa came driving in. He went over for a conference with 'the boys' as he called them.

He turned to me and asked me if I wanted to go to town with him to get a tractor? I thought that was a foolish question, as whenever I went to town with grandpa he bought me a double-dip ice cream cone. I suspect he did it so he could get one for himself.

So we went to Suring, first to the John Deere dealer, then to the Case dealer and next to the Farmer Mercantile store for ice cream. (I told you I'd get ice cream.)

House Calls By Russ Brock

When our new neighbors moved out to the country from Chicago they were very green about the ways of nature and country life.

They were constantly asking questions. When should we plant this and where should we plant that? How much snow will we get? How cold will it get? How many gallons of milk does a cow produce? The questions went on and on.

They always liked our cats and marveled at the many colors and combinations of colors. One day our neighbor came over to tell me that they had gotten a female cat. They wanted her to have kittens and wanted to

Then we headed for Gillett to the IH Farmall dealer and then the Allis Chalmers dealership. I recall he didn't spend much time at each place because we were home by noon.

He told each dealer that he would purchase the first tractor to pull the Gehl chopper over the hill behind our barn with a wagon load of corn silage. He kept telling me that 'the boys' couldn't get anything done with the old John Deere. They still hadn't gotten the A started even by pulling it with the 8N Ford.

We just finished lunch when the IH dealer pulled in the yard with the Farmall H. We hooked the chopper to it and drove to the field to start chopping corn. Everyone stood and watched as dad proudly drove it up the hill and 'the boys' were back to work.

Now, the other tractor dealers were in the yard, but they weren't happy, because grandpa told them that he would purchase the first tractor over the hill. They bemoaned the fact that they could have done it also, but grandpa was a man of his word and a man of action. He liked 'the boys' to be working.

During the years, I watched tractors come and go, an IH 460, 656, 1086, 5088, 7120, 9280, but the H is still here. It now pushes feed into the 200 milk cows three times a day, 365 days a year. Jokingly, I always say that the H paid for a lot of tractors. It runs every day summer or winter.

Oh, yes, the price was \$1,000 to boot the old A back in 1951. Five generations of Brocks have driven the H so far and I know that if it gets some attention, more generations will drive it.

know if he could borrow one of our tom cats or if he should bring his cat to our place?

I told him he needn't worry about it as our tom cats make house calls. He wasn't sure he should believe me, but he finally went home without a tom cat.

Six months and two batches of kittens later he came to tell me to keep my tom cats at home. He put it this way, "Please, no more house calls!"



Promotion and Education Committee Report

By Katelin Haglund



Happy New Year! As we start 2016, we have a new committee at the state level.

During the WFBF Annual Meeting in December, the

delegate body approved a change to the bylaws to change the state Women's Committee to the Promotion and Education Committee. In January, the members of the Promotion and Education Committee will meet and discuss the new structure for the committee. We are looking forward to this opportunity.

The change of the committee occurred after a task force was created in late 2014 after concerns about the Women's Committee's future were expressed at strategic

listening sessions heard throughout the state in 2014. The task force recommended the change to the board and the board accepted the change in spring 2015.

The new Promotion and Education Committee will be open to women and men. While Wisconsin loses the opportunity to have a representative run for the AFBF Women's Committee, we hope to have a representative on the recently formed AFBF Promotion and Education Committee.

This bylaw change was only at the state level, counties are not required to follow the state committee structure. The members of the Promotion and Education Committee are very excited for the next year.

For information, contact me at katelinhaglund@gmail.com.

Policy Development Committee Report

By Jon Bauer

Last winter, District 7 Director Wayne Staidl asked if I would serve on the state Policy Development Committee. Being a past delegate and working on our county resolutions, I knew the process, so I agreed.

In the spring, the committee consisting of about a dozen farmers from across the state, met in Madison to discuss background issues. In November, after the county meetings were complete and the resolutions were compiled, we met for a day and a half to discuss more than 500 resolutions. A lot were on the same issues but had different wordings. I was impressed at how the committee members went through them thoughtfully to come up with resolutions that were relevant.

This is a two-year term so I look forward to doing it again. WFBF Vice President, Dick Gorder, chairs the committee and along with the WFBF staff, does a great job of informing us of issues and compiling the input we give him.



The WFBF Policy Development Committee addressed the resolutions before the delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting.

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Financial

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

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

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District 7's Christa Hoffman Wins WFBF Discussion Meet

Congratulations to Christa Hoffman, a Shawano County Farm Bureau and YFA member, for winning the 2015 Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer and Agriculturalist Discussion Meet at the WFBF Annual Meeting held in Wisconsin Dells on December 6.

The Discussion Meet consists of a discussion panel where Farm Bureau members between the ages of 18 and 35 are judged on their ability to express their ideas and opinions to reach a solution on current agricultural issues. Hoffman was awarded a chainsaw from Midwest Stihl and a free financial plan provided by Rural Mutual Insurance.

Hoffman represented Wisconsin and competed in the national Discussion Meet at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 97th Annual Convention in January in Orlando, Florida.

When asked prior to the convention what she is most looking forward to, Hoffman said, "I'm most looking forward to

meeting other young farmers and ranchers from across the U.S. and seeing their perspectives of agriculture."

In 2016, Hoffman also qualifies for the YFA trip to Washington, D.C., she will be a guest of the YFA Conference and a special guest at the annual meeting of GROWMARK, Inc., in Chicago in August.



WFBF President Jim Holte presented Christa Hoffman with a Stihl chain saw.

Congratulations Christa on a job well done!

Preparing for National Agriculture Day

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

As the world population soars, there is a greater demand for the food, fiber and renewable resources produced in the U.S. The National Ag Day program believes that Americans 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 teach 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.

For more information and resources for National Ag Day, please visit wfbf.com/programmevents/nationalagday.

Humor Corner By Wes Raddatz

What one word includes 26 letters in it?
 Alphabet.

Why is an empty coin purse always the same?
 Because there's no change in it.

Farmer's son: Dad, I'm having trouble with the tractor. I think there's water in the fuel.

Farmer: Ok, let's go check it out. Where is it?

Farmer's son: In the pond.

How can playing with your grandkids keep you feeling young, when trying to keep up with them makes you feel old?



District 7 YFA Report By Brian Preder



Hello District 7 YFA members! I'm Brian Preder from Waupaca County and will be representing District 7 on the state YFA Committee.

Being raised in the dairy industry I share the same passion for agriculture as all of you. As a YFA member I can't be more excited and inspired to see young industry leaders' passion for agriculture.

Your passion was easily seen in December during the YFA Conference at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells. We had more than 500 YFA members attending!

This year members heard the Peterson Farm Brothers' story about their ag advocacy through YouTube music video parodies.

We also had plenty of time for some photos with them. Members also had the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through the YFA contests; Achievement Award, Excellence in Ag and Discussion Meet.

Congratulations to Christa Hoffman from Shawano County on winning the Discussion Meet. She represented Wisconsin Farm Bureau at the national Discussion Meet during the American Farm Bureau Annual Convention in sunny Orlando, Florida, in January. Good job Christa!



Be sure to watch for upcoming district YFA events. If there are any specific events you would like to see happen contact me with your ideas.

Also if you are looking for resources in assisting with any of your county YFA events feel free to contact me.

Finally, I want to thank Kristi and Brian Fiedler for their commitment and dedication representing District 7 on the state YFA Committee these past three years.

I can't wait to see where being Farm Bureau Proud leads!