

Polk County Farm Bureau

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Rural Mutual Agents in Polk County:

Carl Thomfohrda (715) 485-3010

Ken Truax - District Manager

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

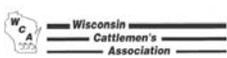
Mark Your Calendars for Ag Day at the Capitol

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend
AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL
 March 11, 2015
 Monona Terrace Convention Center • Madison, WI

Schedule of Events:	Early Registration Deadline: March 5
11:00 a.m. Registration	Cost: \$25 per person by registration deadline.
11:30 a.m. Opening Program	\$30 after deadline and at the door.
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, March 11, in Madison. A bus from Northwest Wisconsin has been organized and will be making various stops including Baldwin, Menomonie, Eau Claire, Osseo, Hixton and Tomah.

The cost of the bus trip is \$30.

Note: The registration fee for the Ag Day at the Capitol program is separate.

To reserve your seat, contact **Katie Matison** at 715.418.0975. Please indicate the county you are from and which location you would like to be picked up at.

Registrations are limited so reserve your seat today!

Thank you to Frontier Ag and Turf and AgStar for their support of the bus and refreshments!



COUNTYnews

POLK COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Highlights from the WFBF Annual Meeting

More than 1,100 farmers and agriculturists attended the WFBF Annual Meeting and about 475 Young Farmer and Agriculturist members attended the YFA Conference. Some of the best and brightest competed in a variety of contests and awards, and member delegates set policy directing our organization. Attendees were challenged by several excellent



(L to R) Ethan Giebel (Juneau County), Jamie Propson (Manitowoc County), Peter Kimball (Pierce County) and Adam Wehling (Buffalo County) competed in the Final Four of the YFA Discussion Meet.

ing an AGvocate for agriculture, and Chad Hymas, motivational speaker, captivated the audience when he shared “Who needs Legs, when you have Wings.” The Farm Bureau Extravaganza took place on Saturday night with comedian Roger Radley.



More than 40 YFA members from District 9 attended the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference.

Of the 1,100 members, more than 100 members were from District 9 including members from the Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter at UW-River Falls. Congratulations to everyone who was recognized throughout the weekend! Here is a list of the District 9 highlights:

- WFBF District 9 Director Jim Holte was re-elected WFBF President
- YFA Discussion Meet participants: Peter Kimball (Pierce County), Kirsten Konder (St. Croix County) and Julie Wadzinski (Barron County)
- YFA Discussion Meet Final Four - Peter Kimball (Pierce County)
- Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet Finals: Kaylin Spaeth (St. Croix County)
- WFBF Top 10 Membership Workers – Karyn Schauf (Barron County) signed 11 and Jim Meng (Rusk) signed 15!
- WFBF Women’s Committee: Mary Prestrud retired from the WFBF Women’s Committee. Amber Cordes of Barron County has been appointed to take her place
- Dan Ripplinger (Barron County) and Lori Gardow (Chippewa County) graduated from the leadership Institute Class VIII.



Polk County members Jim and Patty Melin and Jolene and Rick Wester posed for a photo with Santa at the 2014 WFBF Annual Meeting.



This year marked Dunn County Board Member Carl Casper’s 50th consecutive Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting!

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Welcome New Members



(L to R) Mary Prestrud and Geri Wolfe (Dunn County), Brenda Sikorski (Chippewa County), Greg Zwald (St. Croix County), Dean Bergsens (Pierce County) and Jim Meng (Rusk County) were recognized as part of the Producer Club for signing five or more new members.



Polk County Farm Bureau members who attended this year’s WFBF Annual Meeting were (L to R) Rick Wester, Jolene Wester, Jim Melin, Chris Wood and Dale Wood. (Missing from photo is Patty Melin.)

Price Loss Coverage or Agricultural Risk Coverage?

Submitted by Aaron Moore, Polk County FSA Executive Director

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill) made some big changes regarding commodity programs. The former Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) and Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) programs have been eliminated. Instead, producers must elect one of two commodity programs: Price Loss Coverage (PLC) or Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC). This is a one-time decision for crop years 2014-2018. In addition, the Farm Bill provided an opportunity for landowners to reallocate base acres and update payment yields.

Key decisions for crop producers and landowners:

• **Should updates be made to yields?** Landowners have a rare opportunity to update counter-cyclical yields on a farm to 90 percent of their 2008 to 2012 simple average. In many cases, yields are able to be increased to more accurately reflect actual yields. Producers are able to certify yields. In the event no data is available, county "plug" yields are available. The counter-cyclical yields play an important role in the payment calculations. The deadline to update yields is February 27.

• **Should base acres be reallocated?** Landowners on a farm have a one-time opportunity to reallocate their current base

acres to reflect crops planted between 2009 and 2012. Landowners may wish to retain the current base acres on a farm. The total base acres on a farm may not be increased. The deadline to reallocate yields is February 27.

