

Richland County Farm Bureau

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Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Fall Women's Summit Held



We had great weather and a great turn out for the District 3 Fall Women's Workshop, Tractors and Healthy Eating. We began by learning some tips and tricks of safety on the farm. For example, always wear bright colors if you can so that you can be seen. It is easy to miss someone in a black or brown jacket in the fall, but a red one might help you stand out more. After our classroom portion, we went outside and took turns driving a tractor and a skidsteer. Many participants had a great time driving for the first time and gaining confidence in their abilities.

After lunch, we shared some quick go-to recipes and talked about getting good food on a busy schedule. We shared ideas, tips, tricks and each person shared two healthy, man-friendly recipes which were made into a booklet for attendees.

A special thank you to everyone at Ocooch Dairy in Hillsboro for hosting us.

Ag Discovery Tent Brings the Facts to the Richland County Fair

Do brown cows really give chocolate milk? Which of these chickens lay eggs? Does sweetener for soda really come from corn? These are just a few questions inquisitive minds posed to the ag experts at the Ag Discovery Tent at the Richland County Fair, September 4-7.

Three years ago Marty and Melissa Sprecher received a grant to do a community project through 4-H. They chose to start an Ag Discovery Tent. The tent educates the public on where their food comes from. "Many children today are two or more generations removed from agriculture. They simply don't know how the food that they eat is produced or how it arrives at the grocery store. We want to tell the agriculture story to these kids and their families so they know the truth of agriculture," Melissa Sprecher said.

When families arrive at the tent they first get to be a "Farmer for a Day", gathering eggs, picking apples and digging potatoes. Then they can play a commodity game learning what it really takes to raise a pig from start to finish. The tent also includes a map of Wisconsin coun-



ties telling of the variety of agriculture products we produce here in the state. As the kids wander around the tent, they will find a variety of farm animals they can interact with including baby calves, ponies, sheep, goats, bunnies, ducks and many more. There is also a corn pool to play in and baby chicks and quail to look at. New this year was baby chicks hatching on Saturday and Sunday.



Sprecher have also grown a variety of crops in pots to show people what the common ag plants look like as well as how many everyday products come from that plant. As participants leave the tent they receive a bag of information on agriculture and 4-H.

This tent would not be possible without all the countless volunteers who help out. Volunteers range from local farmers, FFA members, 4-H members and Farm Bureau volunteers. Don't miss your chance to experience the Ag Discovery Tent during the Richland County Fair in 2015. If you'd like to volunteer to help staff the tent, please contact Melissa Sprecher at 608.604.5211 or Gretchen Kamps at 866.355.7343.



COUNTYnews

RICHLAND COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Local Teacher Receives Ag in the Classroom Mini-Grant



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation, through the Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program, has awarded 18 Teacher Mini-Grants to Wisconsin teachers to use in agricultural literacy lessons and activities. The grants provide opportunities for teachers to obtain funding that may not be available through their local school budgets.

Mary Cooper of St. Mary's School, Richland Center was awarded \$100 for "From Seeds to Salads" project. Fifth grade students will discuss conditions suitable for the growth of plants; identify major parts of the plant and plants' needs and plant seeds while observing, measuring and recording plant growth.

"We are extremely excited about receiving the mini-grant and will be using these funds to help us prepare our school garden vegetables for next spring," said Mary Cooper, a fifth grade teacher. She also said that the money will be used to purchase some heat mats and grow lights for new seedlings that will be transplanted into our school garden. Some plants that will be started in early January are: tomatoes, broccoli and peppers along with some heirloom seedlings. St. Mary's School is a 3K-eighth grade school and all of the work is done by the students and guided by the entire teaching staff at the school. The produce raised in the garden is for the lunch program.

Be sure to check out future newsletters for an update!

District 3 Women's Committee Update



As winter settles in and the holidays approach, it is an exciting time for Farm Bureau. So much networking will be done at the WFBF Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Dells in December and the American Farm Bureau Annual Convention in San Diego in January. I attended my first AFBF Annual Convention last year and was a delegate for my region. It is amazing to be one of the people chosen to make the decisions of a grassroots organization. This past year I had the privilege of serving as the state Women's Committee Chair. I learned many new ideas from other committees around the U.S. and have tried to implement some of them here. I am excited for more new things to come.

I would like to thank Ocooch Dairy in Vernon County for hosting the District 3 Fall Workshop. Next year Iowa County will host. I look forward to working with them to come up with another fun fall workshop.

