

# Polk County Farm Bureau

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(715) 514-4477

## Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

### Membership, Membership, Membership

**Farm Bureau**  
*Proud*

Farm Bureau is a membership driven organization, which means your membership is what drives Farm Bureau.

Members like you want to see local businesses and rural communities prosper. You want to be heard when

decisions that affect your farms, families and futures are made by elected officials. This is why you join Farm Bureau!

Each year, county Farm Bureaus have goals to increase their membership. Congratulations to Polk County Farm Bureau for reaching its voting and total membership goal for the year!



Sign a new member, get \$20! You can get involved too. County Farm Bureau volunteers will receive \$20 for every new member who they sign between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017.

For membership year 2016-2017, volunteers are asked to help Farm Bureau grow its membership by pledging to sign two members by April 1, 2017 (2x4 campaign). Will you help by Building Farm Bureau ... one member at a time?

For more information, please contact District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at [kmattison@wfbf.com](mailto:kmattison@wfbf.com) or 866.355.7349.

## Just Around the Corner...

### Ag Day at the Capitol – March 8, 2017



Ag Day at the Capitol will be held on **Wednesday, March 8, 2017** in Madison. A bus from northwest Wisconsin is being planned again for 2017.

This is a great opportunity to make contact with your local representatives and network with other Farm Bureau members.

Watch for more information to come soon.

If you would like to reserve your spot early, contact District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at [kmattison@wfbf.com](mailto:kmattison@wfbf.com) or 866.355.7349.

### Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit – March 10-11

The Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit is a joint effort of Badgerland Financial, the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation and UW-Extension.

It is our mission to support women in agriculture by providing a meeting place to learn, network and build friendships through peer-to-peer interaction. During the past six years, we've learned a lot and grown together, both personally and professionally. Join us for another top-notch program and event as we continue this journey, together.

For more information, visit [wiagwomenssummit.com](http://wiagwomenssummit.com).





# COUNTYnews

POLK COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

## Annual Meeting Highlights



Members of the Polk County Farm Bureau held their annual meeting on October 13 at the Wolter's Shoreview Supper Club in Amery.

Delegates elected to represent Polk County Farm

Bureau at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December are: Erik Melin, Dale Wood and Verne Williamson.

In addition to the regular business at the Polk County Farm Bureau annual meeting, members also voted to change the women's committee to the promotion and education committee.

As a grassroots organization, it is Farm Bureau's members at the county level who create and set the policy goals of the state's leading farm organization. The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is often asked to get involved in issues affecting production agriculture and rural Wisconsin in Madison and Washington, D.C.

During the meeting, members discussed a wide range of issues including transportation funding, wildlife abatement and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The following resolutions passed during this meeting and will be forwarded for consideration and presented to the delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting:

1. We are in favor of finding a sustainable and viable solution to increase rural road funding.
2. We are in favor of the removal of the public hunting requirement associated with the wildlife abatement program.
3. We are in favor of increasing the number of bear kill permits issued per year to the general public.
4. We are opposed to the proposed EPA regulations regarding atrazine.
5. We believe that the EPA should not be able to enact new regulations without legislative approval.
6. We need to make sure that all implements used for agricultural purposes are classified as IOH.

For more information about the Polk County Farm Bureau, contact 715.485.3010 or visit [wfbf.com/countyfarmbureaus/polk](http://wfbf.com/countyfarmbureaus/polk).

## YFA Members Visit Capitol Hill

On June 6-10, 27 of Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Agriculturist member leaders traveled to Washington, D.C. While in D.C., the group met officials from the American Farm Bureau Federation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture where they discussed issues pertaining to wetland conservation, food safety and telecommunication and broadband expansion.

The attendees visited the New Zealand Embassy where discussions included trade and the global agricultural economy. These leaders also became lobbyists for a day while meeting with Senators Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin and their representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Members who attended were: Sean

and Jennifer Beres, Waukesha County; Alex Bringe, Vernon County; Nate and Karyn Eckert, Taylor County; Nick Entringer, Sheboygan County; Becky Hasburgh, Iowa County; Brad and Christa Hoffman, Shawano County; Josh Huber, Marathon County; Peter Kimball, Pierce County; Michael Leahy, Fond du Lac County; Lee and Megan Meinholz, Dane County; Erik and Amanda Melin, Polk County; Cassie Olson, Eau Claire County; Derek Orth, Grant County; Keith and Kelly Oudenhoven, Outagamie County; Jeff and Katrina Pionec, Manitowoc County; Leslie Svacina, St. Croix County; Adam Wehling, Buffalo County; Dustin and Aimee Williams, Green County; and Nate Zimdars, Fond du Lac County.