• **PLC or ARC?** PLC is a price protection program. This program is similar to the counter-cycle payment program. Payments are triggered when National average market prices fall below established reference prices for the marketing year. Payments are based on 85 percent of the base acres and counter-cyclical yields on a farm. Participants in PLC have the option to participate in the federal crop insurance program called the Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO).

• **ARC is a "shallow loss" crop revenue coverage program that provides payments when the crop revenue is less than the guarantee.** The guarantee is the Olympic five-year National Marketing Year Average price. Payments may not exceed 10 percent of the guarantee price between program years.

• **Producers can choose either ARC-County Coverage**

(ARC-CO) or ARC-Individual Coverage (ARC-IC). ARC-CO is based on county data while ARC-IC is based on farm specific data.

• **All producers on a farm must agree on the program election.** The election is a one-time decision that is made through the life of the Farm Bill. Producers will have the option to annually enroll into the program selected. The deadline to make an election is March 31.

• **Enrollment and contracts for the 2014 and 2015 crop years will occur later this spring and continue through the summer.**

In summary, there are important decisions that landowners and producers must take into consideration during the next few months. Landowners and producers should take advantage of information meetings, online tools and make an appointment with the FSA office to discuss options.

More information and decision making tools are available at www.fsa.usda.gov or by contacting the Polk County FSA office at 715.485.3138.

Ag in the Classroom Coordinator Needed

Are you interested in advocating for agriculture? Do you enjoy connecting and networking with others? Polk County Farm Bureau is looking for a new Ag in the Classroom coordinator. Ag in the Classroom provides teachers and K-12 students with an understanding of how their food is produced. The program seeks to work within existing curriculum to provide basic information on our nation's largest industry: agriculture.



If you would like to be a part of educating others about agriculture, please contact Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975, kmattison@wfbf.com.

Ag in the Classroom Program Seeking Essay Contest Entries

"Why are bees important to Wisconsin agriculture?" is the topic of the essay contest from the Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program. Our 2015 Book of the Year is *The Beeman* by Laurie Krebs and Valeria Cis. The essay contest is open to fourth and fifth grade students in public, private and home school programs. Essay submissions must be between 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 Polk County's essay contest coordinator, Lisa Thomforda at 715.485.3010 or District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975, kmattison@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.

My American Farm Has a New Look

My American Farm, the online game that lets kids have fun while learning about agriculture has received a facelift!

The website, myamericanfarm.org, lets you explore lesson plans, activities and videos to go along with the games as well as how you can include a My American Farm kiosk at your next event.

Are you thinking about including a kiosk at your next event? They are now available to checkout through Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom.

For more information, contact Ag in the Classroom Coordinator Wendy Kannel at 608.828.5719, wkannel@wfbf.com or District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975, kmattison@wfbf.com.

UW-River Falls Collegiate Farm Bureau Update

By Jennifer Kuffel, UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau President

The Collegiate Farm Bureau Chapter at UW-River Falls is off to another great start! With nearly 70 people attending the first meeting of the school year, we have been able to plan and implement a variety of activities.

During September, we assisted White Pine Berry Farm with their Family Fun Day. Members helped with pumpkin painting, a petting zoo and a variety of other activities held that day. During the evening, our chapter hosted a barn dance and cookout for all students from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES).

This was followed by our Collegiate Discussion Meet in which we had four contestants. Kaylin Spaeth and Aaron Zimmerman represented our chapter at the state meet that was held in conjunction with the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference. UW-River Falls was well represented during the state event as 27 members participated in workshops, listened to speakers and had a booth at the trade show. A big thank you goes to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation and Rural Mutual Insurance Company which provided support for our members to attend this event.

Second semester will commence on January 26 and our biggest event of the year, Ag Day on Campus, will take place on Tuesday, April 21. Members have been working diligently planning the day's events, gathering donations and promoting on campus. Our theme this year will be Slow Moving agVenture (SMV) with hopes of educating the campus and community on farm safety. We already have one of the Peterson Brothers in line to speak at our Ag Day on Campus event. It is a great opportunity for us to tell our agricultural stories and be a part of the conversation. Throughout second semester we also are planning a few other activities including a showing of the movie Farmland, snow tubing and a picnic.



The Collegiate Farm Bureau at UW-River Falls had 27 members attend the YFA Conference. Members listened to keynote speakers, participated in a variety of workshops and networked with other Farm Bureau members.

Thank you to all Farm Bureau members for your support of Collegiate Farm Bureau! We look forward to continued success!

District Coordinator's Message



Happy New Year Farm Bureau members!

This is the first newsletter of 2015 and I hope that it finds you well. District 9 has many accomplishments to be proud of this past year. I would like to thank all of those who devoted their time and talents to creating a positive impact in their county Farm Bureau.

