

Grassroots

District 9 News

District Director's Message



Peter Kimball

WBFB District 9 Director

As I am writing this article, I am looking out the window at the snow and ice, awaiting the colder temps that are predicted next week.

This time of year, it is very hard to keep spirits up and have something to look forward to. The excitement of the holiday season is over, and the nights are still long and cold.

Spring seems to be so far away; however, it is right around the corner. With each spring there are new beginnings, new calves, lambs and goat kids being born, a fresh start. A new beginning.

What does that mean for us as farmers and agriculturists? It is an excitement of what might be. How will the crop turn out? Will this new crop of calves thrive? Will my fertilizer plan work? What will the markets do this year? Will we get enough rain or too much?

I could go on, but you get the idea. Our lives are filled with uncertainty. In times like these, I like to look at what has remained steadfast over the years.

One such thing that has remained true is Farm Bureau's ability to work with both political parties in a bipartisan fashion that assures agriculture is well represented regardless of which party is in the seat of power. Rest assured, your voices as agriculturists will be heard in Madison as well as Washington, D.C.

As we move into 2021 there is some good news on delisting of the Great Lakes Gray Wolf population. Late in 2020 Congress passed legislation delisting the wolf in the Great Lakes region, which places management of the wolf in the hands of the state. This is a win for Wisconsin Farm Bureau on an issue that we have been working on for years; however, the work is not over yet. It has moved from the federal arena to the state arena. WBFB will be working with the Wisconsin DNR and our legislators to insure we can manage and protect our livestock.

While I am on the issue of wildlife, I have to write about the work that has and is still being done on wildlife abatement (bear damage) in the northern part of the state. Imagine having bears destroy large sections of corn fields where the losses can be \$70,000 and only getting reimburse for \$9,500 because that is the cap that the state can reimburse for. That is the reality for some farmers in Rusk and Sawyer counties. Last year before COVID, WBFB members from District 9 made two trips to the Capitol to testify on changes needed in the wildlife abatement program. Everything looked like it was going pass when the state was shut down in March due to COVID.

This issue still persists, and we are working hard to finish what we were so close to passing. I have great hope we will get it done this session.

As we continue into the uncertainty of 2021, let's remember what has made Farm Bureau successful over the decades is working across the aisle. In a time when everything seems to be divided, let's demonstrate to the world how working together with civility and mutual respect for each other will get us where we need to go.

Optimism and Opportunities



Katie Mattison

WBFB District 9 Coordinator

With 2020 behind us, we can look forward to 2021. A new year brings optimism. The beginning of a new year brings the possibility of great new things, continuing to grow what we already have, improve

upon what we have done, learn from our mistakes and make the future better. All things are possible at the beginning of a new year.

Even though 2020 was not exactly what we had hoped it would be, we can choose to look at the positives that it provided us. 2020 forced us to slow down and reflect on what is important to us. It gave us time to appreciate what we have and not to sweat the small stuff. Since we were not able to do what we had always done in the past, we were forced to think outside the box and come up with new ideas. What we had always done, no longer worked anymore. It gave us an opportunity to embrace change, and guess what ... sometimes change is OK. For some, it required learning new ways to communicate. Virtual meetings and conference calls allowed us to stay connected while we were not able to be together in person. Even though there is no replacement for face-to-face contact, virtual meetings allow us to stay connected and up to speed.

We have had time to reflect and now it is time for us to band together and fight for what is important to us, our farms and our families. The tenacity and perseverance of our agriculture community throughout 2020 has been amazing and gives us hope as we move forward into the new year.

Farm Bureau would not be what it is without our amazing members and their dedication to this organization. Farm Bureau members make the decisions; Farm Bureau members lead the conversations; Farm Bureau members make the difference. Farm Bureau works for YOU as we continue to move forward. We want you to feel empowered to stand up with YOUR organization and speak up for your livelihood.

Please contact me at kmattison@wfbf.com or 715.418.0975. I will be happy to brainstorm with you, hear your ideas, help you navigate challenges or just chat.

Let's reflect on the positive things that happened in 2020 and be hopeful about the opportunities that lie ahead in 2021.

And let's go ... Forward Together.

District 9 News

Farm Bureau Delegates Set Policy for 2021

On Dec. 5, more than 200 delegates at the virtual WFBF Annual Meeting established new policy directives for the organization.

Farm Bureau delegates adopted the policies that will be included in the organization's policy book in 2021. Resolutions were submitted by delegates as part of a grassroots policy development process.

Changes to the 2021 dairy policy include support for elimination of size and calorie restrictions for milk/dairy products in milk vending machines in schools.

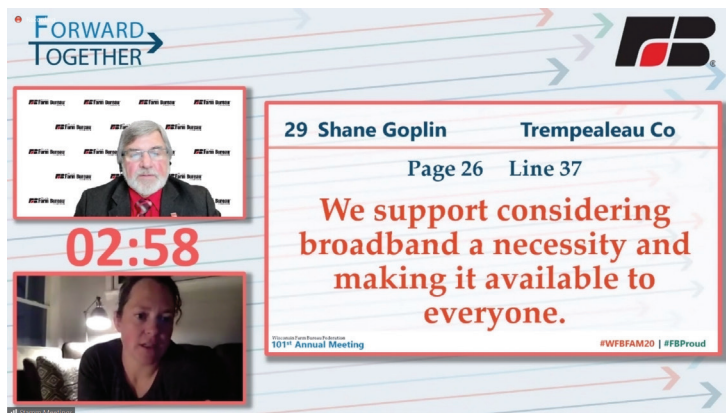
There was also support for overhauling the dairy pricing system that would benefit the farmer by aligning farm gate prices with retail and wholesale prices.

Delegates reaffirmed existing policy for dairy farmer profitability including research and development for growth management, Grade A dairy farm equipment transitions and opportunities to remedy high plate counts.

Changes were made to WFBF policy regarding meat processing including support for the creation of a meat processing facility tax credit to increase the capacity and availability of local processors and retailers. There was also support for creation of incentive programs to encourage students to pursue careers in meat processing. Delegates supported developing a grant program to help local butcher shops upgrade to federal inspection standards and to also help new start up processing plants including on-farm processing.

On the delegate floor, members supported a state program to provide technical resources, funding assistance and low interest loans for the development of new, or the upgrade of existing local, smaller-scale slaughter plants, meat processing plants and other small, local food processing facilities. They also supported the state adding more meat inspectors to allow for increased local meat packing and slaughter plant capacity.

