

# Buffalo County Farm Bureau

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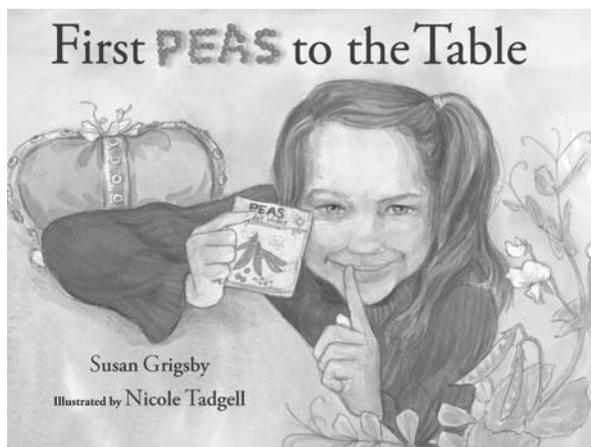
Ken Truax- District Manager

## Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

## Fountain City Student is Ag in the Classroom Essay Winner

Allison Murty is the Buffalo County winner of the Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest. Allison is the daughter of Earl and Jan Murty of Fountain City and a student in Ann Larkin's fifth-grade class at Cochrane-Fountain City Schools.

Fourth and fifth grade students in Buffalo County were given the opportunity to write a 100 to 300 word essay with the theme, "Wisconsin gardens provide many food choices for us." A total of 39 students wrote essays for the competition sponsored by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, Frontier Servco FS and We Energies. Jan Schaffner, Buffalo County's Ag in the Classroom coordinator, presented Allison with a certificate, gardening tools and seeds.



2013 Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom book of the year.

All participants enjoyed an ice cream treat.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program provides teachers and K-12 students with an understanding of how their food is produced. The goal of the program is to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society so they become citizens who support wise agricultural policies.

For more information about this program, visit the website at [www.wisagclassroom.org](http://www.wisagclassroom.org).



## Rural Mutual Sponsors YFA Conference

Again this year, Rural Mutual is generously offering sponsorship for those who have never attended the WFBF YFA Conference in the past to become involved in our organization by attending this year's event. From the applications received by August 15, Rural will select up to 100 first-timers to receive sponsorship to the conference. Sponsorship will include the conference registration fee and two nights lodging at the Kalahari Resort.

In addition, Rural recognizes that it is critical for these new members to have a mentor at the county level. Thus, any YFA who refers new YFA members who are selected for sponsorship to attend this year's event may qualify for a \$100 cash award (you must be present at the Friday, December 6 banquet and program to collect the cash award).

All participants must be Farm Bureau members by September 30, 2013 to qualify for sponsorship. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Tracy Pape at Rural Mutual Insurance Company at 608.828.5401 or [tpape@ruralins.com](mailto:tpape@ruralins.com).



### Want to get away?

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmer and Agriculturist (YFA) Conference will be held December 5-7, 2014 at the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells. Make plans now to join other YFA members for this exciting event!

Top-notch speakers, great entertainment, a unique networking opportunity and a weekend of family fun—and you are invited to attend, as our guest!



**2014 Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation**  
Young Farmer and Agriculturist Conference  
**AGENDA**

**Friday, December 5**

Afternoon: Free Time  
3:00 p.m. Registration/Check-in  
5:00 p.m. First-Timers' Orientation  
6:00 p.m. Banquet and Program  
7:30 p.m. District YFA Meetings  
8:30 p.m. YFA Reception/Entertainment  
Featuring Manitz Brothers Band

**Saturday, December 6**

7:00 a.m. Registration/Check-in  
8:00 a.m. Discussion Meet Contestant Orientation  
9:30 a.m. Discussion Meet Quarter Finals  
10:30 a.m. YFA Buffet Brunch and Program  
12:30 p.m. Excellence in Ag Presentations and Achievement Award Interviews  
Discussion Meet Semi-Finals  
1:30 p.m. Trade Show opens  
2:00 p.m. Breakfast Learning Sessions  
2:40 p.m. Reception—Trade Show  
6:00 p.m. Farm Bureau Extravaganza!  
8:30 p.m. Free Time

