

# Grassroots

District 3 News

## Strength in Numbers



**Robert Nigh**

WFBF District 3 Director

Winter has arrived with -30 wind chills and colder. BRRRR!

COVID restrictions continue, but we were able to meet in person as a board on Jan. 20. It was nice to see the board together in Stevens Point. Masks and social distancing were the requirements for the day.

We had a robust discussion on several topics. The board gave direction and prioritized several legislative issues. The Governor's budget proposal will occupy a lot of staff time this spring. Other issues including labeling, water, NR151 and finishing a growth management proposal also will take significant time from staff, the board and membership. Please help where you can in terms of testifying, advocacy and education with our elected officials.

I mentioned water issues. This spring, there are opportunities to get your well water tested in Vernon, Crawford and Richland counties. Contact your county conservation folks for more details soon. Baseline data is severely lacking in this area of the state. I encourage you to seriously consider this opportunity.

Local affairs is working hard to keep abreast of issues such as moratoriums, rewrites of manure ordinances and many more. Check out the 'Playbook' from local affairs.

Membership is lagging last year's early results. Hopefully you can get out and recruit new members and renewals. There is strength in numbers and this year we will need to work hard for our membership goals. We can accomplish this goal together. Financials are looking good for 2021. COVID has made for many changes in our expenses relating to travel, lodging and meetings. Strong membership numbers will help our bottom line.

Rural Mutual has been and continues to be a very strong partner. Rural also had a good year and was able to offer dividends or rebates to our membership with insurance products. Thank you to the Rural Mutual team and policy holders.

We hope that 2021 will give us more opportunities to be together in person. In the meantime keep checking in with each other. Your call or text may be what the recipient needed that day. Also, their laughter or smile emoji may be what you needed. Speaking from experience.

As always, stay safe and stay informed.

## Cates Receives 'Distinguished Service to Wisconsin Agriculture' Award

Iowa County Farm Bureau member, Richard (Dick) Cates Jr. was presented the 'Distinguished Service to Wisconsin Agriculture' award for his outstanding, long-term contributions to Wisconsin's agricultural industry during the virtual WFBF 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting.

A Wisconsin native, Dick has been surrounded by agriculture his whole life. He earned his Ph.D. in soil science from UW-Madison. He and his wife, Kim, returned to the family farm with a determination to turn it into a successful business. Dick and Kim co-own Cates Family Farm LLC with their son Eric, his wife, Kiley, and daughter Shannon and her husband, Dan.

"Farm Bureau is about people working together to get a job done. There are always some who stand out because of special contributions they have made to Wisconsin agriculture and Dick is one of those outstanding people," said past WFBF President Joe Bragger.

In 1995, Dick helped create the Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers, which is a program within UW-Madison's Farm and Industry Short Course and Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems that teaches young farmers what they need to know when starting their farming businesses. This program has assisted more than 600 young and not-so-young individuals to start, or move towards, their dream to farm. Dick retired from this work in 2018, but during the 23 years he also developed and taught courses in grassland ecology, pasture management, managed grazing and agroecology within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at UW-Madison.

Previously, Dick served on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Board of Directors and the USDA Secretary's Advisory Council for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. Dick serves on the boards of the Town of Wyoming (elected official), Spring Green Fire District, Driftless Area Land Conservancy, Upland Hills Health Foundation, and the Sand County Foundation. Additionally, the Cates family has been recognized for their soil and water conservation work through various awards since 1998 and are members of the Iowa County Uplands Farmer-Led Watershed Project and the Lowery Creek Watershed Initiative.

"Dick's commitment to the agriculture community is admirable because he leads by example," said Bragger. "He is extremely deserving of this award."



## WFBF Delegates Set Policy for 2021

The 101<sup>st</sup> WFBF Annual Meeting took place virtually on Dec. 4-5. More than 200 delegates from across the state established new policy directives for the organization. The adopted policies will guide the legislative agenda for the organization 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 also was 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 also was 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.

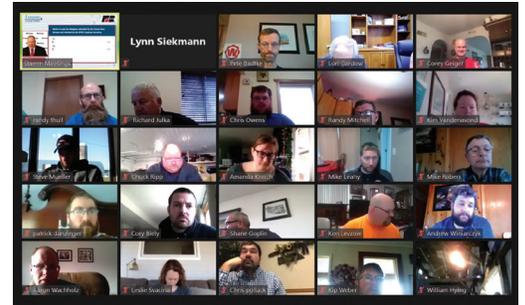
- Delegates also supported:
- Increased availability of natural gas in rural Wisconsin.
  - Requiring individuals and entities digging in road right of ways or easements to notify property owners before digging.
  - Farm to School programs to promote buying local foods and education of food production, 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.



The 2021 Farm Bureau Policy book is available to view at [wfbf.com/policy](http://wfbf.com/policy).



## Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee Update



**Andrew Dal Santo**  
YFA Committee Representative

So here we are 2021. You know that saying ... “New year, new me?” Well, I think that saying is an understatement.

It’s easy to toss out that old calendar and hang up one of the 500 new calendars that seem to get handed out. But what I think is the understatement is the way

we have been able to overcome and move into 2021 with such a positive outlook. New goals. New habits. New outlooks. The list can keep on going and going.

