

# Trempealeau County Farm Bureau

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<b>Ken Truax - District Manager</b> (715) 514-4477		

## Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

### Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Women Attend Girls Day Out By Crystall Johnson

Recently, Monroe County Farm Bureau hosted a Girls Day Out. The ladies loaded the bus in Sparta and headed to the Wetherby cranberry marsh in Warrens. Long-time Farm Bureau member and cranberry advocate Nodji Van Wychen gave a talk and tour of her cranberry business.

Attendees were fortunate to take in the unique harvesting methods of fresh-market cranberries including the modern sorting and bagging equipment and listening to Nodji talk about the history and advancements in the industry.

Next, the group went to the Cranberry Discovery Center. A

cranberry-themed lunch was served, the women toured the cranberry museum and Promotion and Education Director Deb Raemisch shared the newly unveiled 'Playbook' for counties to use as a resource.

The day ended at S Lazy D Ranch Bison farm near Tomah. The group learned about this niche market and the care and management of bison. The weather was beautiful for a great line-up of tours.

Keep in mind that next year we will be visiting La Crosse county.



Women from La Crosse, Monroe, Trempealeau, Buffalo and Jackson counties attended.



Nodji Van Wychen took attendees to the bog to see the cranberry harvest.



Nodji showed attendees the optical sorter makes things more efficient.



Harvesting cranberries.



The last stop of the day was S Lazy D Ranch to see bison.



# COUNTYnews

TREMPEALEAU COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

## Trempealeau County Hosts Annual Meeting By Amber Radatz



Director Amber Radatz presented Todd Quarne with a token of appreciation for his years serving as president.

Tyler Truax, Barb Brueggen and Gretchen Erickson who have worked with clients for more than two decades.

The group also listened to a report from Trempealeau County's District 4 Young Farmer and Agriculturist Chair Derek Husmoen. He served on the state board for nearly two years, and is a great representative for our district.

The recipients of the animal grants accepted their awards. Thank you to Farm Bureau for sponsoring these grants and to the recipients for identifying how the award helps their projects. The essay contest winners also attended.

On August 23, the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau held their annual meeting at Riverside Memorial Park in Blair. It was a great turnout, with more than 70 people. The weather was beautiful.

District 4 State Board Representative Joe Bragger spoke about new legislation and concerns about agricultural issues in District 4 and Wisconsin. Dan Merk from Rural Mutual Insurance spoke about the long-standing tradition of customer service in Trempealeau County, and the agents including Lon Truax,

Members listened to Trempealeau County ag promotions committee chair Crystal Johnson talk about the schools visited and activities offered to youth and adults in the county to share information about agriculture practices and farmers. She coordinated and assisted with more than six activities this year for the promotion and education committee.



Members gathered for the county annual meeting.

Delegates to the WFBF Annual Meeting were accepted, and resolutions were passed, so that they can be submitted to the state Policy Development Committee. This year, Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Board Member Callie Herron will serve on the Policy Development Committee. District 4 and Trempealeau County are well represented at the state level.

The board presented Todd Quarne with a card of thanks for his service as president. He was a great leader and is always open-minded to new ideas, especially from a board that has younger members with less experience.

Thank you for attending and for making it another successful annual meeting!

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WFBF District 4 Director Joe Bragger gave an update on what is happening at the state level regarding Farm Bureau.



Trempealeau County Board Director and District 4 YFA Chair Derek Husmoen gave updates on state and district YFA activities and events.



State Representative Chris Danou spoke about issues affecting rural areas and answered questions.



Trempealeau County Farm Bureau ag promotions chair Crystal Johnson updated attendees about Ag in the Classroom.

## President's Report



Hello! I'm Shane Goplin from rural Osseo and I am serving my second term as the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau president.

After selling the dairy operation three years ago, I own and operate a cash, grain and forage farm. I have been a Farm Bureau member for the past 18 years where I started as a Young Farmer and served as the District 4 Young

Farmer Chair at the county and state level. I participated in the Young Farmer Achievement Award as well as several WFBF Annual Meetings.

More recently, I served on the state transportation committee to recommend improvements to our state infrastructure while protecting the farmer's rights to operate necessary machinery for efficient operation.

Currently, I am serving on the Volunteers For Agriculture (VFA) Committee. I meet with elected position candidates to discuss their potential for meeting the goals of Farm Bureau members. We review their voting record and their stance on local, state and national issues to determine factors that may help or hinder the best interest of Farm Bureau members, regardless of party lines.