**Sunday, December 7**

7:30 a.m. Morning Devotional  
8:30 a.m. Collegiate Discussion Meet Final  
9:30 a.m. YFA Discussion Meet Final  
10:30 a.m. Buffet Brunch and Program  
• Announcement of YFA Contest winners  
12:00 p.m. YFA Conference Ends

Like us on Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/WisconsinYFA](http://www.facebook.com/WisconsinYFA)

### A special offer from Rural Mutual Insurance Company

If you've never attended this event before, Rural Mutual wants to sponsor you and your family. Just complete the sponsorship application on the back of this form and send it to the address at the bottom of the page. You may apply as an individual or as a couple, but don't delay—only 50 double-occupancy rooms are available, and the deadline to apply is August 15!

If you are a Farm Bureau member age 18-35 and are selected for sponsorship, Rural Mutual will pay the conference registration fee for you and your spouse/guest and two nights lodging at the Kalahari Resort. Registration fee includes registrant meals, workshop sessions and entertainment. If selected, you will be notified by September 12, and additional details regarding the conference will be mailed to you with a conference registration form that you will be required to complete.

### Refer a Friend - Quality for Cash!

Any YFA member who refers another who is accepted (or sponsorship and attends the event will qualify for a \$100 cash award. (Limit: One award per family - you must be present at Friday night's banquet to qualify.) See referral form on reverse side.





# COUNTYnews

BUFFALO COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

## Polaris Offers New Farm Bureau Member Benefit

Farm Bureau members will receive a manufacturer's incentive discount of \$200-\$300 depending on the vehicle acquired. Members should negotiate their best deal with their preferred Polaris dealer and then add the manufacturer's incentive discount to the bottom line. There is no limit to the number of incentive discounts that a Farm Bureau member may use so long as it's no more than one per unit acquired and the acquisition(s) is/are made for their personal and/or business use.

The incentive discount(s) is/are shown on invoice as a subtraction from the best-negotiated price of the acquired unit(s).

- Full Size Utility & Sport Vehicles (UTV) – \$300 per unit
- Full Size All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) – \$200 per unit
- GEM Electric Vehicles – \$300 per unit

To find out more visit [wfbf.com/member-benefits](http://wfbf.com/member-benefits).



# POLARIS®

## A Woman Rooted in Agriculture

Meet Darby Sampson  
of Jackson County.

Darby Sampson is a young wife and mother who is already an integral part of the agricultural community in Jackson County. Along with her husband, Clint, and their two sons (ages two and four), they farm in Melrose. Gardening and a bit of sewing are her hobbies.

Darby has been the Ag in the Classroom Coordinator for three years and a member of Jackson County Farm Bureau for seven years. She is also active in the Young Farmer and Agriculturist program. Outside of Farm Bureau, Clint and Darby work with the Jackson County Fair Livestock Project and are involved in the open class beef show at the Wisconsin State Fair.

**What makes you excited about the future of women in agriculture?**  
Darby believes that the role of women in agriculture is being more accepted. She sees women as truly full partners in family farms.

**What do you do for fun when you're not working?**  
Darby says that their love of farming and gardening carries over to their free time. When they have time to travel, it's usually for an auction or a farm show.



## YFA Members Mark your Calendars!

There are great opportunities for YFA members in Buffalo County to participate in district and state events. Remember that these activities are available to voting members ages 18-35.