With the pandemic bringing to light the need for rural internet connectivity, delegates supported additional appropriations and accelerated implementation of expanded high quality cellular, broadband,



fiber optic and telecommunications coverage in rural areas to enhance rural education and agribusiness needs. Additionally, delegates voted to support federal policy to provide broadband availability to everyone.

Delegates from the Wisconsin Farm Bureau's 61 county Farm Bureaus also supported:

- Increased availability of natural gas in rural Wisconsin.
- Requiring individuals and entities digging in road right of ways or easements to notify property owners before digging.
- Farm to School programs to promote buying local foods and education of food production, nutrition and the environment.
- Increased education efforts of modern agriculture and food production at the elementary and secondary levels.

On the federal level, delegates supported:

- Increasing the butter fat content from 80% to 82% for the federal order butter standard.
- Clarification and standardization of food expiration terms, by the FDA, to reduce needless food waste.

The federal resolutions were forwarded to the American Farm Bureau Federation for consideration at its annual convention in January.

2020 Virtual WFBF Annual Meeting Is a Success

The 101st WFBF Annual Meeting, held on Dec. 4-5, looked a lot different than prior years. The meeting agenda was shortened to a two-day format and took place virtually.

Farm Bureau members attended free-of-charge from the comfort of their homes and farms. The virtual platform brought farmers, ag business professionals and agriculture supporters together to discuss issues impacting agriculture. While a virtual event could not replace the camaraderie and networking provided at an in-person event, there were unique opportunities for members to experience during the virtual conference and, overall, it was a success.

More than 500 members attended the virtual conference. Attendees heard from staff with Rural Mutual Insurance Company and Wisconsin Farm Bureau, celebrated member accomplishments and learned something new from workshops.

For recordings of sessions and workshops, visit wfbf.com/2020-virtual-wfbf-annual-meeting.



Mueller Appointed to WFBF Promotion and Education Committee



Kathy Muth from Washington County, Brenda Dowiasch from Eau Claire County and Steven Mueller from St. Croix County have been appointed to WFBF's Promotion and Education Committee by the organization's Board of Directors.

Their terms started at WFBF's Annual Meeting on Dec. 4-5.

Kathy Muth farms with her husband, George, and their son, Peter, and daughter-in-law, Gina. They milk 250 cows in the town of Cheeseville. Kathy serves as Washington County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom co-chair and enjoys facilitating learning opportunities centered around agriculture. She previously worked for Professional Dairy Producers where she learned about aspects of the dairy industry.

Brenda Dowiasch grew up on her family's farm in western Wisconsin, which sparked her love of agriculture. Today, she works for the USDA

Farm Service Agency as a member of the farm loan team serving north central Wisconsin. She is an active member of the Eau Claire County Farm Bureau, Augusta FFA Alumni and the local trap shooting team.

Steven Mueller, along with his family, grows crops on 700 acres in St. Croix County. After milking cows for 25 years, his family recently transitioned into cash crops. In addition to farm work, Steven works off the farm at a warehouse facility in Hudson. He also serves on the St. Croix County Farm Bureau board of directors. Steven and his wife, Ashley, have a daughter named Aria.

The Promotion and Education Committee is a group of nine leaders who represent the nine WFBF districts. Committee members develop, implement and promote projects and programs that build awareness and understanding of agriculture and provide leadership development for the agricultural community.

The committee's chair sits on WFBF's Board of Directors as the program's representative. The Promotion and Education Program is funded by the WFBF Foundation.

2020 Farm Bureau Proud Club Qualifiers

With the close of the Farm Bureau membership year on Sept. 30, WFBF reported its 13th consecutive year of membership growth.

A driving force behind this string of success has been the membership outreach efforts of Farm Bureau volunteers around the state who are committed to helping the organization meet its goals.

This dedicated group of volunteer membership workers who invited their friends and neighbors to join the organization helped add more than 470 new members to WFBF's membership rolls during the 2020 membership year.

Across the state, 34 membership workers from 24 counties earned Farm Bureau Proud Club status by signing at least five new members. These members were presented with a special Farm Bureau Proud box thank you gift.

These boxes contained items from across the state, most of which were proudly produced by Farm Bureau members.

Thank you to the members in District 9 who qualified for the Farm Bureau Proud Club: Karyn Schauf, Barron County; Dean Bergsens, Pierce County; Peter Kimball, Pierce County; John Krings, Pierce County; Rob Wirth, Pierce County; Andrew Winiarczyk, Sawyer County.

County Local Affairs Chairs Wanted

Wisconsin Farm Bureau is working to expand our reach, influence and district coordination regarding local affairs at the grassroots level in 2021.

WFBF has learned a lot during the past few years with the local affairs program and one of the needs that was recognized is the importance for each county to have a local affairs chair. Some counties already have a local affairs chair, but that isn't the case in all counties.

WFBF staff requests that each county work to identify a member to serve as the county local affairs chair.

To help facilitate local affairs discussions amongst county Farm Bureaus, county local affairs chairs will be invited to participate in a conference call where each chair will talk about what is happening in their county or what was discussed at the last county Farm Bureau meeting regarding local affairs.

While hosting these calls staff members have noticed a definitive pattern that has emerged during the past few years. What happens in one county or one town seems to also happen in a neighboring county and town.

These calls will allow local affairs chairs to communicate with each other and bring back to their board of directors what kind of local affairs issues are happening in the district.

This position will work with WFBF Director of Local Affairs Steve Boe.

Current county local affairs chairs:

Barron County: Vacant
Chippewa County: Vacant
Dunn County: Vacant
Pierce County: Vacant
Polk Burnett: Vacant
Rusk County: Vacant
Sawyer County: Mike Robers
St. Croix County: Steve Mueller
Superior Shores: Vacant



Is this something that interests you? If so, please contact District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975 or kmattison@wfbf.com.



District 9 News

Virtual Support Groups for Farmers and Farm Couples Launched

In a continued effort to help Wisconsin farmers access mental health resources, the Wisconsin Farm Center at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is launching a series of virtual farmer support groups. The support groups are scheduled to begin in February.



"These groups are designed to bring farmers and farm couples together so they can share ideas, provide encouragement, and support each other through challenging times," said Jayne Krull, director of DATCP's Ag Resource and Promotion Bureau, which houses the Farm Center.

