

# FARM BUREAU® *Connection*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### We Are All in This Together

By Joe Bragger, Wisconsin Farm Bureau President



Last December, I became the Wisconsin Farm Bureau President. I have looked forward since that time to have the opportunity to introduce myself.

So much has changed in our world since then and it continues to change by the day. In just 6 to 8 weeks we have gone from a robust to a very tenuous situation. Specifically, the agricultural economy was starting to turn the corner after a five year downturn. The COVID-19 crisis is

dominating our lives in very unique ways and providing uncertainty for consumers and farmers alike.

Under normal circumstances, spring brings new life as farmers across the state head to the fields to plant their crops. Soon the beautiful strips of crops that form the tapestry of Wisconsin's countryside will come to life. For many farmers it is time for new life on the farm as cows calve, lambs are born and other young livestock head to the pasture.

This year, there is a little less joy as farmers are struggling to adjust to the markets that have drastically changed. Farmers are being challenged in numerous ways due to the COVID-19 situation and not one type of farmer is not being impacted in some way.

Please know that I am not writing you to pass onto you the woes of agriculture but I as a farmer myself, I want you to know that the struggles the agricultural community is feeling are real and I am not exempted from that.

I understand that you as a consumer have had frustrations with not being able to get certain products. It is disheartening to see stores have limits on products or shelves that are not fully stocked. I have the same frustrations when I know farmers are working hard to fulfil their role in the supply chain. No one saw this coming and the food system is no doubt being put to a test.

If you have concerns for your family's safety, know you aren't alone. I have two daughters who work in health care. This pandemic is hitting close to home for me in more ways than one and I want you to know you aren't alone – we are in this together.

Recently, Rural Mutual Insurance Company and Wisconsin Farm Bureau unveiled the **Wisconsin Food and Farm Support Fund**. We wanted to do something on a state-level that would not only help

people in need but also our farmers. In order to provide help in a variety of ways, each entity took one initiative to focus on so that we could assist a larger base of people.

Rural Mutual Insurance will focus on collecting funds for Feeding Wisconsin. Feeding Wisconsin is the statewide association of the Feeding America food banks that sources, warehouses and provides food to more than 750 affiliated agencies and 1,000 local food programs throughout the state.

This effort will include Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, the non-profit organization representing the state's dairy farm families, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Through the joint effort, the partners will work on connecting processors to make dairy-specific donations. The partnership will provide movement/consumption of milk and other Wisconsin agriculture products to ensure farmers continue to have a place to sell their products, and provide Wisconsinites access to these nutritious, high-quality products. DATCP will also continue its work to connect dots with producers in a variety of other commodities. This will not only benefit the state's farmers by keeping product moving, but also help feed Wisconsinites in need.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau will focus on collecting funds and create awareness for Harvest of Hope. Harvest of Hope provides financial help to Wisconsin farm families in times of need. The Harvest of Hope Fund provides grants to farm families who need financial assistance to meet emergency needs for food, home heating fuel, medical or veterinary expenses, electric power cut-offs, climatic conditions (drought, floods, frost, hail), feed for cattle, machinery repair, retraining or other immediate situations. Funding also is available to purchase seed, fertilizer, fuel and other supplies needed.

To learn more about the Wisconsin Food and Farm Support Fund visit, [ruralmutual.com/about/donations](http://ruralmutual.com/about/donations) or [wfbf.com/wisconsin-food-and-farm-support-fund](http://wfbf.com/wisconsin-food-and-farm-support-fund).

We truly are in this together. I want to thank you for being a member of Farm Bureau and I hope that you find value in the benefits we provide and the organization we have grown to be in our 100 years.

As a member of the Farm Bureau family I hope you feel supported. We do have some resources available on [wfbf.com](http://wfbf.com) for dealing with stress and mental health challenges.

I often say, "Don't think of what you can't do, consider what you can do." If we continue to support each other, we will come through this together!