**Discussion Meet:** The District 4 Discussion Meet has been set for **Wednesday, August 20** at the Community Center (old grade school) in Taylor. The Discussion Meet starts at 7 p.m. with dinner immediately following to make way for the policy development afterwards. The Discussion Meet is an activity designed to build crucial skills in young, active farmers and agriculturists. By participating, members build basic discussion skills, develop a keen understanding of important agricultural issues and explore how groups can pool knowledge to reach consensus and solve problems. This year's topic is: **How can young farmers and ranchers work to encourage membership growth and member engagement for the county, state and national Farm Bureau organizations?**

## Welcome New Members

**Brent Albrecht, Matt Anderson, David Black, Joe Bork, Jacob Bork, Gary Brenner, Michael Bushman, Mark Chillson, Robert Dingfelten, Tom Dorn, John Egner, Sarah Gierok, Adam Gunther, Dale Heck, Terry Helwig, Marie Hillig, Bragger John, Milton Julson, Glenn Larson, Max Nelson, Amanda Nogle, Justin Odegard, Neil Pranschinske, Larry Pronschinshe, Rudy Pronschinske, Russ Pronschonshe, Sid Rotering, Andrew Rotering, Robert Sendelbach, Joe Sendelbach, Phyllis Theisen, Jesse Weiss, Katie Wheling and R Grain Acres**

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## Rural Mutual Insurance Company Celebrates 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Rural Mutual Insurance Company is proud to celebrate providing 80 years of insurance services to farms, families, businesses and industries across the state of Wisconsin.

The Madison-based insurance company was founded in 1934 under the sponsorship of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation to provide personal auto insurance to the farm community at affordable rates. This affiliation has served Rural Mutual well in the past and Rural Mutual continues to build on this niche focus as evidenced by its leading farm market share during 2013.

“With over 80 years of service, our mission and vision has not strayed far from the original purpose of the organization,” said Peter Pelizza, CEO of Rural Mutual. “Holding the position as a leading farm insurance provider in the state of Wisconsin has been our mainstay, however expanding our footprint in the state to include a significant market share of personal as well as commercial protection is something we are proud of and will continue to cultivate.”

For the fifth consecutive year Rural Mutual was selected as a “Ward’s 50<sup>th</sup> Top Performer” by the Ward Group. This recognition means that Rural Mutual is considered one of the top 50 property and casualty companies in the nation based on its superior financial performance over the last five years. Rural Mutual is also recognized by AM Best with an “A” Excel-

lent rating with a stable outlook. This rating is assigned to companies that have an excellent ability to meet their ongoing insurance obligations.

Rural Mutual takes great pride in the state and will continue to ensure that premiums paid here, stay here to keep Wisconsin strong.

To learn more about Rural Mutual Insurance Company, please visit [www.ruralins.com](http://www.ruralins.com).

To learn more about the Ward Group, please visit [www.wardinc.com](http://www.wardinc.com).

## Water Conservation in the Field By Amber Radatz, Discovery Farms, Trempealeau County Farm Bureau member



Often when we hear about conservation, it relates to soil. Don’t get me wrong. Soil conservation is still really important. But, I would suggest that equal effort and attention should be given to water conservation in the field, as the two work hand-in-hand. Discovery Farms research has proved time and time again that reducing runoff lowers nutrient and sedi-

ment loss. Take a look at your farming system - do you have a network of conservation practices in place that increase water infiltration? Harvesting precipitation water protects soil, water, productivity and profits. Usually the most limiting factor in any field and the cause of most yield loss is water availability.

Conservation practices are usually designed for a 25-year event, which means approximately 5.3 inches of rain in a 24 hour time period. We keep hearing that there will be an increase in more intense storms. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration projects that Wisconsin will see nearly a 30% decrease in annual snowfall on average, and about a 20% increase in rainfall events of more than two inches in 24 hours. What does that mean for runoff, nutrient and sediment loss? How can we prepare our farming systems for these events?

A table with the event sizes and recurrence intervals is to the right. When we get a heavy rainstorm, there is always plenty of speculation about whether it was a ‘big’ storm or a storm that ‘you just can’t plan for’. While there can be intense periods during a storm, usually the cumulative effect is within the realm that we’ve been planning for with our conservation designs.