Support groups will be offered at different dates and times to accommodate farmers' schedules:

- 8 p.m., on the fourth Monday of every month
- 1 p.m., on the first Tuesday of every month
- 8 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month (for farm couples)

The support groups are open to farmers and their spouses at no cost. Participants can live anywhere in Wisconsin and must register in advance. Each session will be 60 to 90 minutes and will be held on Zoom. Sessions will be limited to 20 attendees per session, with a couple counting as one.

Sessions will be led and moderated by peer leaders who are farmers that have experienced stress and anxiety while operating their own farms. A licensed mental health provider with extensive experience in serving farmers also will be present during each session to offer additional support as needed.

To register for a session or for more information, visit FarmCenter.wi.gov.

4th & 5th Graders: Don't Forget to Submit Your Essay!

This year's essay topic: "How have Wisconsin soybean farmers fueled Wisconsin's economy?"

The topic is based off of the Book of the Year "Full of Beans- Henry Ford Grows a Car," written by Peggy Thomas.

Submit your essay to your county's coordinator:

Barron

Teresa Marker
N1664 Old Hwy 63
Shell Lake, WI 54871
715.829.5584
tmhanson_98@yahoo.com

Chippewa

Lori Gardow
1919 Bellevue Ave
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Polk Burnett

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Rusk

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Andrew Winarczyk
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Superior Shores

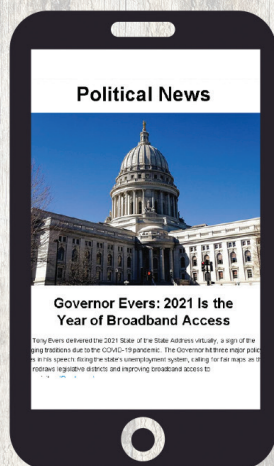
Gregg Jonson
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715.413.1238
greggsdiscovery@gmail.com



Deadline: April 1, 2021

Visit: www.wisagclassroom.org

Sign up!
AG NEWSWIRE



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- ✓ Ag events
- ✓ Weekly updates

Sign up to receive an update with the latest Farm Bureau, political and agriculture news directly to your inbox every Friday.

wfbf.com/communication/ag-newsire

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend
AG DAY AT THE CAPITOL

**Make plans to attend the 2021
Virtual Ag Day at the Capitol**

**Wednesday,
March 24, 2021.**



**Join farmers and
agriculturists from across WI
virtually and learn more
about state issues affecting
agriculture and meet with
your state representatives.**

For more information, visit:

wfbf.com/events/ag-day-at-the-capitol/

**Contact District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison
at kmattison@wfbf.com or 715.418.0975 to
schedule a virtual meeting with your legislator.**

Message From Rural Mutual Insurance Company

By Laurie Peterson, Rural Mutual Insurance Company, Northwest Regional Manager



Greetings, District 9 Farm Bureau members and happy new year from the agents and employees of Rural Mutual Insurance Company.

I hope this finds you happy and healthy. Before you slammed the door on 2020, I hope you took some time to reflect and identify the many good things that came about during this difficult and challenging year.

I have always believed the best approach is optimism. I certainly do not want to minimize the terrible pain and loss that many individuals and families have experienced. This was a difficult time and it affected everyone differently.

I tried to remain optimistic throughout and have decided to continue those thoughts into 2021. Rather than looking at the glass as being half empty, I will make the choice to focus on the fullness of the other half of that glass.

I'm thankful for so many reasons, hopeful that we have experienced the worst of this, and optimistic that we have and will come out stronger and better as individuals, organizations

and as a society.

I was forced to rethink what I considered to be priorities in my life and asked myself what was truly important. I have a new appreciation of the simple things in life, like HUGS, that I will never again take for granted. I witnessed neighbors helping neighbors and communities coming together to support one another. I believe that we persevered together while being separated, and did so by being kind, more generous, by asking for help from others and being there when called to serve.

As well as personally, this optimism was evident for me professionally. I witnessed firsthand the resourcefulness, flexibility and ingenuity of our company and agents. Working from home, virtual meetings, digital signatures and telephone policy reviews instead of kitchen table conversations, we did what it took to conduct business and take care of our clients.

Throughout the year, we stayed focused and available to support policy holders, holding to our promise of helping to keep Wisconsin strong.

To acknowledge that this was an unprecedented and unique year, Rural Mutual Insurance decided to look for ways to give back to our policy holders. Because we are a mutual

company, our primary purpose is to serve the interests of our members.

The company had a successful year with strong new business sales and reduced overall losses. In recognition of the results of the company and knowing what a difficult year this was for so many of our friends, neighbors and policy holders, a one-time dividend for policy holders was proposed by the Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of Rural Mutual Insurance Company Dan Merk at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

By now many of you know that this was approved by the Board of Directors on Dec. 31, 2020, and is reality. This one-time dividend is scheduled to be calculated and distributed starting in early February. We hope that receiving this dividend will impact you, your family and your community in a positive way. We are in this together, and together we are better.

Turning the calendar from the year 2020 to 2021 did not miraculously change our situation, but I do believe that we are going in the right direction. I encourage you, stay strong, be hopeful, ask for help, be there to help others, be diligent, protect yourself and those you love, be kind and most importantly, be optimistic.

WFBF Member Benefit: Yamaha

In December, Dunn County Farm Bureau member Steve Baier purchased a new Yamaha side-by-side from Plum City Service in Pierce County. As a benefit of his Farm Bureau membership, he received a \$250 rebate on his purchase.

Through an exclusive program offered by Yamaha Motor Corp., USA, Wisconsin Farm Bureau members receive a factory-direct rebate of \$250 on the purchase of a new Yamaha 4WD ATV, Side-by-Side or snowmobile.

The Yamaha rebate is valid on the purchase of a new Yamaha 4WD ATV, Side-by-Side or Snowmobile. Restrictions apply.

For more information, please contact your local Yamaha motorsports dealer.

Just by being a Wisconsin Farm Bureau member, you qualify for benefits and services that provide a range of options that respond to the needs of farmers, families and businesses in Wisconsin.

For more information about the Yamaha member benefit and other Farm Bureau member benefits visit, wfbf.com/membership/member-benefits.

- Program excludes all youth models.
- You must be a paid Wisconsin Farm Bureau member at the time of purchase to receive the \$250 factory direct rebate.
- You will need your Farm Bureau membership number to complete the form. Contact the WFBF office or a District Coordinator for your membership number.