## Rural Broadband: Input Needed

A topic that Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Policy Development Committee has identified is access to rural broadband around the state.

The State Broadband Office at the Wisconsin Public Service Commission announced the release of its High Speed Internet Access Demand Survey. This tool will allow residents and businesses the voice needed to improve internet access or service.

The goal is to help state planners and policy makers understand consumer demand for internet access in Wisconsin.

To complete the survey, please visit [www.psc.wi.gov/BroadbandSurvey.htm](http://www.psc.wi.gov/BroadbandSurvey.htm).



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## District Coordinator Message



**Thank you!** Two simple words that do not get said enough.

Thank you for all that you do for Farm Bureau and agriculture in Wisconsin. I am grateful for each and every one of you; for all that you do for agriculture, your communities and for Farm Bureau. Thank you for your passion for agriculture and your commitment to Farm Bureau.

The future of agriculture looks great because of YOU! Farm Bureau is successful because of YOU! Thank you for being

a member of a 45,000+ member strong organization. Your membership matters and helps make a difference in agriculture across Wisconsin and the USA.

I thank you for being a Farm Bureau member. I thank you for your commitment to your county and Wisconsin Farm Bureau. Thank you for your time, your involvement and your dedication.

I am amazed by the accomplishments of our members and



am very grateful to be a part of the Farm Bureau family. It is because of the hard work and dedication of all of you, our Farm Bureau members, that Farm Bureau is able to thrive and the future of agriculture looks so great. I am committed to working alongside you for many years to come to make Farm Bureau and Wisconsin agriculture amazing.

If you have any questions or comments throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would love to hear from you.

**Katie Mattison**  
District 9 Coordinator  
kmattison@wfbf.com

## Erik and Amanda Melin Travel to D.C.

By Amanda Melin

On June 6, we ventured to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to start our five-day trip to Washington, D.C., to proudly represent Polk County Farm Bureau.



Our first day was a gentle acclimation to the city and the first stop was to Arlington National Cemetery. Pictures cannot justify what this experience was like.

From hearing Taps being played for a fallen soldier, to cannons being shot for a prime minister's arrival, it was a beautiful, yet somber place that reminded us how many people had sacrificed their lives for us.

Our next day started at the USDA building where we met with officials to discuss issues concerning Wisconsin agriculture. Then we went to the New Zealand embassy where we learned about the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement and discussed how beneficial this trade agreement would be for U.S. agriculture. After the embassy, we went to the American Farm Bureau Federation office where we were briefed on the issues Wisconsin agriculture is facing.

After much preparation and discussion, we went to Capitol Hill to meet with our District 9 representative Sean Duffy. As lobbyists for Polk County, we talked about the issues affecting our farm, along with the issues many farmers are facing in our county, for example: the increasing wolf population, rural broadband expansion and immigration laws affecting dairy farmers. From our district meeting, we met with Senators Ron Johnson and Tammy Baldwin to discuss similar issues.

Our last two days were full of sight-seeing and experiencing history in our nation's capital. This trip was an amazing opportunity for us to experience Washington, D.C.

We want to thank the Polk County Farm Bureau for providing us with the resources needed to advocate for our local Polk County farmers.

## Welcome New Members

Rylee Black\*, Richard Eggers, Sheryl Holmgren, Del Kraemer\*, Allyssa Lindberg and Town of Spooner.

\*Denotes voting membership.

## Raising More Than Cows and Crops

Ken Nelson has been dairy farming practically his entire life.

During the last couple of years, he decided to take on a new hobby, growing pumpkins. But the pumpkins he grows are not just any pumpkins. These are near record setting pumpkins.