At five Discovery Farms sites around Wisconsin, an average of 10% of the rainfall left the fields as surface runoff. The median storm that produced runoff from these monitoring sites was between 0.6 and 1.0 inches, depending on soil type. In this set of farms from

years 2003-2009, there was a total of one 100-year storm, two 25-year storms, and four 10-year storms that caused runoff. There were 246 total events that caused runoff, and 2,400 rainfall events total. Of the events that caused runoff, 41% of them were greater than a one-year return period.

What elements of your system are helping keep rain and snow where it falls? Practices that increase water infiltration and protect the soil from erosion losses also increase productivity and profitability. I’m talking about minimum tillage, leaving crop residue on the surface, using manure as a fertilizer and soil amendment, contour farming, strip cropping and structural practices like waterways, terraces and check dams.

Enhancing soil quality. Improving soil quality means increasing or maintaining organic matter, maintaining a high level of residue cover, preventing soil compaction and increasing infiltration through enhanced soil structure and water holding capacity. What that really means is by treating your soil well, it will return the favor by holding onto water and making it available for your crops when they need it the most.

The best way to improve soil quality is to add organic matter back to the soil in the form of crop residue and/or manure, and to reduce tillage as much as possible. These steps protect the soil surface from rainfall or snowmelt events, maintain soil structure and reduce the threat of erosion.

Structural practices. Even if you are using minimal tillage,

residue cover and preventing compaction, it’s really critical to maintain waterways in the concentrated flow areas. Waterways, terraces and check dams are placed in critical areas of the field to slow water and protect the soil. By themselves, these practices have far less of an impact than if used as part of a network of practices to slow water down and increase infiltration.

These practices need inspection and maintenance on a routine schedule so that they remain at maximum performance. While walking fields earlier this month, we saw the effects of an intense winter season with several melts, ice events and rain on frozen ground. Repairs to small areas within waterways will be necessary to keep up the filtering ability in these concentrated flow areas. Every few years, check dams may need to be maintained, repaired or cleaned out.



Minimal tillage. No till or minimum tillage may not be a solution for every farm or field. However, you should evaluate whether some of the new technology in tillage tools can work in your system. After each tillage pass, organic matter is decomposed, and soil structure is broken up. By leaving crop residue on the soil surface instead of incorporating it, soil moisture levels are increased. Every spring tillage pass can cause the loss of about a quarter of an inch of water that would have been available to the growing crop.

Some soil types stay too cool or wet in the spring to allow for timely planting. In those areas, consider tillage tools that concentrate disturbance to the area around the seed, instead of the whole field. Some of the new equipment allows us to get the seedbed warmed up and dried out while still leaving some residue on the surface.

It’s more important than ever to get practices in place and working to increase infiltration. It’s predicted (and recent records show) that we will see more spring precipitation and less summer precipitation. The last few years, storms have been less frequent and more intense. We need to think about managing our crop water supply throughout the year so we can increase the chance for a successful growing season.

A network of conservation practices on a farm will work together to slow water down and increase the amount available to your growing crop. You could think of it as the difference between carrying around a multi-tool instead of just a screwdriver. You may not need the extra features like the pliers, knife or file for every job, but just carrying around a screwdriver will really only allow you to complete a portion of the jobs you’d like to get done.

Recurrence interval	Inches of rain in 1 hour	Inches of rain in 24 hours
1 year	1.21	2.53
5 years	1.84	3.64
10 years	2.18	4.3
25 years	2.68	5.32
50 years	3.08	6.19
100 years	3.49	7.13
200 years	3.93	8.16
500 years	4.53	9.64
1,000 years	5.00	10.80

## There are Benefits to Your Farm Bureau Membership:

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- 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](http://wfbf.com/benefits-membership).

## Enough is Too Much!



It's a saying that my beloved father-in-law would use.

In agriculture, life can be frustrating. We see messages everywhere that say farmers and agriculturists aren't doing *enough* to be good stewards of the land, that we don't care *enough* to maintain healthy and well-cared for animals; and that we don't give a damn about our neighbors, community and our own family.