“The \$250 rebate check I received after I purchased my Yamaha Side-by-Side was a great perk of being a Farm Bureau member.”

Steve Baier, Dunn County Farm Bureau Member



Ag LEAD summit

LEADERSHIP • ENGAGEMENT • ADVOCACY • DEVELOPMENT

Join us for the 2021 Virtual Ag LEAD Summit
MARCH 12

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Wesselmann



Thompson-Weeman

PRESENTED BY:



AGENDA

FRIDAY, MARCH 12

| | |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 a.m. | Welcome and Keynote Speaker PAUL WESSELMANN The Ripples Guy |
| 10:15 a.m. | Breakout Sessions |
| 11:15 a.m. | Breakout Sessions |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch Break |
| 12:30 p.m. | Keynote Speaker HANNAH THOMPSON-WEEMAN Animal Agriculture Alliance |
| 1:45 p.m. | Breakout Sessions |
| 2:45 p.m. | Closing Messages |
| 3:30 p.m. | Adjourn |

REGISTRATION

Registration will be available in early 2021.

For the latest updates, visit wfbf.com/events/ag-lead-summit

Barron County

wfbf.com/about/counties/barron
BarronCountyFarmBureau

President's Message



Karyn Schauf

Barron County Farm Bureau president

Greetings.

I always find it challenging to share something that will be timely when I need to write this so far in advance of when you will read it.

At this moment my heart is terribly heavy with impeachment action (again). I am sick of spineless leaders, of twisted truth and double

standards.

Many do not defend the very principles our wonderful nation was first founded on, or what I believe in, and that so many lives have been spent defending.

I am reminded of Isaiah 5:20 that reminds us "woe to those who call evil good and good evil."

I don't know what lies ahead but I do know I have never spent more time in prayer, and I must continue to do so.

This has been a year where I've come to enjoy and appreciate Zoom and its ability to diminish the miles and bring the outside world closer;

however, the reality of these days can leave us feeling pretty helpless, even hopeless, to make a positive difference in the world around us, or even feel like we have any control over our own life.

Let me share some advice. The reality is our world needs changing. We can make a difference but the best place to start is in the world right around us. For now, keep your world small. Focus on and love those closest to you. It's not only doable ... it's most important. You can and will make a difference in their lives.

And when the outside world breaks in here is some good reminders as we work together to bring our world back to normal.

1. We are bombarded with much disinformation. It is very difficult to sort the truth. Use, and pray for, discernment. Don't rush to judgment but take time for the truth to prevail.
2. When frustrations do arise, be sure to channel anger NOT toward each other but give grace and mercy liberally.
3. And when difficult news does arrive, remember don't kill the messenger.

And finally, pray. Please God, Bless America again.

Meet: Christina Jacobson, New Rural Mutual Insurance Agent



Please join us in welcoming Christina Jacobson to the Rural Mutual Insurance Company.

Christina lives in Rice Lake with her husband and two sons. She has 20 years of experience in customer service and sales.

Christina has excelled due to her ability to relate to customers

by listening to their needs and using positive language and sincere friendliness to win their trust and motivate them to buy. She understands the intangible values of things like life insurance and enjoys working closely with customers to customize a package that will not only protect them and their loved ones but will help them to feel confident and happy with their investment.

Most recently Christina worked as a finance and insurance manager for a regional recreational vehicle and boat dealership. Under her leadership, within one year, her department became the most profitable in the organization.

Christina is excited to join the Rural Mutual Insurance Company and looks forward to succeeding in her new role. Her office is located at 135 North Main Street, Rice Lake. Contact her at 715.736.7030 or cjacobson@ruralins.com.

Did You Hear the Good News?

The federal government's first Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) did not 'fit' for many farmers and sole proprietors; however, hidden in the Dec. 27 assistance package is an opportunity that works for many of those farmers and sole proprietors.

Now, farmers qualify for a PPP based on their Gross Income (line 9 on Schedule F of their tax return.) Gross income is eligible up to \$100,000.

This number is then divided by 12 to get your monthly income and then multiplied by 2.5 to show the loan amount.

Farmers who do have hired labor or wages showing on line 22 can use that number in addition to line 9.

The maximum loan possible would be \$40,000. It would be set up at a local bank as unsecured at one percent for five years.

After 24 weeks the farmer can apply for forgiveness and if conditions are met, the full amount is forgiven. The farmer would pay \$0 back.

This is a major change to the original PPP program and works for farmers. If you received a portion in the first round, you could receive the difference you are eligible for between the two programs.

For more information, please contact Karyn Schauf or another Barron County Farm Bureau board member.



U.S. Small Business Administration

Farmers Watershed Group Awarded Grant

The Farmers of Barron County were one of 30 producer-led watershed groups to receive a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). The Farmers of Barron County received a grant in the amount of \$17,200.

Grants support producer-led conservation solutions by encouraging innovation and farmer participation in on-the-ground efforts to improve Wisconsin's soil health and water quality.

DATCP awarded a total of \$750,000 in grants to support producer-led conservation solutions by encouraging innovation and farmer participation in on-the-ground efforts to improve Wisconsin's soil health and water quality.

This is the sixth round of grant awards since funding started with the 2015-2017 State Budget. During the first year, 14 producer-led groups submitted applications totaling more than \$242,000.

In response to an increase in applications and interest in the program since its inception, Governor Tony Evers increased the annual program funding to \$750,000 in the 2019-2021 State Budget.

For more information about current producer-led projects and contact information for groups, visit datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/ProducerLedProjects.aspx.

Apply Today!!!
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Barron County Farm Bureau will be awarding scholarships to high school seniors as well as current college students.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/barron/> for an application.

Barron County Farm Bureau



Nominate a Barron County Farmer Today!

Nomination deadline: March 1, 2021

The theme for this year's National Ag Day (March 23) is 'Food Brings Everyone to the Table.' Barron County Farm Bureau wants to take this opportunity to recognize and thank the Barron County Farmers who put that food on the table. You can help make that happen by nominating your favorite Barron County farmer.

All nominees will be placed into a drawing to receive a gift certificate to enjoy dinner out at one of Barron County's fine dining establishments.

Nomination forms can be found at:

wfbf.com/about/counties/barron/
facebook.com/barroncountyfarmbureau

Sponsored by:

Barron County Farm Bureau

Rural Mutual Insurance Company

Rural Mutual Insurance Company Agents: Eva Curtis, Greg Hayes, Tyler Holten, and Christina Jacobson



Connect with us!

