



Vernon County Farm Bureau

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Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Young Farmers and Agriculturists in Action



1. The District 3 YFA Discussion Meet was held on August 27 at Keiler Farms. The topic was: As the Voice of Agriculture, how can Farm Bureau be more inclusive of all agriculture and production practices? There were six participants including, front row (from left): Maija Haggith, Vernon County; and Kent Jerrett, Grant County; back row (from left): Ryan Studnicka, Grant County; Andrew DalSanto, Grant County; Kyle Shepard, Grant County; and Dan Frank, Grant County. Andrew, Dan and Maija will compete during the YFA Discussion Meet during the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference in December.

2. In conjunction with the Discussion Meet, Grant County Farm Bureau hosted members from District 3 for the annual Night on the Farm. YFA members enjoyed a potluck dinner, wagon ride and tour of Keiler Farms.

3. The District 3 YFA Golf and Grill Outing took place on August 3 at the Platteville Golf Course. Attendees enjoyed a round of golf, followed by a delicious meal and socializing with fellow YFA members.

4. In June, 25 Young Farmers and Agriculturist members from around Wisconsin traveled to Washington, D.C., for the YFA Fly-In. The trip is designed to put real farmers and agriculturists in the room with our congressional representatives. Justin and Livia Doyle of Iowa County, Tammy Wiedenbeck of Grant County and Joe and Amber McComish of Lafayette County represented District 3. The group lobbied at the Capitol, visited historical sites and met other individuals from the state who are actively involved in agriculture.



COUNTYnews

VERNON COUNTY FARM BUREAU EDITION

Vernon County Annual Meeting Highlights

The Vernon County Farm Bureau held their annual meeting on September 18 at the Old Towne Inn in Westby. The evening began with a meal and was followed by the business meeting.

Kaitlyn Riley, 71st Alice in Dairyland, served as the guest speaker. She shared her agricultural story and talked about her experience serving as Wisconsin's agriculture ambassador. District Director, Dick Gorder, and Representative Lee Nerison were recognized for their many years of service, dedication and support of Farm Bureau. Members present selected delegates for the WFBF Annual Meeting, elected directors for next year and discussed resolutions. Vernon County members passed 12 resolutions, including the following:

State

- We support the usage of the 'Wisconsin Cheese' label only on products made with 80%+ of milk originating in Wisconsin.
- We support WFBF exploring ways to moderate milk price fluctuations.
- We oppose lab grown proteins being labeled as meat.
- We support clear and distinct labeling of foods containing more than 10% lab grown proteins.
- We support the label 'milk' to be used only on products containing milk from mammals. Milk comes from mammals not plants.
- We support aggressively pursuing policies that benefit small to mid-size dairies of all types and specialties at the expense of mega dairies (1000+) for the reasons of preserving Wisconsin's traditional farm image, easing environmental concerns, keeping a distinct personality to local farms, and avoiding the potential consequences a decrease in farms would have on the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.
- We support state law being amended to prohibit local governments from declaring productive farmland 'blighted' or unsuitable in other words in order to take it by eminent domain and turn it over to a private developer.
- We support looking into opportunities to dispose of and/or recycle bale wrap plastic that is no longer accepted by Revolution Plastics.



Federal

- We support federal agriculture and trade relief programs being capped at the state average and to never exceed the national average.
- We support consideration and discussion of implementing a national dairy supply management program.
- We support enforcing organic standards to make sure all farms are following the rules as stated and enforcing foreign organic products that may be entering under false label.

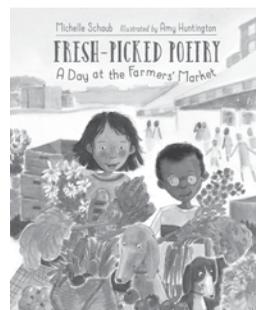
Internal

- We support WFBF being a leader in having open and honest discussion about the implications of the dairy/farm crisis on Farm Bureau and Wisconsin's agricultural industry.

These resolutions will be forwarded to the state policy development committee for consideration by the delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

Thank you to those who attended this year's annual meeting. We look forward to seeing more of you there next year.

