

Polk County Farm Bureau

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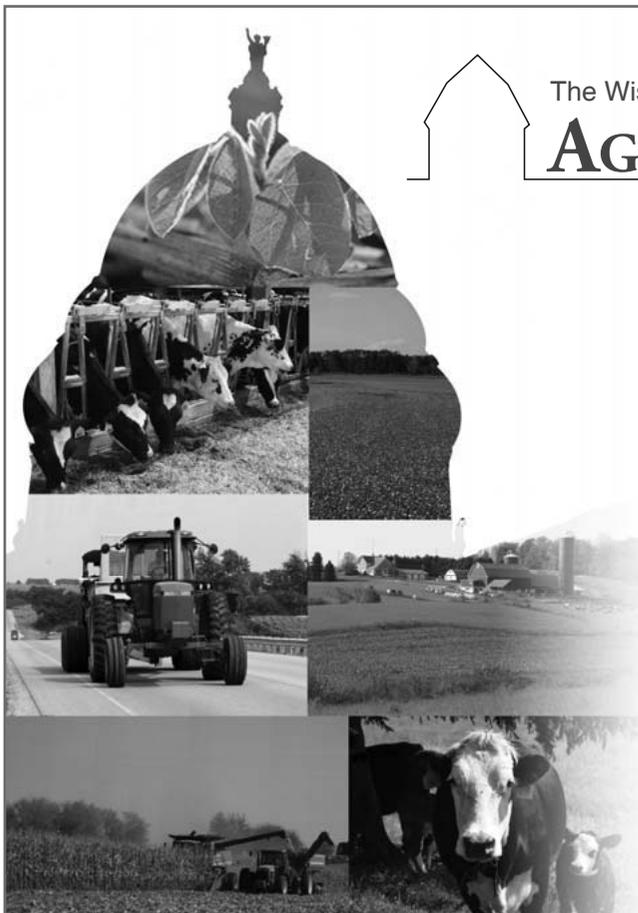
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(715) 485-3010
Ken Truax - District Manager
(715) 514-4477

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Register Now for Ag Day at the Capitol



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend
AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL
January 27, 2016
Monona Terrace Convention Center • Madison, WI

Early Registration Deadline: January 22
Cost: \$25 per person by registration
deadline.
\$30 after deadline and at the door.

Schedule of Events:
11:00 a.m. Registration
11:30 a.m. Opening Program
11:45 a.m. Lunch
12:45 p.m. Legislative Briefing
3:00 p.m. Leave for Capitol Visits

Presented by: 

Thank You to Our Sponsors:
  

Ride the Bus to Ag Day at the Capitol!

Ag Day at the Capitol will be held on **Wednesday, January 27, 2016**, in Madison. A bus from northwest Wisconsin is organized and will be making stops including Baldwin, Menomonie, Eau Claire, Osseo, Hixton and Tomah.

This is a great opportunity to contact your local representatives and network with other Farm Bureau members. The cost of the bus trip is \$30.

Note: Polk County Farm Bureau has money for sponsorship of members to attend Ag Day at the Capitol.

To reserve your seat, please contact District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at 866.355.7349 or kmattison@wfbf.com. Please indicate the county you are from and which location that you want to be picked up at. Registrations are limited so reserve your seat today!



COUNTYnews

POLK COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Members Enjoyed the 96th WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference



Representing Polk County Farm Bureau were: front (L-R) Amanda Melin, Jolene Wester and Bonnie Williamson; back (L-R) Erik Melin, Rick Wester and Vern Williamson. Not pictured: Jim and Patty Melin.

About 1,200 farmers and agriculturists converged on the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells on December 4-7 for the WFBF Annual Meeting and more than 520 young farmers and agriculturists attended the YFA Conference.

Some of the best and brightest competed in a variety of contests and received awards, and member

delegates set policy that will guide the legislative agenda for the state's largest general farm organization during the next year.

Attendees also listened to several excellent speakers including the Peterson Farm Brothers, who spoke about how they advocate for agriculture using entertaining and educational videos; Senator Ron Johnson spoke about the prosperous, safe and secure America we live in; and Lowell Catlett, regents professor of agriculture economics at New Mexico State University, shared the economic outlook for agriculture and that "there has never been a better time to be involved in agriculture."

illusionists Rick and Suzan Wilcox providing the entertainment.

Of the nearly 1,200 members, more than 100 of those members were from District 9 including members from the Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter at UW-River Falls.