Stay healthy my friends!

— WISCONSIN —  
**FOOD AND FARM**  
SUPPORT FUND

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# Farm Life Grows a Family and a Dream

By Amy Eckelberg

## Planting the Seed

As a high school junior, Kelly Oudenhoven was told that the career she wanted to pursue wasn't an option because being a farmer was only for men.

Now, as the herd manager for Larrand Dairy she boldly smiles sharing that story of her meeting with a high school counselor.

Her journey to becoming the herd manager on her in-laws' farm wasn't a direct one. Prior to her role on the farm, she worked in the emergency department at the Fox Valley Animal Referral Center. During her time at the center, she worked her way from third shift to first, and then eventually onto the management team. It was also when she met her husband Keith and started helping with the heifers on his family's farm during nights and weekends.

"After getting married and many discussions and prayers, Keith and I decided we wanted to become the fourth generation to farm," said Kelly. "So, I left my management role to be on the farm full-time."

On the farm, her duties include managing the cows and the employees and their schedules. She also manages daily operations and keeping the farm clean and organized.

"Being in a leadership position and having a role on the decision-making team means so much to me," said Kelly. "Women can be overlooked and I'm forever grateful to be in the position that I'm in."

Being a mom of four keeps her busy with tasks as well.

"Not only do I manage the animals and employees, but I also am a mom," Kelly explained.

Keith and Kelly have been together for nearly 10 years. Their four children: Josephine, Jackson, Allison and Clayton enjoy coming to the farm with her every day.

Keith is a mechanical engineer for Pierce manufacturing in Appleton where he designs fire trucks. He currently works full-time off the farm, but the couple hopes to someday become the sole owners together.

## Planning for the Future

"We are always looking to the future and ways that we can continue to farm," said Kelly. "Keith and I have started the transition process with his parents. We are very proud of that and hope to one day pass the farm on to our children."

While making a successful transition of farm ownership is already a challenge, the industry faces numerous challenges.

"Labor is a concern on a lot of farms, and ours is no different," said Kelly. "Knowing that we will need to make upgrades in the near future, we are making plans for a robotic milking system."

The challenge of consumer misconceptions also is one that Kelly sees daily.

"I grew up on a farm where we raised replacement heifers for a local dairy farm," explained Kelly. "I always wanted to tell others about it. I still love to tell my story of farming and what it means to me and my family."

For that reason, Kelly hopes to someday incorporate an agri-tourism business on the farm.

For the full story, visit [wfsb.com/member-profiles/meet-kelly-oudenhoven](http://wfsb.com/member-profiles/meet-kelly-oudenhoven)





## Benefits of an Annual Insurance Review

We know the importance of an annual doctor visit or routine car maintenance, but when was the last time you reviewed your insurance policy? Regular reviews are just as important to assure your policy remains a good fit for both your coverage needs and your budget.

How often should you review your insurance policy? There are four triggering events that suggest a policy review:

### 1. Policy renewal

At policy renewal is always a good time to sit down with your agent to make sure you understand the coverage provided and exclusions within your auto and homeowners policy. It also is important to verify that you have the appropriate coverage and/or limits.

### 2. Major purchases or home improvements

Did you add on a sun room or remodel your kitchen? Events such as these can affect the appraised value of your home. A homeowners insurance review can help ensure your home and belongings are fully protected and your coverage is keeping up with your current needs without causing a gap in coverage.

### 3. Increased home safety

Updating your home security system adds an extra level of safety by reducing your risk of burglary or extreme damage by water or fire. This means there is less chance you will need to file a claim and therefore could reduce your homeowners' premium. Central Station alarm monitoring systems and those that alert fire or police departments are among those that qualify. Talk to your agent about how investing in a security system can save you money.

### 4. Major lifestyle change

A new engagement or recently starting a family are

just a few examples of major changes that should trigger a review. Do you need to schedule jewelry? Maybe you should look at updating your life insurance policy. Take a minute to think about what life changes you've recently encountered.