<https://wfbf.com/about/counties/barron/>

[@barroncountyfarmbureau](https://facebook.com/barroncountyfarmbureau)

Meet: Kenny and Julie Sippy, Farm Bureau Board Members

Town of Cleveland couple Kenny and Julie Sippy have farmed since 1985 and grew up on family farms in the area.

Julie has been involved in leadership roles within the Chippewa County Farm Bureau since 1990 starting as the chairperson for the fruit sale.

Kenny got involved with leadership in the organization in 2000. He serves as vice president and Julie serves as secretary.

The couple like to be involved in Farm Bureau because they believe Farm Bureau is member driven and supports the efforts of people who live in rural Wisconsin and stands strong for agriculture.

Julie takes the lead with the Registered Jersey herd. Kenny and Julie also graze a herd of Red Angus beef cows on their farm west of Cornell.

Kenny also serves on the road maintenance staff for the Town of Cleveland.



Agricultural Performance Standards and Facility Ordinance Reviewed

The Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forestry Management Committee is presently in the process of drafting a new Chippewa County Ordinance titled Chippewa County Agricultural Performance Standards and Facility Ordinance.

The purpose of the Ordinance is to regulate the location, design, construction, installation, alteration, operation, maintenance, closure and use of manure storage facilities and livestock housing, along with ensuring proper application of waste and manure from all storage facilities. The ordinance will prescribe performance standards and prohibitions for Agricultural facilities, operations, and practices for soil erosion, agricultural runoff, and non-point pollution from agricultural operations. It establishes site evaluation, cost-share, and operational requirements to assure that prescribed State Agricultural performance standards are properly communicated and met and maintained. The Ordinance is

intended to provide for the administration and enforcement of the Ordinance and provide for penalties for its violation.

Why is Ordinance being proposed? The Chippewa County Board of Supervisors finds that there are conditions that threaten Chippewa County's natural and water resources, harm the health, safety of county residents and impact the property bases of Chippewa County. Threats include manure storage structures, management of manure, management of agricultural lands, management of livestock facilities are not meeting performance and technical standards,

Additional information can be obtained on Chippewa County website. Several additional meetings will be conducted on this Ordinance and a public hearing will be held soon. The proposed ordinance can also be found on the Chippewa County website.

Changes to Northwest Insurance Agency



Stacey Miller retired from his role as a Rural Mutual agent as of January 1, 2021 but the Northwest Insurance Agency will retain his services and he will transition to a consultative/administrative role.

He is available upon request for individual service needs. This will be a gradual transition to ensure that the service standards you have experienced will continue.

The staff of four licensed customer service representatives are always here to serve you. You will continue to be in good hands with these individuals who, combined, have more than 50 years of insurance experience.

From your perspective, staff are confident and anticipate that you will not notice any change in your customer service experience. Taking care of you, our valued customers, is the most important factor in any decisions we make.

Our long-term goal through changes like this is to continue to offer you the service you deserve, while providing you with the knowledge and experience necessary to take care of your insurance needs.

We appreciate your business and are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you for your continued trust in Rural Mutual Insurance Company and the Northwest Insurance Agency.

Meet: Tony Aguado, New Rural Mutual Insurance Agent



The Northwest Insurance Agency is pleased to announce the hiring of Tony Aguado.

Tony recently joined the staff of dedicated insurance professionals and is available and ready to provide the same excellent level of service you have known and have come to rely on from our agency.

If you have not already met him, the staff look forward to you having the opportunity to meet and work with Tony in the future. Tony is a sub-producing agent for Carl Thomfohrda and

Northwest Insurance Agency in Balsam Lake and Chippewa Falls.

Before starting with Northwest Insurance Agency, he worked as a middle school teacher in La Crosse and Salt Lake City, Utah.

Tony made the switch from teaching to insurance sales because it was similar to teaching in the sense that he gets to help people, but with half the stress of teaching. He enjoys the outdoors and building things. Someday he hopes to take a fishing and hunting trip to New Zealand and start a side business flipping houses. He and his wife, Brittany, live in Menomonie with a dog Remy.

"He keeps us very busy," said Tony about Remy. "It's OK because he too loves the outdoors like we do."

You can contact Tony at 715.723.6666 (Chippewa Falls office), 715.485.3010 (Balsam Lake office), or taguado@ruralins.com.

Farm Bureau Awards Scholarship



Ben Steffes received the inaugural Chippewa County Farm Bureau Scholarship.

Ben Steffes was awarded the inaugural Chippewa County Farm Bureau scholarship in 2020. Ben is a freshman at UW-River Falls majoring in animal science and enjoys many of his ag-related classes. Ben is a Cadott High School graduate.

Annually the Chippewa County Farm Bureau offers scholarships to graduating high school seniors interested in studying agriculture at a post-secondary school.

For information, contact your high school guidance counselor or Lori Gardow at the Rural Mutual Insurance office at 715.723.6666.

Apply Today!!!
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Chippewa County Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/chippewa/> for an application.

If you have any questions you can contact the office at 715.723.6666

Chippewa County Farm Bureau

Dunn County

President's Message



Kevin Gilbertson
Dunn County Farm Bureau president

I want to thank you for trusting me to lead your county Farm Bureau as your 2021 president.

I live and farm in the Elk Mound area. My wife, Kay, and I have three children: Brandon, 21; Bailey, 18; and Kaleb, 14.

We have been involved in Farm Bureau

our whole lives. We both grew up in Farm Bureau families and continued that involvement after we married. I joined the county board in the late 1990s serving as vice president for the last several years. We served on the WFBF Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee in the early 2000s. Kay has been the county Ag in the Classroom coordinator as well as the District 9 Representative on the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee.

Obviously 2020 was a challenging time for everyone including your county Farm Bureaus. In our county, we held regular board meetings and did not have ag promotion or fund-raising activities.

My first goal of 2021 is to organize and get an active promotion/fund raising committee started. The main responsibility of this committee will be to take charge of the fair food stand. If, like last year, we don't have a fair then our goal will be to try to organize a drive-thru promotion event like we saw in other areas. If you are interested in helping with this committee, please contact a member of the county board or District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison.

Also, we are organizing a local affairs committee. The goal of this committee will be to have members from across the county gather and discuss what is happening in government on a local level, including town, village, city and county, that's affecting agriculture positively and negatively.