Well, **enough is too much!** It's time that we stand up, that we speak up; and provide the full context of what is really happening on our farms.

Sometimes standing up and combating the misinformation, half-truths or blatant lies is intimidating. It is so important though that agriculturists do get out of their comfort zones and join in the conversation that others are having.

There are many examples of how people are tweaking facts, or not telling (as Paul Harvey would say) **the rest of the story...**

First off, a new development in human sewage treatment is being touted as a great advancement in science. This 'new' development is creating a phosphorus product that will bond to soil particles, benefiting farmers who can use it fertilizer. This sounds great, but here is the **rest of the story...**

Farmers in the Madison area (where this product is being promoted) are being asked to transport their manure outside of their local watershed and run it through digesters to **reduce** the amount of phosphorus they are putting on their fields. Understand the "concept" here? Manure (which contains phosphorus) = BAD. "New development of human waste" (which also contains phosphorus) = GREAT!

It is common knowledge that most phosphorus bonds to soil particles so this modified human poop is nothing out of the ordinary. Only a ploy to get urban sewage on farm fields while vilifying the natural fertilizers that farmers currently use.

**"It's time that we stand up, that we speak up; and provide the full context of what is really happening on our farms."**

Secondly, not that I want to pick a fight (though others will disagree), but have you ever heard that grass-fed beef is better for the environment than corn-fed beef? I have. I hear it often, though I can't say I agree with it.

I'm not saying grass-fed beef is bad, but the previous statement sure gives the impression that corn-fed beef is far less environmental friendly. The image of cattle chewing on grass may seem like the "greener" option, here is the **rest of the story...**

According to Dr. Jude Capper (adjunct professor at Washington State University and livestock sustainability consultant) the U.S. meat industry produces about 26.1 billion pounds of meat. The average carcass weight for a corn-fed animal is 714 pounds and on average it takes 464 days to harvest. Grass-fed carcasses average 615 pounds and on average take 679 days to reach harvest weight.

So according to Dr. Capper's research, because grass-fed animals are lighter and take longer to reach harvest weight; it would actually take 35.8 million more cattle to produce the same amount of meat. This would require more:

- LAND: 131 million more acres (that's 75 percent of the land area of Texas).
- WATER: 468 billion gallons (the amount used by 53.1 million U.S. households).
- CARBON DIOXIDE: 134.5 million (like adding 26.6 million cars to the roads).

Again, I'm not degrading grass-fed beef, but there are other facts to consider when determining if something is better or worse than something else.

Former State Representative Barbara "Bobby" Gronemus used to have a unique way of pointing out things that were total crap to her legislative colleagues. A true friend of agriculture, she had no problem sticking up for what she believed was best for farmers. If she thought someone was pushing something bad for farmers, she would grab a special 'tool' from her desk – a shellacked dried cow pie. I wish I had it now because **enough is too much and this crap has to stop!**

Have a safe summer and please give me a call, jot an email or hit me up on Facebook with any questions, concerns or comments you may have.

**Joe Bragger**

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braggfam@trivest.net

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(Back L to R) Merlin Sutter, Chris Ellis (vice president), Doug Olson, Dustin Ellis (YFA chair), Sharon Fernholz, LeeRoy Fernholz, Pat Danzinger, Julie Lindstrom, Charlie Rippley (secretary/treasurer), (front L to R) Joe Bragger (president), Loren Wolfe and Joe Wantoch.

## President's Report

I would like to thank all of the volunteers who worked at the milkshake stand over the Arcadia Broiler Dairy Days. We had a record number of malts sold, which will allow us to continue to promote agriculture in Buffalo County. Not only did we have a great time making shakes, we got to interact with friends and neighbors.

Anyone interested in helping out at the Buffalo County Fair malt stand **July 31-August 3** please do not hesitate to contact any of the board of directors who will be happy to set you up.



Thank you all for you do.

**Joe Bragger**

Buffalo County Farm Bureau President