More District 9 highlights:

- WFBF District 9 Director, Jim Holte was re-elected as WFBF President.
- The delegation voted to change the WFBF Women's Committee to the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee.
- Representing District 9 in the YFA Discussion Meet were Peter Kimball, Pierce County; Nate Kringle, Sawyer County; and Julie Wadzinski, Barron County.
- Representing District 9 in the Excellence in Ag Final Four was Leslie Svacina, St. Croix County.
- Representing UW-River Falls in the Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet Finals from District 9 was Lexi DuSell, Rusk County.
- WFBF Top 10 membership workers included Jim Meng, Rusk County, signing 15 new members and Dean Bergseng, Pierce County, signing 9 new members.

Congratulations to everyone who was recognized throughout the weekend.



Polk County delegates were: (L-R) Rick Wester, Jim Melin and Vern Williamson.

The Farm Bureau Extravaganza took place on Saturday night, with

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- 2** President's Message
- Essay Contest
- Coordinator Message
- Meet John Morley
- Scholarships Offered
- 3** Bourget Babbles
- CPR Enrollment
- Pesticide Training
- Ag Women's Summit
- Board Contacts

Meet Polk County Farm Bureau YFA Chair: Erik Melin



Erik and Amanda Melin attended the YFA Conference for the first time on a sponsorship from Rural Mutual Insurance Company.

ence was able to learn more about Farm Bureau and what they do. I plan to spread the word around my area in hopes to get more involvement.

Farm Name: Lucky Oats Farm

Number of years in Farm Bureau: 5 years

Why did you choose agriculture: I was raised on a farm and can't imagine living life any other way. I enjoy the lifestyle and the variety in day-to-day work. Someday, I hope to raise my own children on a farm.

Why are you a Farm Bureau member: I am a Farm Bureau member originally because it came with my insurance. I have recently attended the YFA Conference in Wisconsin Dells and at the confer-

Welcome New Members!

Welcome to the new members who have joined the Polk County Farm Bureau. If you have questions about your membership, please contact one of the board members.

- Daniel Carlson
- Kelly Curtis
- Ethan Dado*
- Gwen Dado*
- Garland Frokjer*
- Rebecca Gray*
- Eric Hannigan
- Crystal Meier*
- Nezben, Inc.*
- Richard Rowell
- Joyce Snow
- Town of Lorain
- Vern Williamson*

*Denotes voting membership.

President's Message



Dear Farm Bureau Members,

I hope that this message finds you well.

I wanted to highlight an event that we have coming at the beginning of the new year. Ag Day at the Capitol will be held on Wednesday, January 27. Farm Bureau staff works hard for you at local, state and federal levels. We need to hear from you to make this organization the most effective that it can be. Please consider joining us at Ag Day at the Capitol.

There is a place and a need for more members to get involved!

Wishing you a very prosperous new year.

Jim Melin
Polk County Farm Bureau President

Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest



Each year Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom offers an essay contest for fourth- and fifth-grade students in public, private and home schools, including 4-H clubs, Farm Bureau families and other organizations.

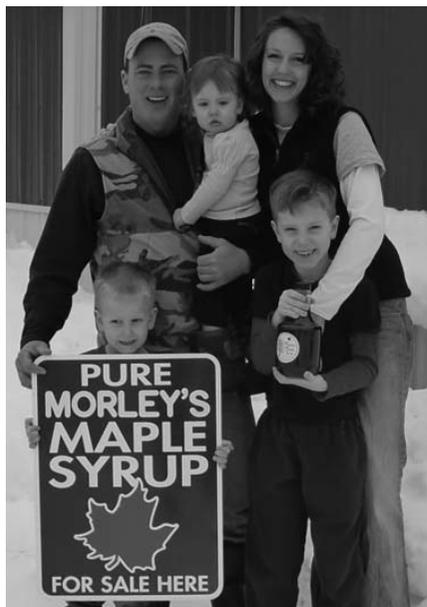
The 2016 topic is 'Tell us about producing maple syrup in Wisconsin.' This topic coincides with the 2016 book of the year, *Sugarbush Spring* by Marsha Wilson Chall.

The book and essay topic will allow us to teach about sap, maple syrup and the science behind making this sweet treat.

Polk County contest entries are due by **April 1**. All rules, promotional materials, lessons and activities and other resources related to the essay contest and book program is at www.wisagclassroom.org.

For more information, contact Polk County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom coordinator Lisa Thomfohrda at 715.485.3010.

Meet Polk County Farm Bureau Member: John Morley



the second-highest amount produced in the state on record.

The number of maple trees tapped was at an all-time high, with 760,000 drilled this year, 60,000 more than the previous year.

One of those maple syrup producers is Polk County Farm Bureau member, John Morley. John and his wife, along with their four children, own and operate Morely's Maple Syrup in Luck where they sell pure maple syrup, maple products, gifts and equipment and supplies.