Going forward, we want the county Farm Bureau to be active in promoting the positive and to provide facts to deter potential local ordinance's affecting agriculture negatively.

Once again if you are interested in serving on this committee, please let me know. It takes every county Farm Bureau member's help to get work done, not just those who have volunteered to serve on the board.

Thanks again in trusting me to lead your county Farm Bureau. Wishing everyone a safe 2021.

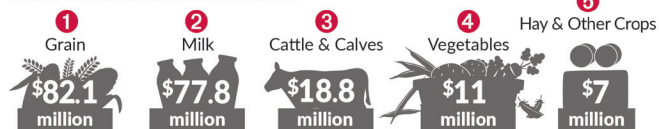


AGRICULTURE WORKS HARD FOR DUNN COUNTY

Family-owned farms, food processors and agriculture-related businesses generate thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity for Dunn County, while contributing to local income and tax revenues.

Agriculture's annual impact:

WHAT DO OUR FARMS PRODUCE?



HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES AGRICULTURE EMPLOY?



WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC IMPACT?



HOW MUCH TAX DOES AGRICULTURE CONTRIBUTE?



Apply Today!!!
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Dunn County Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships to high school seniors.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/Dunn/> for an application.

Dunn County Farm Bureau

Virtual Elected Official Meeting: Senator Jeff Smith

Strangely, the pandemic has provided us an opportunity to get familiar with virtual meeting platforms. This has allowed for legislative meetings to happen from the comfort of our own farms and to have these conversations more regularly.

On Jan. 15, Farm Bureau members met with Senator Jeff Smith (D-Eau Claire) and his Chief of Staff, Beau Stafford, via the virtual platform Zoom. Members had a great conversation with Senator Smith to discuss issues that are important to them and their farms.

Some of the topics discussed in the meeting were: Rural broadband, rural infrastructure, local meat processing facilities/meat processing incentives, wolves, rural mental health, water quality, conservation and bipartisan cooperation.

During the meeting, Senator Smith challenged members to help keep legislators informed, stating, "We need you helping remind us of the

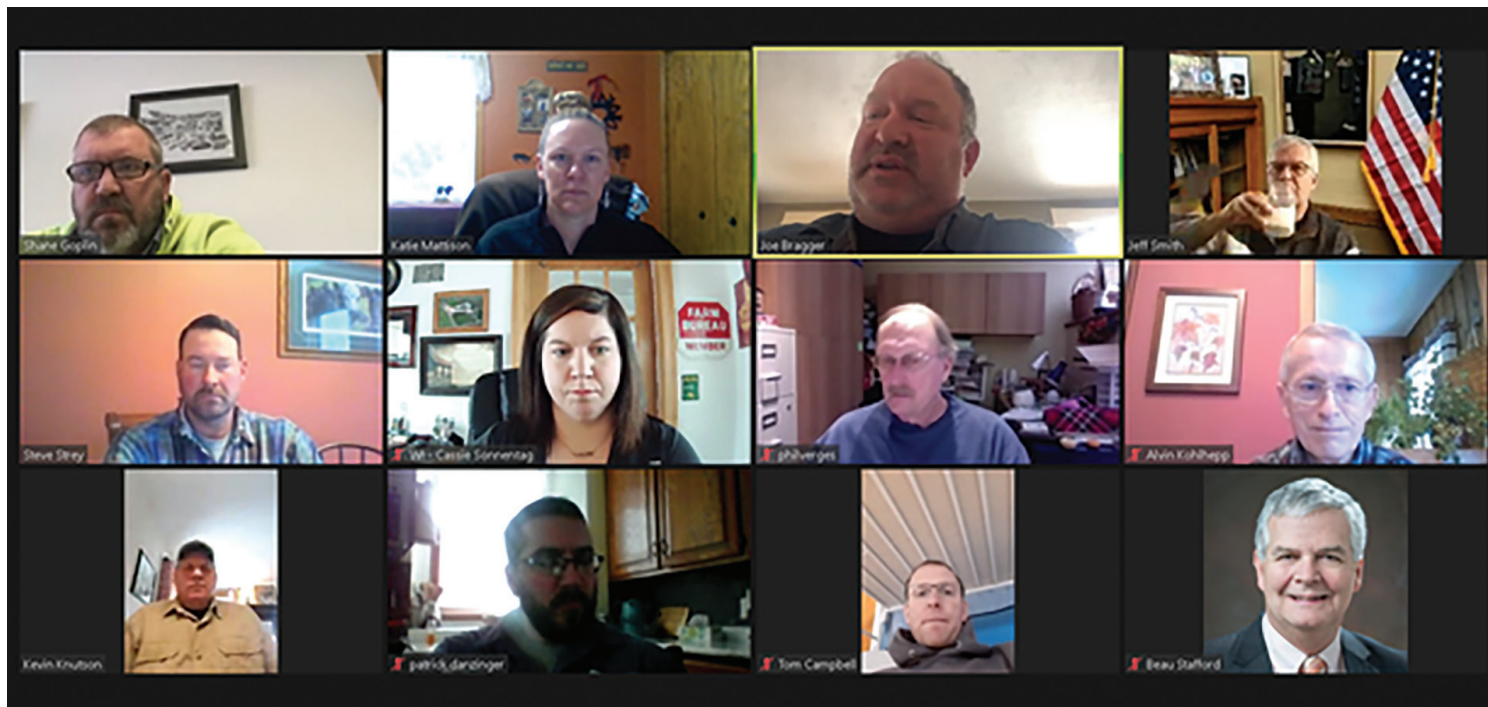
needs of rural Wisconsin. We succeed when rural Wisconsin succeeds."

An ask of the Senator was that we continue the discussion and work together to hold meetings between him and Farm Bureau members on a regular basis to keep up to speed on the issues.

Meeting with our legislators is the most effective means of letting them know where we stand on issues. While carrying out effective meetings takes effort and patience, it can pay huge dividends for the future of agriculture.

Farmers and constituents from the district bring credibility and trust to Madison and Washington, D.C.

If you want tips on how to advocate for agriculture and communicate with your local elected officials, visit wfbf.com/policy/take-action or contact a county Farm Bureau board member or District 9 Coordinator Katie Mattison.