This is the fifth year of the Wisconsin Ag Women's Summit. It will be held in Madison at the Marriott Hotel. Please check out our Facebook page and the Farm Bureau website for more information. I am excited for the entertainment this year, Piano Fondue is coming back! The workshops are going to be amazing so grab a friend and join in the fun!

Nicole Adrian

District 3 Women's Committee Representative and Committee Chair

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5th Tuesday Potluck
12-2 p.m.
SAVE the DATE

Tuesday, December 30
Richland Community Building

1050 N. Orange Street in Richland Center

Bring a dish to pass, sandwiches will be provided.
We'll be decorating cookies and making a winter craft.
Please RSVP (call or text) to Derek or Charisse Orth at 608.778.8101 or Gretchen Kamps at 608.751.3812.

Did You Know?

Did you know that Farm Bureau members can save up to \$300 on select Polaris ATVs, UTVs and GEM electric vehicles? Did you also know that Vetesnik Power Sports of Richland Center can help you use this discount? If you are thinking of buying



a new Polaris vehicle soon, be sure to tell them you are a Farm Bureau member. All you need is your Farm Bureau membership number which can be found on your membership renewal or your Rural Mutual Insurance Company Policy Declarations page near the top, or you can call Wisconsin Farm Bureau to request your number 800-261-FARM.

Once you have your membership number, please visit www.fbadvance.com/Deals/Polaris to print off your certificate. Be sure to visit the Vetesnik Power Sports' website to see if they have something that might make your jobs a little easier this winter! www.vetesnik.com.

President's Message



As the temperature stays below freezing all day and night, you don't need me to tell you that another growing season has come to an end. Evidence is all around. As we wrap up the last of the harvest and hunker down for what is to come, we evaluate what we have accomplished this year and start to think ahead to next year.

Your Richland County Farm Bureau board is doing likewise. We have had some highlights and have experienced some disappointments. The highlights include the Assembly Can-

didate Forum in which all of the candidates participated and also our participation in our County Fair and Dairy Breakfast.

Disappointments include our inability to get more farmers as members and active on the county board. The Richland County Farm Bureau tries its best to represent the views and interests of rural county residents and urgently seeks the input of an ever greater number of our neighbors.

As we plan for next year, the November elections should provide some assurance that the state lawmakers and agencies will continue a reasonable agenda and a predictable amount of stability.

That said, we must still be vigilant and stay involved. With no major elections this coming year our focus will change to more involvement at the local level with more focus on supporting youth activities such as safety, 4-H and FFA. Also we would like to see development of more Young Farmer and Agriculturist (YFA) activities and involvement. This is our best hope for future leadership here in Richland County. Our county has had an outstanding record of YFA contest winners going on to win at the state level and do well at nationals. This is an open invitation to all YFA members to become involved!

Dick Hauser
Richland County Farm Bureau President

Making a Sandwich and a Newsletter

At my house, we've been working in the fields for the past few months and with the time in the field and all hands on deck to make harvest swift, meals quickly turn into sandwiches, chips and cookies in a cooler on the back of the truck that you stop and grab on your way by with an empty wagon. For many of us, myself included, it's easy to forget the work that went into making those sandwiches and that they didn't just magically appear. The same is true with your county newsletter. While you stop at the mailbox and get a chance to enjoy the end product, there are a few things that we work together to do in order to provide you with this newsletter you're reading right now.

Let's start with your county leaders. As county board members and committee chairs, these individuals discuss content that will go into a newsletter and then assign different people to take care of writing those articles. As the district coordinator, everyone sends all their information to me via email or U.S. mail and I compile each and every item into one big word document. Then, I create an email with the text, photos and captions and send it to the home office. Once it is received there, Lynn and Amy get to the hard part of layout, design and edits that have to take place to make everything fit into these four pages. After they create the first draft, it comes back to me and your county president for a final approval. This process takes about a week.

After the newsletter is approved, it is sent to the printer, and then from the printer to the post office where they are processed. The Wisconsin Farm Bureau creates 49 newsletters for counties around the state so you can imagine that we have lots of newsletters to create each week and so sometimes batching, printing and mailing might take a few extra days. Thus, it probably won't reach you for about 30 days after our initial submission of information.

Oftentimes we are asked why we don't have a weather segment, or even something giving specifics on crop reports, or an update on a current legislative issue. So, this month I'd like you to help me out by responding

to me when you actually get this newsletter. I'm always curious what parts of the county it gets to first and I also wonder if people actually read it. To make it interesting I'll give you a few details about today. As I type this, it is November 16. We had snow last night and into this morning, and the tank



heaters in all the waterers were turned on and the block heaters for the tractors were as well. We are fortunate to have all our calves on the ground and the corn surrounding my house is harvested. By the time you are reading this, it will likely be sometime in mid-December and hopefully a little bit warmer.