It started 10 years ago when the Morleys bought some land in Luck. At the time, they didn't even know what a maple tree was. When they decided to start tapping trees they started with 350 taps and collected in pails just like the old days.

The Morleys have grown to more than 8,000 taps and they produce about 2,000 to 3,000 gallons of syrup each season.

The Morleys invite you to stop by during the syrup season to see how it's made and to try some maple syrup.

Wisconsin maple syrup producers had an extremely productive season in 2015, thanks to ideal weather conditions and a growing number of producers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Wisconsin maple syrup producers produced 215,000 gallons of maple syrup,

Polk County Farm Bureau Offers Scholarships

Polk County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce that it will award higher education scholarships to graduating high school senior students who are enrolled in an accredited college, university or technical college.

All majors will be considered for this schol-

arship. The applicant or his or her parent must be a current Polk County Farm Bureau member. Completed applications must be postmarked by **April 1**.

For more information, please contact Polk County Farm Bureau office secretary Lisa Thomfohrda at 715.485.3010.

District Coordinator Message



Miles and momentum...

One way to keep momentum going is to have constantly greater goals. -Michael Korda

In 2015, I traveled 35,659 miles. What is a mile made up of? The obvious answer is 5,280 feet...but those miles are so much more. Those miles represent the work, effort and time that you as District 9 Farm Bureau members devoted during the year.

Those miles set the foundation for continuous momentum to improve your county Farm Bureaus and to be "A Voice for Farmers and A Vision for Agriculture."

What happened across those 35,659 miles? Those miles mean well thought-out resolutions by the nine county Farm Bureaus in District 9.

Those resolutions resulted in improved legislation for agriculture. These came from events throughout the year that dedicated Farm Bureau members attended and from the county Farm Bureau delegates who took time to vote on issues related to agriculture during the WFBF Annual Meeting.

More than 40 members traveled to Madison and met with representatives at Ag Day at the Capitol. They shared their passion during the District 9 policy development meetings where you as members voiced opinions on what is important.

Those miles mean education. From members

being involved in Ag in the Classrooms programs. More than 400 fourth and fifth grade students submitted essays about 'Why Bees are Important to Wisconsin Agriculture.' Members worked at June dairy month breakfasts or went on membership drives to share their passion for Farm Bureau.

Members sponsored scholarships for graduating seniors to continue their education and their passion for agriculture.

Those miles mean leadership development. District 9 had talented individuals who competed in the Discussion Meet and Excellence in Agriculture Competitions at the WFBF Annual Meeting. We look forward to seeing these individuals do great things in the future.

UW-River Falls Collegiate Farm Bureau continues to thrive and is building future county Farm Bureau members and leaders. Two of our District 9 members traveled to Washington, D.C., in September to meet with representatives at the national level.

As Farm Bureau members you have accomplished a lot during this year and 35,659 miles. Thank you for all that you do for your counties and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau.

Please contact me with comments, questions or just to chat. I look forward to continuing the momentum and working with you to do great things in the year to come. Happy 2016!

Katie Mattison
District 9 Coordinator
kmattison@wfbf.com

2016 Organic Vegetable Production Winter Workshop

Submitted by **Heidi Doering**, St. Croix County Extension

UW-Extension is sponsoring the 2016 Organic Vegetable Production Winter Workshop on **Friday, January 22**, at the Hungry Turtle Institute in Amery.

The workshop will be from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with lunch included. Cost to attend is \$20 per person (\$10 each for additional attendees from same farm). Preregistration is required.

Sessions focused on organic farming include: insect and disease management, creative financing for a solar installation, evaluating labor efficiencies, late blight and other tomato diseases, whole farm CSA shares, Brown Marmorated

Stink Bug and other emerging insect pest and variety selection for disease control in high tunnel production.

For more information or to download the program flyer and registration form, visit stcroix.uwex.edu or visit the Facebook page at St. Croix County/UW-Extension-Horticulture.



Bourget Babbles



For many of us, the holidays are a time for reflection. It's a time to reconnect with the friends and family who are special to us.

I want to take a moment to reflect on what District 9 YFA has to be proud of this past year and thank you for your dedication.

District 9 offered its YFA members opportunities to network, from curling with Barron to bonfires with Pierce. It was wonderful to see everyone enjoying time together—a much needed event for many with the hard work to make your agricultural dreams a reality. Thank you to those who put time and effort into planning events and to those who attended events.

In 2015, District 9 members served their communities in some innovative ways. Dunn County members brought agricultural and health information to those in the Chippewa Valley with the Farmer Frolic 5K.