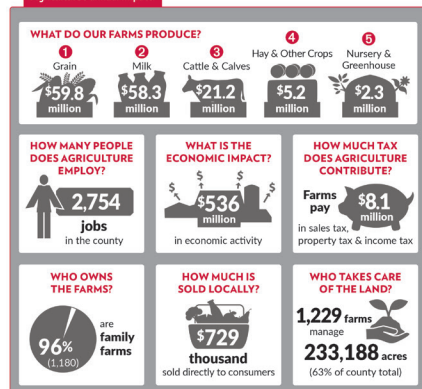


AGRICULTURE WORKS HARD FOR

PIERCE COUNTY

Family-owned farms, food processors and agriculture-related businesses generate thousands of jobs and millions of dollars of economic activity for Pierce County, while contributing to local income and tax revenues.

Agriculture's annual impact:



Virtual Shop Talks for Farmers

February 3, 17; March 3, 17

Resource Stewardship in Hard Times

Join us for meaningful conversations between farmers and experts about ideas and programs that can help you weather hard times and have success with stewardship practices.

Free and open to farmers from across the Midwest and Mid-South. Connect with like-minded farmers.

Registration is required.
For more information and to register, visit <https://bit.ly/virtualshoptalks>.





Apply Today!!!
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Polk Burnett Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/Polk-Burnett/> for an application.

If you have any questions you can contact the office at 715.485.3010

Polk Burnett Farm Bureau®

Dairy Farmers Receive Burnett Dairy Milk Quality Award

Burnett Dairy Cooperative is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2020 Alpha Award: H&W Soldner Farms, Turtle Lake; Brad & Sheanah Voeltz, Emerald; Raymond Dairy, Inc., New Richmond; Kyle and Sara Mathison, Cumberland; Marshland Farms, Inc., Cushing; Gausman Farm, Grant Gausman, Baldwin; and Val-O-Mo Farm, Elmwood.

The Alpha Award is Burnett Dairy's annual milk quality award given to the top five dairy farms based on average somatic cell count for the fiscal year, with the lowest SCC average receiving top honors.

To learn more about Burnett Dairy Cooperative and its products and services, please visit www.burnettdairy.com.

Rusk County

wfbf.com/about/counties/rusk
RuskCountyFarmBureau

Farm Bureau Awards Scholarships

Rusk County Farm Bureau is proud to assist future generations of agriculture leaders by offering scholarships to graduating high school seniors every year.

Applicants were asked to complete an application that included their future education plans, community and school activities and letters of recommendation from teachers.



Katie Zimmer is a 2020 graduate of Flambeau High School. She grew up on her family's dairy farm in Glen Flora and raised livestock after the dairy was sold. In middle school she became involved in FFA and started showing pigs at the Rusk County Junior Fair. Her experiences in

agriculture and FFA, and other organizations in high school, encouraged her to pursue a degree in agricultural business and minor in Spanish at UW-River Falls. She plans to own a business that supports farm to table operations and agricultural education in and out of the classroom.



Nadia VanDoorn is a graduate of Flambeau High School. She grew up on her family's dairy farm in Tony where they milk 650 Holsteins. Her family also started a beef operation. Nadia attends UW-River Falls and is pursuing a degree in agriculture.

We are proud to recognize Katie Zimmer and Nadia Van Doorn as recipients of 2020 Rusk County Farm Bureau scholarships.



FARMER APPRECIATION DAY

Rusk County Farm Bureau recognizes the importance our farmers have on our community.

We want to give back by sponsoring a FREE farmer appreciation day.

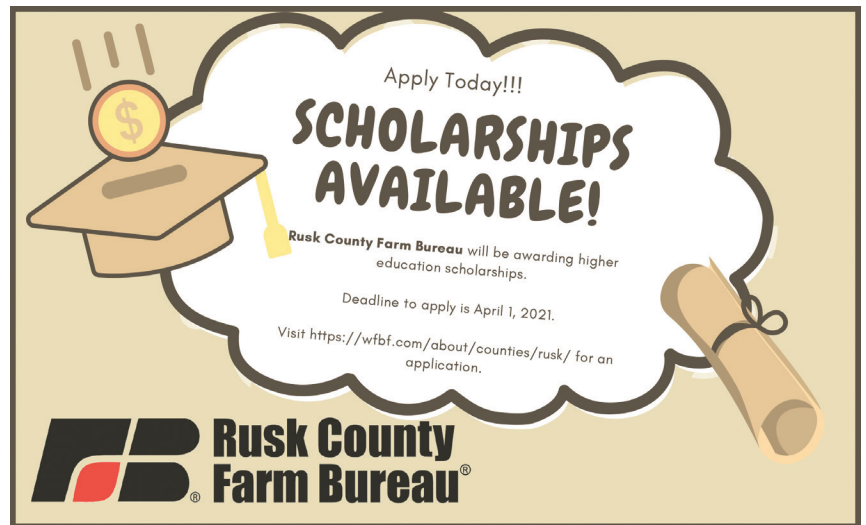
LOCATION:
HANKS FARM & FOOD
MARSHALL ROAD, SHELDON

DATE: TBD

WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION TO COME:

[HTTPS://WFBF.COM/ABOUT/COUNTIES/RUSK/](https://wfbf.com/about/counties/rusk/)

 @RUSKCOUNTYFARMBUREAU



Apply Today!!!
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Rusk County Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/rusk/> for an application.

Rusk County Farm Bureau®

The Rusk County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce its intent to award higher education scholarship(s) to 2021 graduating high school seniors in the amount of at least \$250. The scholarship(s) are open to graduating seniors living in Rusk County and who are accepted into an accredited agriculture-related field of study through college, vocation or technical school. Preference will be given to students of Farm Bureau families, but all applicants will be seriously considered.

President's Column

Leslie Svacina

St. Croix County Farm Bureau president



Pivot continues to be a common theme in our lives with the work we're doing, whether we're on the farm or working in ag.

It's true with the home front, too, with our families. For our family and farm, we've continued to adapt with the ever-changing events, whether that's keeping a close eye

on how we're serving our customers' needs with the farm, learning how to encourage my son to enjoy his virtual 4-H activities, we are doing a lot of baking, and continuing to learn how to balance our limited technology resources, internet and mobile phone service, between my farm business work and my husband's off-farm job that is now at home.

I know you're in the same place, continuing to adapt to what comes in front of us.