I have only been employed with WFBF since last May and I have been extremely impressed with all that you have done in the short time that I have been here. I look forward to many years of working alongside you all. It is your dedication to agriculture and this organization that makes you

shine. Agriculture is my passion and it is very evident that it is yours as well. Communities are better places across our area because of your efforts in activities such as dairy breakfasts, 4-H and FFA support, county fairs, Women's programs and YFA events.

Thank you for your participation this past year and for making my first year a very memorable one. This new year brings challenges but with those challenges come opportunities to improve and exceed everyone's expectations. I look forward to working with you throughout the year as we continue to work together to promote and improve the agriculture community in Wisconsin. Please feel free to contact me with comments, questions or concerns at 715.418.0975 or kmattison@wfbf.com.

Katie Mattison
District 9 Coordinator

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
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

Cordes Named District Women's Committee Representative

Amber has been a Farm Bureau member since 2005 and became a member after being asked to help at the county fair food stand by Karyn Schauf.

At the time, Amber wanted to get more involved in the community, which led to her next role as a member of the Executive Committee for the Barron County Farm Technology Days. Amber knows that it is important to be a part of the agriculture industry and the reason is simple, farmers feed the world and now that makes her want to be a voice that helps educate the public about where their food comes from.

"It is frightening to see how many people actually don't know where their food comes from," Amber said.

Amber and her husband, Will, own a 52-cow registered Holstein dairy near Comstock.

The Cordes' have two children, Nathan and Kathryn.



District 9 Fall Women's Summit Held

Women from across District 9 joined for the Fall Women's Summit on October 8 for a day of touring, tasting and fun!

Attendees to the event enjoyed lunch and a tour of fellow Farm Bureau members Greg and Irma Zwald's farm, White Pine Berry Farm. After that the group moved on to 65 Vines to hear from owner Scott Andrzejczak, to taste wine and learn about the wine making process.

To wrap up the day, the group visited the UW-River Falls Dairy Plant to watch ice cream being made. The group was able to enjoy fresh butter brickle ice cream as it came out of the mixer.

Thank you to Mary Prestrud, District 9 Women's Representative, for putting together a great event!



Women from Barron, Dunn, Polk, Pierce and St. Croix Counties attended the Fall Women's Summit. We had visitors from Hancock, Iowa, and Hastings, Minnesota!

Farm Succession and Estate Planning Seminar Held

Carl Thomfohrda sponsored a Farm Succession and Estate Planning seminar at the Lodge at Crooked Lake in Siren on December 30. Presenters were Rick Bollenbeck, an attorney who specializes in estate planning, and Jared Nelson, a Senior Regional Financial Consultant with Farm Bureau Life Insurance.



Rick and Jared discussed viable solutions to business and estate succession issues that many Wisconsin families face. The presentation also explored how to be fair to children in transferring the business to heirs, while also providing a fair inheritance to non-active children; how to surmount common estate-tax traps; making sure attendees and their spouses are prepared for retirement and the potential need for long-term care; and how to assemble and work with a team of professional advisors.

For more information on Farm Succession and Estate Planning, contact Carl Thomfohrda at 715.485.3010, cthomfohrda@ruralins.com.

Register NOW for Ag Women's Summit

Now is the time to make plans to attend the 2015 Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit. Presented by Badgerland Financial, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and University of Wisconsin-Extension, the forum will take place March 13-14 at the Madison Marriott West. The early registration deadline (to receive \$25 off) is February 13.

To register go to www.wiagwomenssummit.com. Questions may be directed to Deb Raemisch at 608.828.5712.

Scholarship Available to a Graduating Senior

The Polk County Farm Bureau will be granting a scholarship to a graduating senior. This scholarship will be based on the student's past school and community activities, plans for future education and an essay.

Applications can be obtained through your School Guidance Counselors or Ag Instructors or by contacting Lisa Thomfohrda at 715.485.3010. **Application deadline is April 1.**



Welcome New Members!

James Andreas, Andrew Christenson*, Ed Cycenas, Mark Gilbertson, Daniel Gullickson*, Jeff Hanson, Timothy Hesla*, Troy Hicks*, Donald Hill, John Holst*, Martin Host*, Daniel Johnson, Merle Larson*, Harold Larson, Larry Larson, Cody Marek*, Larry Olson*, Richard Quinton, Richard Ward.

*Denotes voting membership

Welcome to Farm Bureau

New YFA Chair Needed

Are you between the ages of 18 and 35 and looking to get more involved in Polk County Farm Bureau? Polk County is looking for a new YFA chair. The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmer and Agriculturist (YFA) program is for members between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. The YFA program offers opportunities for leadership and skills development, along with the chance for YFA members to meet and network with their peers. Many of the YFA members who have participated in the program have gone on to become active county, state and national Farm Bureau leaders, as well as respected leaders and partners in their communities.

If you are interested, please contact Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975, kmattison@wfbf.com.