Ag in the Classroom Book of the Year and Essay Contest



"Fresh-Picked Poetry," written by Michelle Schaub, has been selected as the 2019 Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Book of the year. Each year, the Ag in the Classroom program holds an essay contest in conjunction with the book of the year for fourth and fifth grade students.

The essay contest topic is, 'Making it happen at the farmers' market.' Lessons plans aligned to state standards and educational resources are available online for teachers, students and volunteers to use in promoting and preparing essays.

The essay contest topic is, 'Making it happen at the farmers' market.'

Essay submissions must be 100- to 300-words in length and will be judged on content, grammar, spelling and neatness. The essay contest rules, lesson plans and sample classroom activities are located at wisagclassroom.org/whats-new. Essays are due **April 1, 2019**. In May, nine district winners will be selected with one being chosen as the state winner by the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee. Each district winner will receive a classroom presentation for their class. The essay contest is sponsored by We Energies and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation. Last year, more than 2,500 students participated.

Questions about the essay contest can be directed to Vernon County Ag in the Classroom committee chair Travis Klinkner at 608.633.1981 or travisklinkner@gmail.com.

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President's Message



As I write this, we are just a few days before Halloween. The weather for many in Vernon County has sure been no treat. Our thoughts and prayers go out to all our families, friends and neighbors. Many have suffered tremendous losses.

This Thanksgiving reach out to those in need and share whatever you can. Hopefully

Thanksgiving gives us something to be thankful for besides the end of those annoying campaign ads and mailers. I often think about what good things we could do with those dollars.

Thank you to those who were able to join us for the Vernon County annual meeting at the Old Town Inn. Alice in Dairyland, Kaitlyn Riley, delivered a very nice address. The elections were held for directors. Returning to the board are Alex Bringe, Maija Haggith Scott Sherry, Steve Wagemester and myself.

We are excited to welcome back Dave McClurg after a brief absence and new board members Travis Klinkner and Troy Strangstalien.

We are looking forward to a great year with more promotion and education events and increased membership. Membership has its advantages in discounts on items you purchase. Along with the strong advocacy presence, both within the state and on the national scene.

Renew your memberships and encourage others to become a member.

December brings us to the WFBF Annual Meeting at the Kalahri Resorts in Wisconsin Dells. For more information, visit www.wfbf.com. While you are there you can also check out the member discounts and other opportunities on how to become involved.

Hope your harvest has been successful and smooth. As always stay safe and stay informed.

Robert Nigh

Vernon County Farm Bureau President

District 3 Director: Farewell



During the last month, I've had the opportunity to address and thank my district counties for their support. It truly has been a privilege and honor to represent you and agriculture these past 21 years on the Farm Bureau and Rural Mutual Insurance Company Board of Directors.

At each of the county annual meetings, I

read a forward from our 75th anniversary book that puts into eloquent words my feelings. It was written by Dr. Chris Christensen, a former Dean of the College of Agriculture at the UW-Madison, and appeared in our 1946 membership brochure. As we celebrate our 100th anniversary this coming year, the words of Dr. Christensen still hold true.

"If farm organizations were to disappear tomorrow, it is certain that within a very short time their praises would be sung by even those who have never supported them ... "Acting as individuals, farmers have comparatively little influence. Acting together in the best interests of the nation, they are a powerful force ... "Like the school and church, farm organizations are an accepted part of our way of living. We take them very much for granted ... "They have been elevated to the position of a commonplace institution. Commonplace institutions are likely to be our most important and at the same time the least impressive. One seldom misses them until they fail to function properly, or are gone ... "Farmers can only be served by organizations which are made up of farm people, led by farm leaders, financed entirely by farmers and run in the interests of the men and women on the farm who appreciate that the farmers' interests are best served only when society as a whole is best served ..."

I hope you find these words as meaningful and purposeful as I do – I believe them with all my heart. Thank you and may God bless.