Soon, we will exercise our right to vote so it is important to research the candidate that best fits your beliefs.

During challenging times in agriculture, it is of utmost importance to use your Farm Bureau membership benefits. Our goals are to continue to be a positive voice for agriculture while inspiring a new vision for our state's largest industry. I encourage you to explore [www.wfbf.com](http://www.wfbf.com) to see the member benefits included so you can gain the most from your involvement in our organization.

I look forward to serving and welcome questions or comments from members. Together we can make an impact on agriculture while striving to be better stewards of our land.

**Shane Goplin**  
Trempealeau County Farm Bureau President

## District Board Report



### *The Little Policy that Could*

Each and every year at county Farm Bureau around the state, annual meetings are held and Farm Bureau members advance resolutions that can benefit Wisconsin agriculture.

These resolutions go to the Policy Development Committee that reviews each and every one. Of the hundreds that are submitted the committee discusses them and selects some to be added to our proposed policy that will be voted on at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

Others are rejected but not dead as they can be brought back to the delegate body by a member if it passed at the county level. So, we have a very purposeful process that works to thoroughly address topics facing our membership and there is no guarantee that a resolution will pass.

WFBF sticks by and large to issues facing agriculture and tends to stay away from social policy as WFBF has varied membership as the state's largest general agriculture organization and there are many opposing viewpoints.

Now back to the 'Little Engine that Could' analogy.

Last year, a member of Buffalo County proposed that the state develop a program to compensate landowners for maintaining roadsides. The county Farm Bureau being supportive of the idea, with some reservations, voted in favor and it was passed on to the Policy Development Committee, which decided to advance it into the resolutions packet delegate approval. And, walla! It was approved by the delegate body and is now a part of Wisconsin Farm Bureau policy.

This was a policy that I hate to admit, I didn't think would ever make it out of Policy Development because, as one of my friends would say, how would this ever be implemented?

The usual cries of liability and safety went unsaid, and of course who would oversee and how would cooperators be compensated also unquestioned; however, what brought folks together on this issue was a common understanding that we value the beauty of our agricultural landscape and know that many farmers go above and beyond when it comes to keeping the countryside beautiful. A common bond.

While I never thought it had a chance, that little resolution kept saying, "I think I can, I think I can" and pulled its way through the process.

So what's my point? Every year, you as a Farm Bureau member has the ability to help shape agricultural policy in Wisconsin and nationally. Please bring forth any topics that either affect you or could make your farms, lives or communities better. And together we will chug through the process.

Thank you and as always enough is too much.

**Joe Bragger**  
District 4 WFBF Director

## Emily Herness Advances to Discussion Meet

By Derek Husmoen

The District 4 Discussion Meet and annual Policy Development meeting was held on July 12 at the Taylor Community Center in Taylor. The discussion meet was followed by the policy development meeting.

The discussion meet topic was: **Today's food companies employ many tactics to gain a marketing edge. What is the purpose of food labels? How can Farm Bureau work to ensure that consumers understand the labels and have confidence in the safety and quality of their food?**

Emily Herness from Trempealeau County competed and placed in the top three, qualifying to advance to the state Discussion Meet. She will compete against other finalists from around the state during the YFA Conference in Wisconsin Dells on December 2-4. We wish her the best of luck as she prepares for state competition.



Emily Herness advanced to the state YFA Discussion Meet.



Emily Herness gave her opening statement during the District 4 Discussion Meet.



Participants at the District 4 Discussion Meet were: (L-R): Cassie Olson (Jackson), Brittany Herricks (Monroe), Emily Herness (Trempealeau) and Kyle Danzinger (Buffalo).

## Make It Tradition: Attend the State YFA Conference

By Derek Husmoen, District 4 YFA Chair



Are you planning to attend the YFA Conference? If not, you still have time to change your mind. The YFA Conference is December 2-4 at the Kalahari Resorts in Wisconsin Dells.

The theme is 'tradition' and the weekend is full of exciting things to do. Activities kick off on Friday with a welcome dinner, district YFA meetings and a reception with music by the Soggy Prairie Boys and other entertainment.

Saturday activities start with the discussion meet contest, followed by brunch and the general session. In the afternoon, you can attend the Excellence in Ag Award presentations, discussion meet semifinals, a variety of workshops and breakout sessions and the trade show.