So, as you're reading this column, please know that there were several hands that went into making this newsletter, just like those sandwiches you find on the tailgate of the truck. Also know that I'd love to hear from you. Tell me what your favorite part of the newsletter is, suggest an article for a future issue or just call and give me an update on the harvest in your area. I promise, I'm nice, and I'd love to hear from you and I'd be glad to tell you how things are going at our farm in Lafayette County as well.

Wishing you a bright and sunny day, even if it is cold!

Gretchen Kamps
WFBF District 3 Coordinator
608.751.3812, gkamps@wfbf.com

Connecting with Southwest Tech's Agriculture Programs

Successful farmers understand the importance of being able to run their farms effectively in vital areas like crop/soil management, livestock nutrition/management, records/business analysis, credit/marketing/purchasing, farm business transfers, goal setting, and human and employee relations. The objective of the Farm Business and Production Management (FBPM) program at Southwest Tech is to help farm families reach their goals. Knowledge presented and skills demonstrated are provided through classroom settings, workshops and seminars, speakers of expertise, farm and business tours, and individual on-farm instruction. Southwest Tech allows farm businesses to tailor training to fit their needs.

Past and current participants have stated that the Farm Business and Production Management program has been a critical part of their farm management plans. One participant commented, "I feel this program has been a big part of our success on our farm. It helps keep us up-to-date on current topics and helps us benchmark how our business compares to others of comparable size in a wide area." Another participant stated, "Without these classes I wouldn't have taken production ag courses past my four-year degree. I love learning and using the material right away."

See for yourself, and contact an instructor today. All three instructors, Deb Ihm, JoAnn Peterson and Edmund Ruff, have an agriculture education background and farm with their families. Past and personal experiences have helped them connect in the classroom and on farms. For more than 45 years, the Farm Business and Production Management team has provided training to adult farmers in southwest Wisconsin. Classes are offered in the communities across the district.

Training courses for the 2014-2015 year include:

- *Financial Management (begins first week of January 2015)
- *Crop Management – Land Management/Conservation (begins first week of March 2015)
- Guidelines to Farm Succession (begins second week of January 2015)

*includes individual on-farm meeting time

Tuition assistance is available through outside grant funds for some courses as well as cost-sharing on soil sampling for nutrient management plans.

If training courses do not work into your schedule, consider contacting an instructor for individual instruction. Instructors have experience in the areas of financial analysis, business planning, loan application planning, feasibility study/cash flow, farm succession planning, computer software training or market plan development. Ultimately, the instructor's goal is to help you with your farm management profitability and goals.

The Farm Business and Production Management program is prepared to provide opportunities for you to develop and fine tune your skills with production agriculture. In addition, Southwest Tech offers an associate degree in agribusiness/science technology and technical diplomas in agriculture power and equipment technician and dairy herd management. Visit our website for more details: www.swtc.edu.

Southwest Tech
Here. Now.

Farm Business & Production Management
Helping Farm Families Reach Their Goals

REGION	REGION	REGION
Grant and Western Iowa Counties	Grant, Iowa, and Lafayette Counties	Crawford, Richland, and portions of Vernon and Sauk Counties
		
Deb Ihm 608.822.2741 dihm@swtc.edu	JoAnn Peterson 608.822.2742 jpeterson@swtc.edu	Edmund Ruff 563.880.9324 eruff@swtc.edu

District YFA Update



Harvest time is coming to a close! It's truly amazing to spend all summer watching a field grow and grow. And be gone in an instant filling bins, bags, silos and trucks to feed livestock and our nation for the

next year. First, we'd like to thank you for inviting us to your annual meeting this fall. It's been very interesting to see the differences between counties and great to meet new people and catch up with old friends.

We hosted our YFA Discussion Meet at the end of August and had a great panel of contestants who competed for the top three spots to advance to the state contest. Congrats to Becky Hasburg (Iowa County), Chad Gleason (Lafayette County) and Kory Stalsberg (Grant County) along with Achievement Award final four contestants Joe and Sarah Mumm.

As part of a new District 3 program, we've been hosting potlucks this year throughout the district. Three of the four "5th Tuesday Potlucks" have come and gone. They were well attended and fun was had by all. We are looking forward to the last one of the year, December 30 in Richland Center at the Community Building from 12-2 p.m. Join us for a fun afternoon of eating, games and cookie decorating. Please remember to bring a dish to pass!

We just finished up with the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference. Please be sure to check out our Facebook page, the next issue of *Rural Route* and our next newsletter for highlights and results of the YFA contests. If you have any suggestions for activities that you'd like to host or take part in, please feel free to contact us. We're always looking for new ideas!