Dick Gorder

WFBF District 3 Director

2019 FFA Farm Forum Sponsorships

Vernon County Farm Bureau will sponsor students interested in attending FFA Farm Forum on **February 15-16, 2019**, at Hotel Mead in Wisconsin Rapids. The forum is for students who are ready and willing to explore new topics and learn outside their comfort zone. It features general session speakers, workshops, a discussion meet demonstration and a game-night. If you or a FFA student you know wants to attend, please contact Vernon County Farm Bureau president Robert Nigh by **January 15, 2019**.

Wiedenbeck Reflects on AFBF Women's Communications Boot Camp



Sometimes it isn't easy taking time away from home. It can get discouraging to continue to take advantage of opportunities that are presented to you in order to avoid any criticism; however, the consequence of giving up on life-changing experiences is

NEVER worth it because life is too short. No matter how much stress it may take to prepare for your journey, you always come home with a special gift that you never had before. My gift at the end of July was going to Washington, D.C., and meeting 15 of the most amazing women in this country. Not only did they share my passion for agriculture, but they also shared my commitment to growing personally and professionally to better our futures.

On July 23-25, I participated in the Women's Communications Boot Camp sponsored by the American Farm Bureau Federation's Women's Committee. After meeting the class and hearing about their accomplishments, I thought to myself, "I don't even compare to these ladies." Yet, they are the ones who boosted me up and helped convince me that I, too, deserved to be there. After having a brief introduction dinner and beautiful night tour of the historical monuments, we jumped right into doing our presentation speeches the next morning. It was interesting to hear different perspectives on agricultural issues that other states are dealing with.

Following our presentations, we took an in-depth look at public speaking and covered topics of content, messaging and delivery dynamics. Then media training was covered, giving us tips on hitting our key message using tag lines or seven-second sound bites. That prepped us for day two, where we participated in print, radio and television interviews and were forced to step out of our comfort zones.

Before we headed to Capitol Hill to meet with our legislators, we gained more information on farm policy, regulatory reform and trade issues. We also learned about social media advocacy and how to have successful congressional visits. I have been to Capitol Hill in the past, but it was a new experience meeting with staffers one-on-one versus in a group setting. I enjoyed sharing my connection to issues and addressing concerns that Wisconsin farmers may be facing.

Finally, we began our third day with a message from AFBF President Zippy Duvall who read, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries (1 Cor: 16:9)." This means that wonderful opportunities to do great work present themselves every day, but there are always people who will be against you. Then, the group finished the class by giving our final presentations and I was very proud of how far everyone had come.

They say a missed opportunity is worse than defeat, and I know this group of women that I met left me with a sense of confidence that I didn't have before because they believed in me more than I believed in myself. Flipping fear into curiosity is a gift and that I got to bring back to Wisconsin, along with a family and a fan club that I wouldn't have had without this experience.

I am very grateful for my job letting me partake in this opportunity and I would recommend the Women's Communications Boot Camp to anyone. I am always willing to answer questions, so don't be afraid to contact me.

Collegiate Corner

The UW-Platteville Collegiate Farm Bureau had an exciting fall semester. The students participated in the annual UW-Platteville homecoming parade, enjoyed an outing to Vesperman Farms and hosted the Collegiate Discussion Meet. The officer team has done an impressive job organizing meetings and events, welcoming new members and representing Farm Bureau. The officer team includes: Bridget Clevon, president; Brittany Rennhack, vice president; Sara Elizabeth Raemisch, treasurer; Lexey Hammerly, secretary; Vinny Reiter and Evan Young, Ag Day On Campus co-chairs; Katie Lux, Brag About Ag chair; Heidi Smith and Ally Biroshchik, Ag in the Classroom co-chairs; and Kailyn Ripp, historian.



District 3 Young Farmer and Agriculturist Update



I know we have been experiencing a crazy weather pattern in Wisconsin lately with the rain and temperature changes. Let's take our minds off of that for a few

minutes and talk about all of the great things that we have done in Farm Bureau during the summer.

On June 4-8, I embarked on another adventure with fellow WFBF members and attended the Washington, D.C., Fly-In. This event is designed to give attendees a chance to speak with elected officials, legislators, agencies and other professionals about agricultural issues and policies.

Our group met with Senators Tammy Baldwin and Ron Johnson and Representative Ron Kind. We toured the American Farm Bureau building and were briefed on immigration, trade, regulation and farm bill issues.