Saturday evening is the Farm Bureau Extravaganza with great food and entertainment. The conference wraps up Sunday with the discussion meet finals and a brunch buffet and the last general session.

The YFA conference is an awesome opportunity to network with YFA and Farm Bureau members. If you have thought about participating in the YFA contests, it's also a great opportunity to see firsthand what the discussion meet is like, or what goes in a presentation for Excellence in Ag or Achievement Award. In addition, the Kalahari Resorts offer a great atmosphere for food and fun.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact me at 608.863.0105. Mark your calendars for December 2-4 and plan to attend the YFA Conference in Wisconsin Dells. I hope to see you there!

## There are Benefits to Your Farm Bureau Membership:

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For complete details visit [wfbf.com/benefits-membership](http://wfbf.com/benefits-membership).

## Amber Radatz Named State Finalist for Excellence in Agriculture



Amber Radatz, Trempealeau County member and Board of Director, was recently selected as one of four finalists in the state for Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Excellence in Agriculture Award! Amber is the co-director of UW-Discovery Farms Program.

The Excellence in Ag award recognizes members of Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Agriculturist (YFA) Program who excel in their leadership abilities, and involvement in agriculture, Farm Bureau and other civic and service organizations. Excellence in Ag award applicants are agriculturists who derive a majority of their income from

an off-the-farm job (those not directly involved in production agriculture). Examples of occupations of past finalists include: agricultural education instructor, fertilizer salesperson, veterinarian, farm employee, agricultural writer and marketer.

The four finalists will compete for the top honor at the 2016 YFA Conference/Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting on December 2-5 in Wisconsin Dells. Each finalist will prepare a presentation and must answer questions in front of a three-judge panel. Amber is the only finalist from District 4. The other three state finalists are from Barron, St. Croix, and Waushara counties.

Congratulations Amber! We all wish you luck in December!

## Buffalo and Trempealeau Farmers Collaborate to Improve Water Quality

By Brian Maliszewski, Elk Creek Watershed project leader

I am proud to announce that in an effort to control sediment and nutrient loss in our area the Elk Creek Watershed Group was established. The group consists of local community farmers as well as some Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Board members. The project is a grant program put on by the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) with help from UW Extension Discovery Farms.

The main function of this producer led watershed (also referred to as the Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network) is to study nitrogen use efficiency and cover crops. The goal is to develop a larger group that will encourage other farmers to try new methods of soil nutrient conservation in the hopes of improving water quality.

The scope of the project will work collaboratively to improve soil and water quality within the Middle Trempealeau watershed. The watershed's resource concerns involve the protection of groundwater and surface water resources from nitrogen and phosphorus loss in agricultural areas. The primary objectives of

the grant are to measure and quantify nitrogen use efficiency, measure soil health parameters, and test cover crops and technologies within a variety of farming systems in the watershed. Outreach and education efforts to area farmers will focus on reporting of local and statewide results and suggestions for strategies to implement nutrient management and conservation practices. All of this in hopes of achieving desired water quality and farm sustainability goals.

Other goals of grant implementation are to increase awareness of conservation benefits, improve farm profitability related to nitrogen use and reduce phosphorus nitrogen losses from farm fields.

Stay posted on upcoming dates. A meeting with a farmer panel is planned to give everyone an opportunity to talk about nitrogen strategies and cover crops. Also being discussed will be split nitrogen rates and comparing yield differences in the same fields. Possible demonstration of different types of cover crop seeding may be conducted.



Members of the Elk Creek Watershed Group met to discuss the next step with their DATCP grant.



## Trempealeau County Farm Bureau Contacts:

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 RMIC District Manager, Ken Truax 715.514.4477

## Update from Ag in the Classroom

By Crystal Johnson

With school back in session, the ag promotions committee is looking for teachers and classrooms to teach agriculture topics from Christmas tree production to making ice cream in a bag or learning about cranberry production. The options are endless. Volunteers are willing and excited to work with the students and teach a hands-on lesson.

The 2017 Book of the Year is *Time for Cranberries* by Wisconsinite Lisl H. Detlefsen. The Trempealeau County Farm Bureau will donate a book to each of the elementary schools in the county in January.

If you know a teacher who is interested in a volunteer coming to lead a lesson, please contact Crystal Johnson at 715.597.2411.

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