County Farm Bureaus also made sure that community events

were funded and youth have access to higher education through scholarships. We have a lot to be grateful for and District 9 YFA members showed their support and appreciation.

This year, we also can be proud of professional development milestones. Our members applied for the Achievement and Excellence in Ag awards and sent representatives to the state competitions. Thank you to those who made time to apply and participate. Congratulations to those who made it to the state competitions.

As we look forward to next year, I encourage you to say thank you to your county Farm Bureau for their continued support of the YFA program. We have a lot to be proud and thankful for and their support played a role in our opportunities.

This time of year also makes people think about the future and make New Year's resolutions that range from eating better to spending less. I want to add a resolution to your list . . . don't forget to take care of yourselves. Make time for that YFA social event or apply for an award—put yourself first now and again.

I am thankful for all of you in District 9 and I can't wait to see what we can do in 2016.

Cindy Bourget
District 9 YFA Representative

USDA Opens Enrollment Period for the Conservation Reserve Program

Submitted by **Aaron Moore**, Polk County Farm Service Agency Executive Director

Farmers are reminded that the enrollment period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) started, **December 1 and ends on February 26**. December 2015 marked the 30th anniversary of CRP, a federally funded program that assists agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat.

As of September 2015, 24.2 million acres were enrolled in CRP, which is protecting more than 170,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, enough to go around the world seven times.

For a tour of CRP success stories from across the U.S., visit www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30 or follow on Twitter at #CRPis30.

Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

At times when commodity prices are low, enrolling sensitive lands in CRP can be attractive to farmers and ranchers, as it softens the economic hardship for landowners at the same

time that it provides ecological benefits. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish native plant species on marginal agricultural lands for the primary purpose of preventing soil erosion and improving water quality and related benefits of reducing loss of wildlife habitat.

Contracts on 1.64 million acres of CRP are set to expire on September 30. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP. Since it was established on December 23, 1985, CRP has:

- Prevented more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks.
- Reduced nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95 and 85 percent, respectively.
- Sequestered an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road.

Since 1996, CRP has created nearly 2.7 million acres of restored wetlands.

For more information FSA conservation programs, contact the Polk County FSA office at 715.485.3138 or www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

Private Agricultural Pesticide Applicator Trainings Schedule

Submitted by **Ryan Sterry**, St Croix County Extension

Private Pesticide Applicator Training session has been scheduled for the Polk County area on **January 21** in Balsam Lake. The session is scheduled to start at 10 a.m. and end at 3 p.m.

Materials can be picked up before the session in order to prepare for the written exam as the educators will not be able to cover everything in the book. Space may be limited for each session.

Individuals should preregister and pick up materials at their local UW-Extension office. Cost is \$35 per person to cover the cost of materials.

For more information or if you have questions, contact the Polk County UW-Extension Ag Educator Don Dipprey at donald.dipprey@ces.uwex.edu or 715.485.8600.



Polk County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, Jim Melin 715.488.2261
Vice President, Don Ellefson 715.485.3088
Secretary/Treasurer, Trent Jensen 715.268.8211
YFA Chair, Erik Melin 715.566.0803

Director, Mike Garvey 715.825.3229
Director, Dean Johnson 715.491.9146
Director, Tim Mares 715.554.2174
Director, Ken Nelson 715.268.6426
Director, Dale Wester 715.646.1447

Office Secretary, Lisa Thomfohrda 715.485.3010

WFBF Board Director, Jim Holte 715.835.6708
District 9 YFA Chair, Cindy Bourget 715.505.7676
District 9 Women's Chair, Amber Cordes 715.357.3444
District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison 866.355.7349
RMIC District Manager, Ken Truax 715.514.4477

Polk County Farm Bureau Board



Serving on the 2015-2016 Polk County Farm Bureau board are (L-R): Dean Johnson, Dale Wester, Trent Jensen, Don Ellefson, Jim Melin, Ken Nelson and Mike Garvey. Missing from the photo are Tim Mares and Erik Melin.

Plans to Attend the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit



Join us at the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit, **March 4-5** at the Madison Marriott West in Middleton.

The Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit is a joint effort of Badgerland Financial, the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation and University of Wisconsin-Extension to host an event focused on engaging and supporting women in agriculture.

For more information or to register, visit www.wiagwomenssummit.com or contact Deb Raemisch at 608.828.5712.

Are you Farm Bureau Proud?

If you sign up five new Farm Bureau members by May 5, you will be awarded a Farm Bureau Proud jacket!

For more information, please contact District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at 866.355.7349 or kmattison@wfbf.com.