We visited the USDA and discussed beginning farmer and rancher, conservation, dairy and crop insurance programs. We also toured the New Zealand Embassy, where we learned about agricultural commodities in their country and that you can find common ground with any farmer no matter where you are in the world.

Earlier in July, we had our state YFA Committee meeting in Appleton, where we focused on team building and worked on planning the YFA Conference that will be held in Wisconsin Dells on November 30-December 2. We also volunteered at

Feed America and packaged more than 5,000 pounds of meat to go to food pantries in Wisconsin.

Over the summer, many counties had food stands at their county fairs or booths with educational resources and games about agriculture. In August, the District 3 YFA held a Golf and Grill Outing at the Platteville Golf Course and the Discussion Meet in conjunction with Night on the Farm at Kieler Farms in Platteville.

Thank you to the YFA members who participated in the discussion and to Angie Hermsen, Jacque Metille, and Toby Spillane for judging the event. Congratulations to Andrew DalSanto, Dan Frank and Maija Haggith for being selected to compete at the YFA Conference. Also, congratulations to Justin and Livia Doyle, who were named finalists for the Excellence in Agriculture Award. I look forward to seeing you at the YFA Conference later this year.

Be sure to mark your calendars for the following events next year: AFBF Annual Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, on **January 11-16, 2019**, and the FUSION Conference in Milwaukee on **March 14-17, 2019**. There will be sponsorships available to attend the FUSION Conference, so look for those applications in the coming months. Wishing you the best and a safe harvest season.

Tammy Wiedenbeck
District 3 YFA Committee Representative



Agriculture for ME on Land and Sea

In June, my sister-in-law, Livia Doyle, and I traveled to Portland, Maine for the National Ag in the Classroom Conference. Traveling to Maine for the first time was a wonderful experience, and one I'll never forget. From learning about Maine's unique agriculture industry to meeting new friends from across the U.S., the National Ag in the Classroom Conference was truly a one of a kind opportunity.

We took advantage of all the conference had to offer. During our first day in Maine, we participated in the pre-conference tour titled 'Experience Maine at its Best on Land and Sea.' The full-day tour included a stop at a wild blueberry farm, a visit to Acadia National Park and a ride on the Margaret Todd, a 151-foot, four-masted schooner, across Frenchman's Bay. Livia and I even helped raise the sails on the schooner.

During the next few days, we had the chance to explore the Portland area more. We spent time sightseeing in the historic Old Port district, stopping in local venues, visiting with the native 'Mainers,' and eating lots of SEAFOOD. Maine leads

the nation in lobster production ... and like Wisconsin is with cheese, they're pretty proud of it. At the Lobster Bake on Peaks Island, we quickly learned we weren't the only ones unfamiliar with how to 'properly' eat a lobster. Luckily, the locals were willing to lend a hand and teach us. The lobster was delicious and definitely worth the hard work.

The conference also featured many different workshops, keynote speakers, tours of nearby agribusinesses and research facilities, and opportunities to network and learn from educators, volunteers and staff members. The highlight of the conference was seeing Livia honored as one of the USDA Excellence in Teaching About Agriculture Award Recipients.

We left Maine with new knowledge, lifelong friendships, unforgettable memories and innovative ideas of how to incorporate agriculture in the classroom.

Melissa Doyle
WFBF District 3 Coordinator



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WFBF YFA Representative, Tammy Wiedenbeck	608.723.2382
District 3 Coordinator, Melissa Doyle	866.355.7343
RMIC District Manager, Randy Palmer	608.515.3123

Candidate Forum Success

In July, Crawford County, Monroe County and Vernon County Farm Bureaus hosted a forum for the 96th Assembly District candidates. The forum gave candidates the opportunity to introduce themselves and weigh in on key issues facing the agriculture industry today.

The 96th Assembly seat is held by Lee Nerison, who will be retiring after 14 years in the state Legislature. Candidates who participated included Paul Buhr, Alicia Leinberger and Loren Oldenburg. More than 200 people attended, proving the forum was a great success. Thank you to all who attended.