### Other questions to think about during your insurance review

- How will adding another driver affect my car insurance?
- Does my policy provide enough coverage to rebuild my home today?
- How will a new car affect my car insurance?
- How will finishing my basement affect my homeowners insurance?

A simple conversation with your agent can give you peace of mind knowing your coverage is up to date and prepare you for any upcoming changes. You may find cost savings or qualify for new discounts. Insurance reviews are just one of the benefits of working with a local agent who takes the time to understand your needs.



## Build a business you can be proud of

If you're thinking about becoming an insurance agent, now is the time!

You will receive:

- Starting salary
- Designated mentor
- New agent training

If you're interested in joining Rural Mutual's team of agents, contact us to build your future.

[RuralMutual.com/Careers](https://RuralMutual.com/Careers)





**GOOD EATS**



## Strawberry Pecan Salad

Recipe submitted by  
Lauren Brey, Door County.

### Salad Ingredients

- 1 package of romaine hearts, chopped
- 1 container fresh strawberries, halved
- 2 oz. feta cheese
- ¼ c. red onion, thinly sliced
- 15 oz. mandarin oranges, drained
- 2 chicken breasts, cooked and diced
- 1 c. candied pecans

### Dressing Ingredients

- ⅓ c. granulated sugar
- ½ c. lemon juice
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- ⅓ c. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. poppy seeds

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine romaine lettuce, strawberries, oranges, feta cheese and red onion. Add diced chicken. Toss gently.
2. In a jar, combine dressing ingredients and shake until well mixed.
3. When ready to serve, add candied pecans and dressing.

## Grape Salad

Recipe submitted by Beverly Jean  
Porter of Grant County.

### Salad Ingredients

- 3-4 lbs. green and red grapes
- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 8 oz. sour cream
- ½ c. sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla

### Topping Ingredients

- ½ c. brown sugar
- ½ c. chopped walnuts or pecans

### Directions

1. Wash grapes and pat dry.
2. Cream the cream cheese and sour cream together.
3. Add sugar and vanilla. Mix well.
4. Pour mixture over grapes and stir gently. Refrigerate.
5. When ready to serve, top with brown sugar and walnuts or pecans.



## Grilled Kabobs

### Ingredients

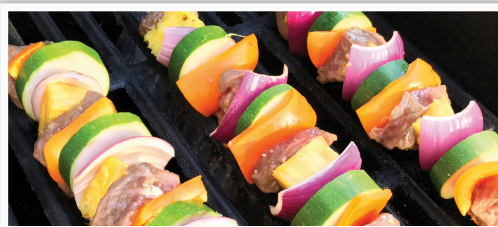
- ¼ c. soy sauce
- ½ c. pineapple juice
- 1 scallion, minced
- 2 tsp. garlic in water (from a jar)
- 1 Tbsp. sesame oil
- 1 tsp. ginger
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper

### Directions

1. Mix marinade: soy sauce, pineapple juice, scallion, garlic, sesame oil, ginger, salt and crushed red pepper.
2. Put beef in a bag you can seal and pour half of marinade over it. Mix to coat. Refrigerate at least 45 minutes.
3. Save remaining marinade for basting.

- 2 lbs. steak, in 1-inch cubes
- 1 large zucchini, cubed
- 2 red bell peppers, in 1-inch cubes
- 1 large red onion, in 1-inch pieces
- 1 small pineapple, peeled, cored, in 1-inch cubes
- skewers, wooden or metal

4. Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Drain meat and discard marinade. Put meat, veggies and pineapple skewers.
5. Grill, covered for 8-10 minutes, turning occasionally and basting with remaining marinade.



## Farm Bureau Flavor

These recipes are from Rural Route's Farm Bureau Flavor. For more great recipes visit, [wfbf.com](http://wfbf.com) or find us on at WIFarmBureau.