Blessings!

Derek and Charisse Orth
District 3 YFA Representatives

District Director Update



This fall, as I've attended the county annual meetings, I've reported on the action items in the Strategic Plan the organization is going to be implementing over the next five years.

I've talked in past articles about the process we went through: the six listening sessions around the state, the board retreat where we began the process of prioritization

and finally developing the action plan. We are now in the stage of reporting out our strategy and the early stages of implementation.

I thought first it would be good to give you a sense of the questions we asked at the listening sessions.

- 1) What is the most important part of your Farm Bureau membership?
- 2) If the Farm Bureau wanted to improve or modernize any of its programs or services, what would you change?
- 3) If we had to cut back, what programs and services would you reduce and why?
- 4) How can the Farm Bureau ensure and enhance greater member involvement in our activities?
- 5) How do we manage the generational differences and challenges facing our organization?
- 6) And maybe most importantly, how does Farm Bureau fit into the future of farming?

As you can imagine we received some great responses, but mostly our members were thankful we took the time to ask their opinion.



So here is what we heard.

- We need to improve our communication structure: This recommendation is a great challenge for us as we try to navigate through a diverse membership that has a wide range of technological capacities, but also interest.
- We need to increase the use of technology. We are never going to get ahead of technology, but we need to embrace and adapt in a more efficient manner to address our members' needs.
- Continue to collaborate and coordinate with key partners across generations. We're a general-purpose organization, with a diverse membership. We need to reach out to other organizations, which have the same interest, to best serve our members' needs.

There is a lot more to the plan. Some changes you'll see while some will be building efficiencies that won't be so obvious. We started the year by asking how we, as an organization, position ourselves for the next century. It is our job now to implement what we heard to ensure our members find value in their membership for years to come.

Be Safe!

Richard Gorder
WFBF District 3 Director

WFBF Seeks Photos for Rural Route

Wisconsin Farm Bureau members live and work on some of the most beautiful pieces of land. In *Rural Route* WFBF would like to highlight those sights and special moments with your families and friends.

Please email your photos (high resolution jpgs, 4x6 inches at 300 dpi) to lsiekmann@wfbf.com.

(Due to the high volume of photos received, we are unable to include every photo.)



Richland County Farm Bureau Contacts:

President, Richard Hauser	608.585.4808
Vice President, Duane Olson	608.585.2411
Secretary, Germaine Hying	608.739.3367
Treasurer, Byron Hillberry	608.537.2352
Women's Chair, Germaine Hying	608.739.3367
Director, Karen Kloehn	608.647.2078

Richland County Farm Bureau	888.830.2576
District 3 Coordinator, Gretchen Kamps	866.355.7343
WFBF Board Director, Richard Gorder	608.987.3424
RMIC District Manager, Dave Larson	608.935.9500

County Ag in the Classroom Update



Do you know someone in fourth or fifth grade? If you do, please encourage them to check out the essay contest. Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom offers an annual essay contest for fourth and fifth grade students. Each year the topic has specific lesson plans, activities and other resources

that teachers and home school parents can use to teach about Wisconsin agriculture. The 2014-15 essay topic is: 'Why are bees important to Wisconsin Agriculture?' This year's contest will be sponsored by Frontier Servco FS, We Energies and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation.

For more information about this committee, please contact a county board member. We'd be glad to visit your classroom and share the book, *The Beeman* with your class and do an activity.

County Annual Meeting Highlights

The Richland County Farm Bureau held their annual meeting on October 8 at the White House in Richland Center. The meeting began with a meal followed by the business portion of the meeting. Members elected delegates to the WFBF Annual Meeting, elected directors for next year and discussed resolutions. Richland County had four resolutions that were brought to the voters. The county members discussed the resolutions and then voted on each of them. These were forwarded to the WFBF Policy Development Committee for consideration and were voted on during the WFBF Annual Meeting December 8.

Thank you to everyone who attended the annual meeting, we look forward to seeing more of you there next year.

Save the Date – Ag Day at the Capitol

The 2015 Ag Day at the Capitol will be held on **Wednesday, March 11** at the Monona Terrace in Madison.

Tentative schedule:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| • 11 a.m. | Registration |
| • 11:30 a.m. | Opening Program |
| • 11:45 a.m. | Lunch |
| • 12:45 p.m. | Legislative Briefing |
| • 3 p.m. | Capitol Visits |



Individual registration is \$25 in advance and \$30 after March 5. For more information contact Gretchen Kamps at gkamps@wfbf.com.