This year, Ken grew the biggest pumpkins he has ever grown. Part of this can be attributed to a little friendly competition. He and a neighbor decided to have some fun and see who could grow the largest pumpkin. Ken says his largest

pumpkin probably won in the end by default as his neighbor's pumpkin was slightly damaged in late summer before the pumpkin was done growing.

Ken's two biggest pumpkins are displayed at Balsam Lake Hardware and The Blacksmith Shop.

Weights of the pumpkins were not able to be disclosed at the publishing of this article as they were both being used in 'guess-the-weight' contests at the aforementioned locations.



Ken and grandchildren Hunter, Celia and Lily posed with one of the gigantic pumpkins.

## YFA Members Attend a Farmer Field Day

By Savannah Williams, UW Discovery Farms



Minnesota Discovery Farms for a field day at Spring Creek Farms, a 1,400-acre corn and soybean farm in Chisago County, Minnesota.

Discovery Farms is a farmer-led research and outreach program focused on the relationship between agriculture and water quality. The program proudly partners with Farm Bureau to better connect with farmers on water quality related topics and research.

Even with the hot temperatures, there

were more than 30 farmers and advisors from Wisconsin and Minnesota at the event. To start off, Minnesota Discovery Farms coordinator Tim Radatz and UW Discovery Farms co-director Amber Radatz discussed results from Spring Creek Farms and two other farm monitoring sites that are part of the UW Discovery Farms Dry Run Watershed project across the St. Croix River.

Amber explained how John Peterson's system does a very good job of keeping the soil in place, which results in very little soil loss on his fields. The average soil loss for Spring Creek Farms is 84 pounds per acre. The median soil loss for all participating farms is 134 pounds per acre.

Then, John, the owner of Spring Creek Farms, talked about his participation with Discovery Farms and about the

equipment he used. John emphasized that working with Discovery farms "is a good way to learn and give at the same time. It fit well. It's been a good learning experience, better than we expected."

After dinner, attendees walked to the monitoring site at the bottom of a no-till soybean field.

"We chose no till because it was different, was a challenge and you could still make money," said John.

This was a great way for young farmers to connect with a seasoned no-tiller; John has been no-till for 20 years and continues to perfect his equipment set up.

For more information, visit [www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org](http://www.uwdiscoveryfarms.org) or follow them on Facebook and Twitter.

## Put Down the Phone When You See Orange Cones

As of **October 1**, it is illegal to talk on a handheld mobile device while driving in a Wisconsin road work zone when road workers are present.

This applies to all roads and also applies to farmers driving implements of husbandry and agricultural commercial motor vehicles (Ag-CMV's). The only exception to this law is that a call can be made to report an emergency to 911.

The law does not apply to the use of a voice-operated or hands-free device if the driver does not use his or her hands to operate the device, except to activate or deactivate a feature or function of the device.

Read more about our Transportation Tidbits initiative at: <http://bit.ly/TransportationTidbit>.



## District 9 Young Farmer and Agriculturist Discussion Meet Contestants Shine

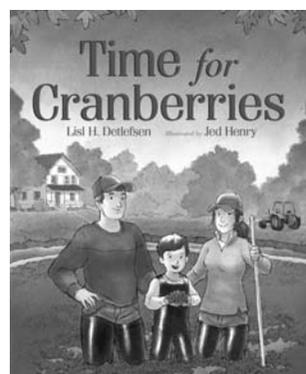
The District 9 YFA Discussion Meet was held in conjunction with the District 9 Policy Development meeting on August 4 at the Stout Ale House in Menomonie. About 20 people attended with five YFA members competing in the Discussion Meet.

District 9 had a great showing from across the district. Competitors were: Julie Wadzinski, Barron County; Isaac Christenson, Polk County; Nate Kringle, Sawyer County; Laura Benitz, Pierce County and Kirsten Konder, St. Croix County. Isaac Christenson, Laura Benitz and Kirsten Konder will be moving on to represent District 9 at the YFA Conference in the Wisconsin Dells on December 2-4.

**Congratulations to the competitors on an awesome Discussion Meet!**



## Ag in the Classroom Program Announces Essay Topic and Book of the Year



*Time for Cranberries* is the 2017 Book of the Year and "Tell us about cranberry production in Wisconsin during one of the four seasons" is the topic for the annual essay contest.