WFBF Annual Meeting

Thank you to Dave Kruschke and Steve Mueller for joining me as a delegate, representing St. Croix County, particularly during the Resolutions Session during the virtual WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

We joined more than 100 member delegates, farmers and folks who work in agriculture, to review and vote on updates to our WFBF's Resolutions Policy document. At the state level, this document is what dictates how WFBF organization including, farmer-board of directors and government relations staff, works on behalf of us with our policymakers on issues impacting Wisconsin agriculture and rural communities. The federal resolutions are forwarded to AFBF and are reviewed during a similar process.

As a grassroots organization, our national and state policy stances start with our members at the local level. During our county annual meetings, we voice concerns regarding the challenges we're facing on the farm or in our rural communities.

This can be issue-related or positions on how the government can be of support. These issues are put into written resolutions and voted on at the local level. The county resolutions are reviewed at the state level and are incorporated into the existing Policy Resolutions Policy document as a draft. This is what we reviewed, discussed amendments and voted on during the delegate assembly.

There were a number of resolutions relating to dairy, as well as several relating the stresses on our meat processing infrastructure.

For more details on items discussed, check out the policy resolutions highlights on page 2 of this newsletter.

Voicing Your Concerns or Needs

If you find that you have an issue related to your farm, whether it's local, state or federal, please contact me at 651.261.3079 (call or text) or leslie.svacina@gmail.com or District 9 Board of Director Peter Kimball. We can connect you with others and work together to support you in your work in agriculture.

Thank You to County Board Members

Lastly, I want to extend a thank you to county board members for their flexibility during the last year in adapting to how we conducted our board business, whether it was virtual meetings, offering meeting space on their farms to allow for social distancing or finding new ways to serve our community.

Farm Bureau Donates to Organizations

In the spirit of giving this holiday season, St. Croix County Farm Bureau members decided to give to two non-profits including Operation Gratitude and Wisconsin Foster Closet.

Jenny Mueller, Lexi DuSell and Amy Shafer collaborated to do the shopping and items delivered.

Operation Gratitude sends care packages to deployed troops and front-line responders.

Items purchased from the suggested list included: Socks, batteries, personal hygiene products, nonperishable foods and puzzles.

Wisconsin Foster Closet is located in Menomonie, and provides clothes and other necessities to Wisconsin kids in foster care.

We received a Christmas wish list for two boys and two girls. We were able to get an outfit and some fun items off of each of their lists.

Giving to these organizations was a heart-warming experience.



WWCC Spring No-Till Incentive Program

The Western Wisconsin Conservation Council is seeking farmers to implement no-till practices and will award \$2,000 to the first five applicants to help cover expenses.

The cost-share will go to applicants who meet these criteria:

- Are members in good standing of the WWCC (membership form and completed 2020 Annual Member Survey on file).
 - Agree to implement no-till on at least 40 acres of cropland that has been tilled in each of the last three years.
 - Agree to provide a report about the acreage, including location, crops planted and subsequent outcomes that can be shared with other members and sponsors.
- * Applicants will be provided with a list of members who may be open to renting necessary equipment.

To apply, visit <https://westernwisconservation.org/ntip> to complete the form and return it to WWCC. Awards will be distributed in the order in which approved applications were received. If your application is approved, WWCC will contact you to discuss next steps and project requirements.

The WWCC is a group of farmers committed to being stewards of the land and water in our care. They use research, collaboration and financial resources to promote farming best practices that keep soil healthy and water clean. The aim is to bring benefit to the whole community while preserving family farming as a way of life.



**WESTERN WISCONSIN
CONSERVATION COUNCIL**

St. Croix County

wfbf.com/about/counties/st-croix
StCroixCountyFarmBureau

Apply Today!!!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

St Croix County Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is March 25, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/st-croix/> for an application.

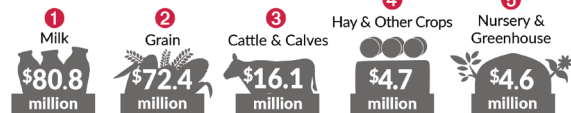



AGRICULTURE WORKS HARD FOR

► ST. CROIX COUNTY



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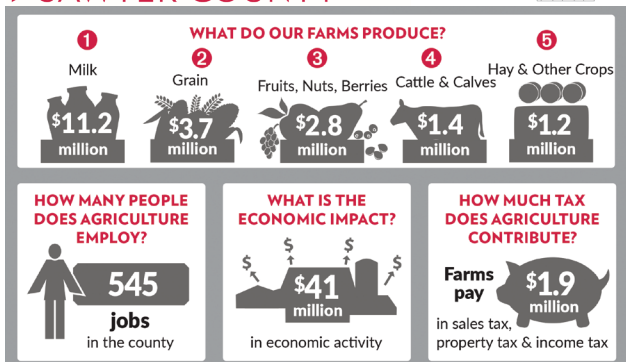
Sawyer County

wfbf.com/about/counties/sawyer
SawyerCountyFarmBureau



AGRICULTURE WORKS HARD FOR

► SAWYER COUNTY




Apply Today!!!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

Sawyer County Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is April 1, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/sawyer/> for an application.



Superior Shores

wfbf.com/about/counties/superiorshores
SuperiorShoresFarmBureau

Apply Today!!!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!

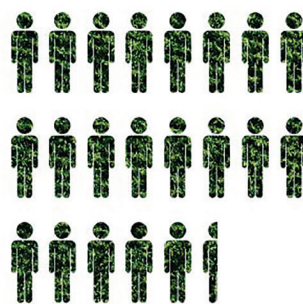
Superior Shores Farm Bureau will be awarding higher education scholarships.

Deadline to apply is April 15, 2021.

Visit <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/superior-shores/> for an application.



The U.S. DEPENDS on Farming



Farming and related industries employ

21.6
million people

making up 11% of total U.S. employment

WWW.AGDAY.ORG



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This Issue Contains Highlights for:

Barron County
Chippewa County
Dunn County
Pierce County
Polk Burnett
Rusk County
St. Croix County
Sawyer County
Superior Shores

Strong Wisconsin Reputation

Rural Mutual is ranked as one of the top Property & Casualty insurance companies in the Nation and has the financial stability to be there when our policyholders need us most.



Rural Mutual has earned a Financial Strength Rating of A+ (Superior).



For twelve consecutive years, Rural Mutual has earned a spot on the WARD'S Top 50 list.

Thank you for trusting in us. Visit RuralMutual.com to contact a local agent.

Rural Mutual
Insurance Company