Although 2021 is not a total fresh or new start, there are a lot of things that have carried over from 2020 that have made the Wisconsin Farm Bureau and YFA look at things in a NEW and better way.

Recently, the WFBF YFA Committee had their first committee meeting

for 2021, virtually of course. What came out of that meeting was a mixture of both old and new. We shared a lot of the old 2020 recaps ... how much we enjoy talking with everyone, how farming is going, how each district is doing, etc.

I think the best part of the meeting was talking about the new ... what we can grow to get more involvement, new ideas for the next annual meeting and how to make things that didn’t work so well in 2020 work in 2021. The outcome of the meeting boasted ideas that intertwined using both the old and new experiences to grow in 2021.

Our goal is to build involvement and connectiveness through new platforms and engagements. We have monthly virtual events that we are planning so we can share different experiences each district has to offer. Look for more information to come.

We also are already planning the 2021 YFA Conference. I am super excited to see what this year has in store for WFBF and YFA. From what we learned last year and growing together into 2021, I have no doubt that we will have the best year yet. As always please contact me with ideas, thoughts or to chitchat.

Thank you for your involvement and let’s make 2021 the best yet.

## 7 Tips for Advocating During the Pandemic



By Derek Orth, Farmer and Member of PAL Class 10

Although the last year has been interesting, there are still ways we can advocate for agriculture and share our stories with consumers. Here are a few tips I've learned through the American Farm Bureau's Partners in Agriculture Leadership (PAL) Class, other media training or tried myself.

### Make Connections

We in agriculture are good at "the echo chamber." We share stories, events and our daily duties on the farm with our friends and other people in agriculture, but how can we get out of our bubble and share with those outside? Think of people that you know outside of agriculture ... church, school, parents of your children's friends or even online. Are you part of non-agriculture Facebook groups or follow people on Twitter or Instagram with no agriculture background? Ask them one simple question: "Hey, I'm working on a project. What is something that you'd like to know more about when it comes to farming and agriculture?" Then tell them by creating a video, picture or explanation. One simple question can make you 'their farmer' or the expert that they reach out to every time they have a question about farming.

### Connect with Schools

Teachers are always looking for content to share with students. Reach out to a teacher and ask them to have their students "ask a farmer." The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture has a great program called "Kids' Questions about Agriculture!" Visit [www.agfoundation.org](http://www.agfoundation.org) to learn more or find them on Facebook. You can get involved, share their answers or work with a local teacher to create your own videos for kids.



### Create Virtual Tours

In the age of Zoom and distance learning, what better way to share about your farm than with a virtual tour? If you have a phone that can record videos, you can make this happen. Most phones and tablets today also come with free video editing apps like iMovie that you can use to create great videos that combine video clips, photos and audio into one easy flowing video that many will enjoy. You can see the virtual tour I created by going to YouTube and searching for me, Derek Orth.

### Be Vulnerable

This is tough for us. Agriculturalists are private people. Sometimes it's easy for us to show off a shiny new tractor, your latest excellent cow or a bumper crop you just harvested. But what about the other days? Sharing the flat tire, the field of hay ready to bale getting rained on or pouring your heart out over the dead calf that you've been waiting nine months for. This is a great way to make connections. We're not looking for pity or people to feel sorry for us. We need to show our struggles because we

are human. Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Comparison is the thief of joy." While on social media, we constantly see each other's bests, but being vulnerable and sharing our worst can help us connect inside and outside of our tribe.

### Use Positivity

That said, watch out for negativity. People react differently when you use positive language as opposed to negative language. "We don't beat our calves." "We treat our calves with care and kindness." Those two sentences say the same thing, but one of them makes us cringe and the other makes us smile. When sharing a story, try to use the most positive words possible. No, not, none, no one, nobody, nothing, neither, nowhere and plenty others don't belong in our stories.

### Share Someone Else's Story

What if you're in agriculture but not a farmer? Do you have farmer friends? Share what they are doing on their farm with your friends and on social media. Maybe they have questions and you can be the bridge to a farmer they can learn from. Are you good at videography or editing? You could offer to take some videos on the farm and compile them to share with the world. They don't have to be perfect, either. Sometimes the most candid and amateur videos gain the most respect from those that watch them.



### Inform, Don't Educate

Lastly, inform, don't educate. Our customers are smart, well-educated people. There is just so much misinformation and misunderstanding in the world, especially about what happens on our farms. We've all heard "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink." Humans are the same way. Take the time to lead and share your wealth of knowledge about farming, and hopefully someone listening will drink up the facts and stories you share.



We're in this together, and we can be better advocates for agriculture and share the great stories of farming even when we are completely distanced.

*Derek and his wife Charisse farm with his parents on their dairy, Orthridge Jerseys, in Grant County. They are the proud parents to two young daughters, Zeeva and Jaylee. In 2019, Derek was selected to participate in American Farm Bureau's tenth class of the Partners in Agricultural Leadership honors program along with nine other young leaders. PAL is designed to help agricultural leaders accelerate their leadership abilities and solidify their roles as advocates for agriculture.*



## Promotion and Education Committee Update



**Krista Klinkner**

Promotion and Education Committee Representative

With the first day of spring around the corner, I'm sure you're looking forward to the promise of a new growing season. As we make our way through this last leg of winter, there's still time to participate in and take advantage of some of the great informative sessions Farm Bureau is offering.

Below are key dates of activities that can be enjoyed from the comfort of your own living room, barn office or wherever life and WiFi finds you.

### Wisconsin Chili Lunch

Celebrate all Wisconsin Farm to School has to offer by participating in the Wisconsin Chili Lunch. The third annual Wisconsin Chili Lunch is a statewide farm to school event that encourages K-12 schools, hospitals, colleges, business campuses, community organizations and early care sites to get warm and cozy around bowls of chili at home, school or any educational setting.

The lunch encourages the use of Wisconsin-grown foods and supports our local farmers. This year, the WFBF Promotion and Education Committee members are compiling their favorite chili recipes.



### 'My Not So Secret But Still Yummy' Chili Recipe

#### Ingredients

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1.5 lbs. ground beef                        | 3 teaspoons chili powder |
| 1 16 oz. can tomato sauce                   | 1 teaspoon salt          |
| 2 14.5 oz. cans diced fire roasted tomatoes | 1 teaspoon garlic powder |
| 1 16 oz. can mild chili beans               | 1 teaspoon dried mustard |
| 1 onion, chopped                            |                          |

#### Instructions

Brown beef then add the rest of ingredients. Let simmer and enjoy.

### Ag LEAD Summit

The virtual 2021 Ag Lead Summit will be held on Friday, March 12, and is open to Wisconsin Farm Bureau members. The summit gives attendees the opportunity to learn more about tools, resources, ideas and best practices to use when advocating for agriculture and conducting promotional events. The conference will be broken into four tracks: Leading Your Own Self Development, Engaging Consumers, Advocating for Agriculture and Developing Agribusinesses.

Keynote speakers include Paul Wesselman, The Ripples Guy, and Hannah Thompson-Weeman of the Animal Agriculture Alliance.

### FUSION ReImagined

The first ever virtual FUSION Conference will kick-off on the evening of Thursday, March 11, and conclude Saturday, March 13. Events will begin after 12 p.m. EST. There will be great speakers, breakout sessions and evening events to bring together volunteer leaders from the Promotion and Education, Women's Leadership and Young Farmers and Ranchers programs. You will leave the virtual conference with new friends, new ideas and new energy for your farm and Farm Bureau. The conference is free and open to Farm Bureau members.



### Amplify Agriculture Webinar Series

The AFBF Promotion and Education Committee is offering a new Amplify Agriculture webinar series. The first webinar was held in November on the topic of social media. Upcoming webinars are scheduled for April 8 and June 10. Information about upcoming speakers and topics may be found on the 'Farm Bureau Promotion and Education' Facebook page.

Last but certainly not least, we congratulate Wisconsin Farm Bureau's own Andrea Brossard on being re-appointed to the AFBF Promotion and Education Committee for a second term. Andrea also was selected by her fellow committee members to serve as vice-chair. It's exciting to see Wisconsin Farm Bureau well represented on the national committee.



Photo Credit: Krista Dolan



## 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 Wisconsin virtually and learn more about state issues effecting agriculture and meet with your state representatives.

**Tentative Agenda:** 9 - 11 a.m. – Briefings  
11:30 a.m. – Legislative visits

**Prerecorded welcome messages** from Gov. Tony Evers and Secretary-designee of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Randy Romanski

**Registration Information:**  
Cost: Free  
Link: [bit.ly/2021AgDayReg](https://bit.ly/2021AgDayReg)  
Deadline: March 17

For more information, visit [wfbf.com/events/ag-day-at-the-capitol](https://wfbf.com/events/ag-day-at-the-capitol)

Presented by: Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation

Thank You to Our Sponsors: Rural Mutual GROWMARK

## Ag in the Classroom Update

By Livia Doyle, Iowa County Ag in the Classroom Coordinator

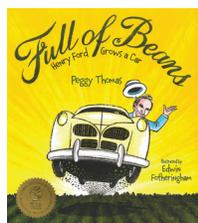
### Essay Contest

The Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom program is once again holding an essay contest for fourth- and fifth-grade students in public schools, private schools or homeschool programs. This year's essay contest topic is 'How have Wisconsin soybean farmers fueled Wisconsin's economy?' The topic is based on the Book of the Year "Full of Beans: Henry Ford Grows a Car" written by Peggy Thomas and illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham.

Essay submissions must be 100- to 300-words in length and will be judged on content, grammar, spelling and neatness. Contest rules, lesson plans and sample classroom activities are located on the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom website at [wisagclassroom.org](http://wisagclassroom.org). Essays are due to your county coordinator by April 1. One winner will be selected from each county and their essay will advance to the district level.

### Book of the Year

Each year Wisconsin Farm Bureau selects an outstanding agricultural book highlighting facts and information about the agriculture industry. This year's Book of the Year is "Full of Beans: Henry Ford Grows a Car" written by Peggy Thomas and illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham. This picture book shares how American automobile manufacturer and inventor Henry Ford made cars ... millions of cars. But there was one car he showed great innovation and determination to build, a car completely made of soybeans.



"Full of Beans" inspires readers of all ages to think innovatively and perhaps, even build a car completely made of soybeans. The county Farm Bureaus of District 3 have donated a copy of this book to many of the elementary schools and public libraries throughout southwest Wisconsin.

### Upcoming Dates

*March 2, National Read Across America Day*

Consider getting in contact with a local teacher and volunteering your time to read an agriculture-themed book to students in elementary school. Connect with the students via Zoom, share a little bit about yourself and read an agricultural picture book of your choice. If you are interested in this idea, please contact me for book recommendations or to borrow a book. I have so many great titles for you to choose from.

*March 7, National Cereal Day*

Enjoy your favorite bowl of cereal and thank the farmers and truck drivers who helped bring breakfast to your table. Wisconsin dairy farmers produce more than 30 billion pounds of milk each year, and wheat and corn are two of Wisconsin's top 10 commodities.

*March 14, National Potato Chip Day*

Wisconsin ranks third in the nation for potato production. Wisconsin potato growers harvest more than 2.7 billion pounds of potatoes each year across our state.

*March 23, National Ag Day*

The National Ag Day theme for 2021 is 'Food brings everyone to the table.' Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom is encouraging students in grades PreK-12 to participate in sharing their creativity by submitting an entry for National Ag Day. Entries can portray different kinds of foods the



students like; show what farmers, processors and others do to bring food from the farm to table; share fun facts about food; or show things they want to share about food. For more information on the Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Ag Day Activity, visit [wisagclassroom.org](http://wisagclassroom.org). Entries must be submitted by March 31.

The national group also has student contests, downloadable materials and ideas of how to celebrate National Ag Day at [agday.org](http://agday.org).

*June 28-July 1, National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference*

The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization is excited to announce this year's annual meeting and conference will held as a 'hybrid' model, meaning it will be held in-person in Des Moines, Iowa, for those who choose to travel and via a virtual platform/live streaming for those who choose not to. Each year the conference brings together hundreds of teachers, volunteers, informal educators and industry experts from across the country to share ideas, network and celebrate agricultural literacy. To learn more about the conference, visit [www.agclassroom.org/conference](http://www.agclassroom.org/conference). The early registration deadline is June 1.



### Get Involved

If you or someone you know is looking for resources or ideas, please consider contacting your county Ag in the Classroom coordinator. County Ag in the Classroom programs are stocked with educational resources, books, lesson plan ideas and activities to do with children of all ages. We enjoy sharing these resources with teachers, 4-H leaders, library media specialists, parents, etc. Together, we can connect and teach so many of tomorrow's consumers about the importance of today's agriculture industry.



Ag in the Classroom  
Essay Contest

**Essay Topic: How have Wisconsin**

**soybean farmers fueled Wisconsin's economy?**

Submit your essay to your county coordinator:

Crawford

Grant

Iowa

Pat Dearth  
46823 Drake Rd.  
Gays Mills, WI 54631  
608.279.2417

Charisse Orth  
11555 Mount Ridge Rd.  
Fennimore, WI 53809  
608.778.8101

Megan Yager  
6235 Woodlawn Rd.  
Mineral Point, WI 53565  
608.574.4028

Lafayette

Richland

Vernon

Gretchen Kamps  
24240 County Rd. F  
Belmont, WI 53510  
608.762.5752

Germaine Hying  
23870 Sorge Ln.  
Muscodia, WI 53573  
608.739.3367

Travis Klinkner  
S4993 Volden Ln.  
Genoa, WI 54632  
608.633.1981

**Word Count: 100-300    Deadline: April 1, 2021**

## Krentz Elected WFBF President



Kevin Krentz was elected president of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and Rural Mutual Insurance Company. Krentz is a dairy farmer from Berlin in Waushara County.

Krentz was first elected to the WFBF Board of Directors in 2012 to represent District 5, which

includes: Adams, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Juneau, Marquette, Waushara and Winnebago counties.

Kevin is president of Krentz Family Dairy, Inc. He started his farming career in 1994 when he purchased his father's 60 cows. He grew the farm to 600 cows and 1,300 acres of crops.

Kevin and his wife, Holly, have a daughter and three sons.

Dave Daniels from Union Grove in Kenosha County was re-elected to serve as vice president.

Arch Morton Jr. of Janesville in Rock County was re-elected to a three-year term on the board representing District 2 (Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Rock and Sauk counties).

Joe Bragger of Independence in Buffalo County was re-elected to a three-year term on the board representing District 4 (Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe and Trempealeau counties).

Rosie Lisowe of Chilton in Calumet County was re-elected to a three-year term on the board representing District 6 (Brown, Calumet, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Sheboygan counties).

Nine of the 11 members of the WFBF board of directors are farmers elected in each of Farm Bureau's nine districts. These nine individuals also make up the board of directors for the Rural Mutual Insurance Company. Rounding out the WFBF's board are the chairs of WFBF's Young Farmer and Agriculturist and Promotion and Education Committees, both of which serve a one-year term on the board.

Lynn Leahy of Plover in Waushara County was elected to a one-year term as the chair of the Promotion and Education Committee and will serve as the representative on the board. She succeeds Darby Sampson from Jackson County.

Emily Johnson of Orfordville in Rock County was elected to a one-year term as chair of the Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee and will serve as the representative on the board. She succeeds Kelly Oudenhoven of Outagamie County as YFA Chair.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Board Directors who were not up for re-election included: Dave Daniels of Union Grove in Kenosha County, Robert Nigh of Viroqua in Vernon County, Kevin Krentz of Berlin in Waushara County, Brian Preder of Weyauwega in Waupaca County, Ryan Klussendorf of Medford in Taylor County and Peter Kimball of Baldwin in Pierce County.

## Farm Bureau Proud Club Recognizes Volunteers

Each year WFBF recognizes membership volunteers who have made an extra effort to promote Farm Bureau by signing up five or more new members.

Typically these Farm Bureau Proud Club members are acknowledged at the WFBF Annual Meeting in December. This year, a specialty cheese box was filled with agricultural items from around the state and delivered to each Farm Bureau Proud Club member.

Congratulations to the following District 3 members who signed up at least five new members and continue to work hard to keep Farm Bureau strong and growing.

Mike Harms was also recognized as one of the 'Top 10' membership volunteers, signing up nine new members.



Katie Roth, Grant County



Krista Dolan, Iowa County



Justin Doyle, Iowa County



Tim Appell, Lafayette County



Mike Hames, Lafayette County





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

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**REGISTRATION**  
Registration will be available in early 2021.

For the latest updates, visit [wfbf.com/events/ag-lead-summit](http://wfbf.com/events/ag-lead-summit)

## Conservation Corner



By Katie Abbot, Iowa County Land Conservationist

Let's think spring. Are your fields ready for snowmelt and rain? As you prepare for the upcoming cropping season, it's a great time to think about your soil and water too.

- Before spreading manure, visit Wisconsin's Runoff Risk Advisory Forecast and winter restriction maps at [www.manureadvisorysystem.wi.gov](http://www.manureadvisorysystem.wi.gov). This will help you reduce the chances of losing those valuable nutrients to runoff that can also pollute nearby water.
- The upcoming Wisconsin Manure Applicator training will cover the basics of manure spill response, setbacks and regulations, neighbor relations and equipment/manure gas safety. Register for any one of the sessions online at <http://go.wisc.edu/4lm34e> for \$10/person. Trainings will be: March 4 at 9 a.m.-noon, March 11 at 6-9 p.m., March 23 at 9 a.m.-noon and March 29 at 12:30-3:30 p.m. For more information, contact Kevin Erb at [kevin.erb@wisc.edu](mailto:kevin.erb@wisc.edu).
- Consider incorporating practices to increase soil health, promote water infiltration and protect valuable soil from being battered by heavy rain. Cover crops, grassed waterways, filter strips and reduced tillage are a few examples. Your county conservation department or NRCS office may have funding to help with the costs of these practices and can provide advice. For information, visit <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/covercrop> or search the internet for NRCS Soil Health.

## Meet: Erica Sauer, Lafayette County Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning Department Manager



Hi my name is Erica Sauer and I am the new Lafayette County Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning Department Manager.

I grew up on a dairy farm outside of Darlington that is currently run by of my parents, Tim and Kim McComish, and my brother and sister-in-law, Joe and Amber McComish. I am married to Brock Sauer and we have a daughter, Brooke, who recently turned one-year-old.

I attended UW-Platteville and earned a bachelor's degree in soil and crop science and minored in Spanish. During my college career, I was involved in the UW-Platteville Crops Team, Agronomy/SWCS Club and Ag Council.

Upon graduation, I was employed at Biddick, Inc., in Livingston as an Agronomy Supervisor working in seed corn, popcorn, soybean and small grain seed production.

Following my time at Biddick, Inc., I found myself wanting to be closer to home and began my career at Insight FS in Darlington as a Nutrient Management Specialist. For the last three years, I have enjoyed working with farmers in southwest Wisconsin writing nutrient management plans and developing variable rate fertilizer recommendations.

I am very excited to serve as the Land Conservation and Planning and Zoning Department Manager and cannot wait to work with the residents and farmers of Lafayette County.



25  
April

### GRANT COUNTY

UP TO \$1,500 AWARDED

Application available at: <http://bit.ly/grantfb21>  
Questions: Charisse Orth - 608.778.8101

25  
April

### IOWA COUNTY

UP TO \$1,500 AWARDED

Application available at: <http://bit.ly/iowafb21>  
Questions: Megan Yager - 608.574.4028

25  
April

### LAFAYETTE COUNTY

UP TO \$2,000 AWARDED

Application available at: <http://bit.ly/lafayettefb21>  
Questions: Tim Appell - 608.778.6062

25  
April

### VERNON COUNTY

UP TO \$500 AWARDED

Application available at: <http://bit.ly/vernonfb21>  
Questions: Travis Klinkner - 608.633.1981

May

### ANNOUNCEMENT

All scholarship recipients will be announced in May and recognized at county annual meetings in September.

## Farm Bureau Flavor

From the kitchen of Mary Jo Johnsrude

### Hot Ham & Swiss Cheese Sandwiches

#### Ingredients

1 ½ pounds shaved ham  
Sliced Baby Swiss cheese  
1 package dry Italian dressing  
1 cup butter, softened  
1 small chopped onion  
3 tablespoons horseradish mustard  
16 small hamburger buns

#### Directions

Preheat oven to 275° F. In a small bowl, mix together butter, dry Italian dressing, onion and mustard into a soft spread. Slice the rolls in half horizontally. Spread butter mixture on the inside of each bun. Pile on ham and cheese. Wrap each sandwich in foil. Bake for 20 minutes and serve.

From the kitchen of Janice Johnsrud

### Orange Burst Salad

#### Ingredients

1 6-oz. package instant vanilla pudding  
1 6-oz. package orange Jell-O  
3 cups boiling water  
2 11-oz. cans mandarin oranges  
1 9-oz. container whipped topping

#### Directions

Mix together pudding and Jell-O. Add boiling water, mix well and cool slightly. Drain mandarin oranges and then add to mixture. Chill until almost set. Fold in whipped topping. Refrigerate.

# Grant County

## Farm Bureau Embraces Virtual Technology



### Peter Winch

Grant County Farm Bureau President

Hello from northern Grant County. As I write this report, we are in the house while a snowstorm takes over outside.

That has kind of been the similar theme for the last year with the pandemic. We've been isolating whether it be for school or work. But, as we know our jobs as farmers and agriculture

professionals still must go on.

In the past year, we have learned a lot about technology and how to do meetings and trainings remotely. We have attended classes and meetings via Zoom, phone or some other platform. Even the WFBF Annual Meeting was virtual. I really do miss attending meetings in person, but we will get through this. All of us are ready to get back to normal. I think in time everything will get better.

It is now even more important with the ever-changing government to be sure that farmers have a seat at the table. Farm Bureau is our voice and we need to be sure that everyone hears what farmers have to say and how laws and legislation affect us. Very few people in government any more are farmers or even one generation or more removed.

Membership is one aspect of any organization that can be challenging. As we gain members it makes our voice even stronger. Farm Bureau is a well-respected grassroots organization that starts at the local and county levels. I am proud to be a member and do what I can to help.

This year, Ag Day at the Capitol will be held virtually on March 24. There is a session in the morning on current agricultural issues. Then in the afternoon we will meet virtually with our elected officials. Ag Day at the Capitol happens every year and Farm Bureau saw the need to continue with the tradition. Even though it is on a virtual platform, it is still important to make connections with our legislators.

I always think it is amazing to hear what Farm Bureau members have to say and how respected we are at the state level.

If you are interested in getting more involved in Farm Bureau, please contact me at 608.778.1150.

## Winch Appointed to Ag Youth Council



Photo Credit:  
Rustic Road Photography

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee Randy Romanski announced the 15 members of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council.

These members will serve a one-year term, receiving a certificate of completion at the end of their service.

Among the students selected is Fennimore High School senior, Randy Winch. He is the son of Grant County Farm Bureau members, Peter and Christina Winch.

"Congratulations to the first members of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council. These students are outstanding representatives of the future of Wisconsin agriculture, and their insights will be incredibly valuable to our department and the entire industry," said Secretary-designee Romanski. "We are excited to engage with these young people to promote agricultural career opportunities, share resources available for farmers and discuss agricultural policy development."

Members include: Chad Achenbach, Eastman; Haley Beukema, New Richmond; Hannah Dahl, Columbus; Charles Fahey, Sussex; Kendra Goplin, Osseo; Samantha Hammiller, Burlington; Abigail Helbach, Amherst; Sophia Larson, Reedsburg; Adaire MacSwain, Hudson; Jamison Meier, Windsor; Natalie Ott, Berlin; Natalie Roe, Monticello; Lauren Thompson, Woodville; Drew Tuttle, Drummond; and Randy Winch, Fennimore.

The purpose of the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council is to encourage young people to engage with state government and increase their awareness of DATCP's interactions with Wisconsin's agriculture industry. Council members will attend monthly virtual sessions, hearing presentations and engaging in discussion.

For more information about the Wisconsin Agriculture Youth Council, visit [AgYouthCouncil.wi.gov](http://AgYouthCouncil.wi.gov). Follow the hashtag #WIAgYouthCouncil on social media for updates throughout the year.

## Everyone Has a Story to Tell



By Krista Dolan, Iowa County Farm Bureau President

As I sit here writing this newsletter article it has been a week into subzero weather.

We have been very fortunate this winter season, so I guess we can't complain too

much; however, I am ready for spring.

The crazy thing is there are places in our country that are experiencing colder than normal temperatures and snow, and they are not used to this at all. I've been trying to fathom the things I am reading from farmers in some of those areas and wonder where these misconceptions they've heard are coming from.

Two years ago, during the Polar Vortex I was contacted by a news reporter to come to the farm and see how we take care of animals during times like these. This turned out to be a great learning experience for her and a good way for me to share our story.

They contacted me again this year, and again we invited them out.

When the reporter arrived and asked if it was bath time for the cows, I knew once again we had made the right choice. She was not familiar with dairy farming allowing a great teaching opportunity for our family.

I've learned to never pass up a chance to share your story. I have done four different interviews in the month of February sharing my agricultural story. I encourage you to do the same. By sharing truthful information, we can clear up many of the misconceptions people have about agriculture.

National Ag Day is coming up on March 23. I encourage you to share your story. It can be online, a blog, newspaper, etc. It can be anything. Everyone in this world has experienced something that has changed them and because of that everyone has a story to tell. I look forward to reading or hearing about yours.



## Promotion and Education Update

By Megan Yager, Iowa County Promotion and Education Committee Chair



As I type this we are on the eve of yet another snowstorm. What a winter it has been for snowfall. It's been years since I've seen this much snow, and to be honest I didn't miss it.

Snowstorms always make plenty of extra work for farmers, between plowing and trying to keep animals clean and fed. There may be no prettier sight than a snow covered landscape, however. We had some absolutely beautiful frosty mornings and I hope everyone took a minute to enjoy nature's beauty.

Winter is a good time to catch up on office work and planning, and of course there are always countless shop projects to work on and equipment to prepare for the next growing season. February 1 is typically the halfway point of winter though, so we are over the hump and heading towards spring. Jimmy the Groundhog even predicted an early spring!

Daylight hours are getting longer, which is quite enjoyable. The busy spring season will be here before we know it! Unfortunately, we have not had an opportunity to do many promotion and education events this winter because of the ongoing pandemic. Hopefully the year to come will be friendlier to events and gatherings.

Enjoy the snow and stay safe on the farm. I hope to see you at a Farm Bureau event soon.



## Ag in the Classroom



Mineral Point teacher, Livia Doyle, recently introduced the Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest topic to her fourth grade students and talked about all the different career opportunities in the agriculture industry. One of the careers her students took a lot of interest in was agriculture engineering and were excited to try the hands-on learning activities.

## A Season to Learn and Grow

By Christina Benson, Lafayette County Farm Bureau President



As I turn the calendar page and remember it's newsletter time again, I sit here wondering what I should write about. Writing has not been a strong point for me when it comes to communication. Reading, now that's another story.

I have enjoyed reading from a young age; however, I know it is important to learn and grow much like what we see happen in

springtime. Reading alone will not get me through life. I use that along with understanding, patience and faith as my spring tools.

As you are reading this newsletter, we as Farm Bureau members are adding ideas to help each other understand what is going on in this world. We are practicing our patience with each other, the weather and other things we have no control over.

Most of us often have a lot of faith that things we do will eventually work out. Maybe not in the timing we feel it should, but we still have faith. I hope that you find a little bit of bright a spot when reading about our upcoming events, what we plan for spring and enjoy photos from our corner of Wisconsin.

I'd be happy to share our plans for the upcoming year with you. Feel free to stop in and say 'hi,' call or text me. Spring also is a great time to encourage those who might enjoy being a Farm Bureau member to visit our website at [www.wfbf.com](http://www.wfbf.com) or talk with one of our board members about the many benefits and endless opportunities.

Thank you for being a Lafayette County Farm Bureau member. Happy spring.

## Young Farmer and Agriculturist Update

By Casey Lobdell, Lafayette County YFA Committee Chair

2021 brings the relief of a new year. Although I'm sure it will have its challenges much like the previous year, we should hopefully have a more typical year, whatever that will look like in the future.

It's no secret the pandemic has slowed up activities, but this year I hope to plan some YFA events either jointly within District 3 or in Lafayette County. Recently, the state YFA Committee met and I look forward to hearing what it has decided regarding activities. That way, we can start planning an event soon.

Shifting gears, I wanted to share a little about what is going on in my world as it pertains to agriculture. While winter is not real fun for me anymore, it makes it more enjoyable to step into the barn and see new life brought into the world. My family and I lamb out about 60 ewes, including four breeds: Southdowns, Dorsets, Dorpers and Romneys. The birth of new life makes the time between Christmas and April 1 crazy every year. We are just about halfway done lambing, and it is nice to take a break from the outside weather to see the lamb races partake.

Along with the sheep, we also farrow about 20 sows between Dec. 1 and Feb. 15 each year for show pig projects. These show pigs will be sold to youth in the coming months so they can experience agriculture firsthand. We raise Crossbred, Yorkshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Spotted hogs. Raising purebred livestock has always been near and dear to me and is the reason why we have so many breeds. It also gives us diversity and allows us to sell into new breeds or markets.

As always, stay safe and healthy. Spring will be here before we know it.



## Meet: Jordan and Mackenzie Torstenson, Directors

**Occupations:** Mackenzie: Dairy Nutritionist with Pearl City Elevator; Jordan: Goat Farmer.

**Agricultural background:** Mackenzie: I grew up on a small hobby farm where we raised sheep and goats while spending a lot of time on my grandpa's beef farm. I was involved with 4-H and FFA during school and spent a lot of my high school and college years working for the local vet clinic, as well as on local dairy cow and dairy goat farms. I attended UW-Platteville with a major in animal science and knew that I wanted to continue in the agriculture field post-graduation, specifically in the dairy and small ruminant nutrition areas.

Jordan: I don't really have an agriculture background. I grew up in Darlington, but the farmer in me came out when I met Kenzi. She has always been an animal lover and pretty heavily involved in the agriculture industry. When we bought our place in the country awhile back, I knew she would want to start adding livestock but never envisioned we would end up with 170 meat does. It's been a learning curve for me, but I've really enjoyed the opportunity to come home and care for our herd.

**Brief description of your family and farm:** We have two children, Jessa (5) and Lyla (3) and five dogs (Baxter, Sam, Buck, Dixie and Bruiser). Jordan farms at home where we have a herd of about 170 commercial meat goats and soon to be 300 plus kids once the new crop of babies arrives. There are a couple ducks running around, a free roaming pot belly pig named Beulah and about a dozen rabbits. Needless to say, we like to keep things funny and interesting. We are a pretty busy family on and off the farm.

**What is your favorite job to do on the farm? Or favorite part of working in the agriculture industry?** Jordan likes to play 'Mr. Fix-It.'

Overall, we really enjoy being able to spend time together as family on our little farm. Kidding season is upon us and our daughters think it is the greatest time of the year. It's one of those areas that is exciting and daunting all at once, but it keeps us on our toes. We really enjoy sharing our story with others and promoting the meat goat industry. It isn't one that is widely known about on a large scale basis. Many people around here just have a few goats, but the recent uptick on the pay scale in this area has made it more enticing for people to look at meat goats as a solid way to diversify their operation without incredibly high investments and inputs. I really enjoy working as a nutritionist because it allows me to connect with producers while helping them reach goals, see success in multiple areas and become more profitable in total.

**Why did you join Farm Bureau?** Our friend Amber McComish approached us about joining and we decided it would be a great way for us to give back to our community in an agriculture-related way.

**Why should members get more involved with Farm Bureau?** There are many opportunities to promote agriculture and share your story, as well as develop new connections and friendships. We think it is a really neat organization that more people should take advantage of being a part of.

**Preferred tractor color:** Red!

**Favorite ice cream flavors:** Jordan: Butter Pecan; Mackenzie: Highly Calf-inated Gelato.



## President's Message



**Dick Hauser**  
Richland County Farm Bureau President

January of 2021 started off quite nice for Wisconsin and I am thankful it did as I had some calves born completely out of proper time. Enough.

Now we have a new administration in Washington, D.C., and a new Secretary of Agriculture. Things are bound to change. With emphases on the environment, agriculture

will have to look to new production options that will help sustainability and carbon sequestration. If we in agriculture get out in front of this idea, hopefully we can keep the programs voluntary and not get slammed with regulations written by people who hardly know the difference between a crop and a cow.

I saw an article, 'Truterra Launches Carbon Program, First Payments in Summer 2021.' In the information they say, "On farm stewardship has always been a good investment and it's even better now in 2021. You may be eligible to earn \$20.00 per ton for the carbon that may already be sequestered in your fields." If there are ways that farmers can offset costs of environmental issues and not just have another expense burden to shoulder then we need to take the lead.

The Driftless Region Beef Conference was held online at the end of January. One of the topics was 'Greenhouse Gas, Sustainability and Beef Cattle Production.' Dr. Frank Mitloehner, professor and air quality extension specialist, in the Department of Animal Science at University of California-Davis, discussed the connection between carbon dioxide and methane. The number that we usually see is that methane is 25 times that of carbon dioxide and thus there are those who would claim that a vegetarian diet would save the earth. His contention is that it would not make a difference because the gas from cattle is a recycled carbon and not a new source as are fossil fuels.

In this new era of environmentalism, agriculture will have to make sure that science is used to review what we do and not let some pencil pushing desk jockey get away with painting us as the villain. Too often we get busy with running our farms and allow others to purport to know what we are doing wrong.

## Joseph Family Welcomes Richland County's Newest Farm Bureau Member



Richland County Farm Bureau Director, Josh Joseph, and his wife, Kristen, welcomed a baby boy on Aug. 14, 2020. Lane Karl Joseph attended his first Richland County Farm Bureau Meeting on Feb. 10. Lane turned six months old on Valentine's Day.

# Vernon County

## Promotion and Education Committee Update

By Travis Klinkner, Ag in the Classroom and Promotion and Education Committee Chair

This year still certainly has its challenges for the Ag in the Classroom and Promotion and Education programs, but we are still working to get members and the community involved in agriculture and Farm Bureau.

To start off, we have provided the Book of the Year "Full of Beans" to all of the schools in

Vernon County along with information on the essay contest and National Ag Day activities. This year's book is about Henry Ford and his efforts back in the day to develop soybean plastics that are used in everyday life today.

Our scholarship application also is now available for graduating seniors. Be sure to contact me if you have any

### Spice Rub

#### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ½ tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons coarse salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper

#### Directions

Combine ingredients in a bowl. Apply rub mixture to roast. Sear and cook.

questions or are interested in helping students apply or judging essays. We continue to look for new ideas and new supporters. If you or someone you know has ideas or wants to help, please let me know.

I hope you have been staying warm this winter and are ready to welcome spring soon. In the meantime, try our family's spice rub recipe with your favorite beef or pork roast.



Klinkner Family Farm  
Photo Credit: Ashley Wurzel



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