The essay contest is open to fourth and fifth grade students in public, private and home school programs. Students involved in 4-H, PALS and after school programs are also encouraged to participate.

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 accessible at [wisagclassroom.org](http://wisagclassroom.org) or by contacting Wisconsin Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom Director Darlene Arneson at 608.828.5644 or [darneson@wfbf.com](mailto:darneson@wfbf.com).

Participating students and schools need to submit essays by **April 1** to their county Farm Bureau essay coordinator. A list of coordinators is available at [wisagclassroom.org](http://wisagclassroom.org).

• **Polk County Ag in the Classroom essay coordinator – Lisa Thomfohrda**

A state winner will be selected from nine district winners in May by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Promotion and Education Committee. Each district winner will receive a classroom presentation in May for their homeroom or class. The contest is sponsored by Insight FS, We Energies and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation.

Last year, more than 3,000 students participated in the contest. In this year's Book of the Year selection, *Time for Cranberries*, introduces young readers to cranberries – from the bog to the Thanksgiving table.

The hardcover books come with an activity-lesson plan packet that teachers, students and home school parents can use to enhance the reading experience. Book order forms can be found at [www.wisagclassroom.org](http://www.wisagclassroom.org) under Order Resources, Order Forms.



## USDA Marketing Assistance Loans Offer Short-Term Financing

By **Aaron Moore**, Polk County Farm Service Agency, county executive director



The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers that nine-month, low interest marketing assistance loans are available.

Marketing assistance loans are a valuable marketing tool by providing operating capital at competitive rates and offering flexible repayment at the time a commodity is sold or marketed.

Recent interest rates have been as low as 1.625 percent for all commodity loans. Producers may obtain a low interest loan on commodities stored on the farm in an eligible structure stored on the farm or at a public warehouse.

The grain must be stored in a facility that is safe and accessible and must be repaid before it is fed or sold.

Farmers with grain under loan that will be sold can request a marketing authorization, which gives them permission to sell the mortgaged collateral to a designated buyer before the loan is repaid.

Silos and oxygen-limited structures also are eligible storage facilities. Marketing assistance loans will be adjusted for excess moisture.

The final day to request a 2016 small grain commodity (wheat, barley, or oats) is **March 31, 2017** and the last day to request a 2016 corn or soybean loan is **May 31, 2017**.

Marketing Assistance Loan eligibility also requires compliance with conservation and wetland protection, requirements, beneficial interest, acreage reporting, and ensuring that the commodity meets Commodity Credit Corporation minimum grade and quality standards.

For more information about commodity marketing loans, farmers may contact the Polk County FSA office at 715.485.3138 or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).



## 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 |
| Promotion & Education Chair,<br>Crystal Meier | 715.292.7798 |
| 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 Coordinator, Katie Mattison        | 866.355.7349 |
| RMIC District Manager, Ken Truax              | 715.514.4477 |

## District Director Message



I'm sure you've heard the phrase 'decisions are made by those who show up' before. No one knows this better than active Farm Bureau members like you. In our high-tech, fast-paced world, it may seem a little old fashioned but your county Farm Bureau annual meeting still stands for what is right about a grassroots organization.

It is those of you who show up that determines the directions of our 61 county Farm Bureaus, and the legislative priorities that our state organization will work on in Madison and Washington, D.C. There is no shortage of challenges and opportunities facing Wisconsin agriculture these days.

For more than 90 years, Farm Bureau members have got the job done by rolling up their sleeves, looking for solutions and staying positive. My challenge to you is that you get involved in our policy development process.

Technology is great, but its power pales in comparison to what can happen when a group of passionate agriculturists get together to share a meal and talk issues. This year, items up for discussion include: rural broadband, animal husbandry, Wisconsin's fence law and atrazine and ATCP 30.

Farm Bureau is the best vehicle to ensure that your local, state and national concerns are heard. That's why your Farm Bureau membership remains a tool to ensure agriculture's future success.

Those of you who show up at Farm Bureau meetings are the ones who have played the largest role in making this an honorable organization. Rest assured that other committed individuals like you are striving to make it even better.

Thank you for being a Farm Bureau member. Thank you for continuing to make Wisconsin agriculture stronger. Thank you for showing up.

**Jim Holte**

Dunn County crop and beef farmer  
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation President