# 

#### **District Director Report**



**Brad Olson**WFBF District 9 Director

As I write this, I am less than a month into being your District 9 Director. First, a little about myself. I live on my home farm in northern Polk County east of Frederic with

my wife of 35 years, Vicky. We have two grown children and two grandsons. Our dairy cows left this past October. Now I grow crops and do some custom work with our son.

To those who served as delegates at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting, as well as all of the members of District 9, I am truly humbled and appreciate this opportunity to not only work for you, but most importantly, with you. My goal as your District Director is very simple; it is to be YOUR voice on the state Farm Bureau Board. I am asking you, the members of District 9, to guide our path. I want your input and thoughts as to what the goals of District 9, and Wisconsin Farm Bureau as a whole, are and will be. So, I ask you, the members, to reach out to me at any time. I want your thoughts, ideas, issues and concerns. My phone is always on, and my door is always open; I look forward to hearing from you.

Working together not only will we keep District 9 strong now and even stronger in the future, but we will also ensure WFBF stays strong now and in the future.

Our future is bright, and our potential is great. Working together we can accomplish anything; we will set the bar high then reach even higher.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to work with you.

God Bless.

Brad Olson
District 9 Director
brad\_vickyolson@yahoo.com | 715.566.2249

## Through the Eyes of a Child

By Brittany Olson, Barron County Farm Bureau member



When I think back on Titus Olson's first WFBF Annual Meeting, I'll forget the handful of times I carried him out of the room to get him settled. I will remember, though, how his eyes lit up when he heard his dad's voice at the microphone during the resolution session. I will remember, though, how much fun he had smiling, laughing and blowing raspberries with all the new friends he made.

I'll think back and try to answer the questions I had then. We talk a

lot about faith, family and farming. Did we do good work in good faith? Did we set a good example for him to follow one day? Are we keeping the next generation of farmers and agriculturists in mind with our decisions? After all, it affects them more than it affects us.

Most of all, when I think back on Titus Olson's first WFBF annual meeting, I hope we left Farm Bureau, and Wisconsin agriculture as a whole, better than how we found it.

# **Thank You!**

Members across district 9 would like to thank Peter Kimball for his service to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Board of Directors and District 9.

We wish him well in all his future endeavors.













# Silent Auction Raises More Than \$13,500 for the WFB Foundation

to all the county Farm Bureaus and members across the state who donated fun items, great baskets, delicious Wisconsin products, packages, gift certificates and hand-made items to the silent auction at the 103<sup>rd</sup>

Proceeds from the Silent Auction benefit programs funded by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation including Ag in the Classroom, Young Farmer and Agriculturist, Promotion and Education, Farm Bureau Leadership Institute and the Collegiate Farm Bureau Chapters at UW-Madison, UW-Platteville and UW-River Falls. With more than \$13,500 raised, we will be able to continue to support agriculture education and leadership development programs.

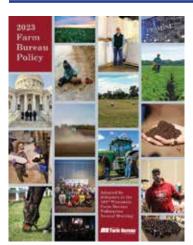
WFBF Annual Meeting.











## 2023 WFBF Policy Book

The 2023 Policy Book has been updated and is available on the WFBF website at wfbf.com/policy/policy-development.

Hard copies of the book have been ordered and will be available soon. If you are interested in a hard copy, contact District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975 or kmattison@wfbf.com.



## **Policy Development Process**



Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots organization that works on behalf of farm families and other individuals who support agriculture.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's policy is established by farmers through a structured

policy development process. Suggestions and policy ideas come directly from members who propose and vote on them at county Farm Bureau annual meetings. Policy ideas work their way up to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Annual Meeting each December where delegate members vote on the proposals. This process continues at the national level as well.

On Dec. 5, more than 230 delegates at the 103<sup>rd</sup> WFBF Annual Meeting established new policy directives for the organization. Delegates from District 9 and from across the state came together to speak up for agriculture and set the policy that will lead our organization in the upcoming year.

Farm Bureau delegates adopted the policies that will be included in the organization's policy book in 2023. Resolutions were submitted by delegates as part of a grassroots policy development process.

On the floor, delegates discussed various dairy topics. They voted to oppose de-pooling of milk by processors. During dairy policy discussion, delegates supported giving farmers more access to consumers through the sale of raw milk only if the farm meets Grade A requirements and national standards.

Under the area of education, delegates supported post-high school

education opportunities for students returning to the farm, including an in-person Farm and Industry Short Course program at a Wisconsin agriculture campus. Support for a 4-H program in each county was also approved.

Delegates discussed transportation concerns and seasonal accessibility to roads. In order to help create revenue to support transportation initiatives, delegates discussed and approved an alternative way to support transportation in the biennial state budget.

To support rural communities delegates approved exempting ambulance and Emergency Medical Service (EMS) districts and services from levy limits. Delegates also approved the elimination of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians Test (NREMT) for Emergency Medical Responders (EMR) level first responders.

On the federal level, delegates supported FDA enforcing their current standard of identity of milk. Delegates also discussed and supported animal-based meat protein in USDA-supported school lunch programs at all times.

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

- Indemnification of farmers if PFAS and PFOS are found to exceed acceptable levels thus making farming non-viable.
- Implementing sustainability practices while ensuring the costs associated with those practices are spread across the supply chain and not only to the farmer.

On the federal level, delegates:

- Opposed more restrictive changes to the current atrazine levels.
- Supported inter-seeding cover crop practices without insurance coverage restrictions on the first insurable crop.

























#### **UW-River Falls Collegiate Farm Bureau**

By Kendra Jentz, UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau President

Hello District 9,

As we come into the new year, it is important to reflect on the past, but look forward to the future. Here at UW – River Falls, we couldn't be more grateful for all we were given this last fall. This year we have nearly 80 members and have been keeping quite busy. Whether it is connecting with industry professionals through farm tours, developing leadership skills through the Discussion Meet or bringing good to the community by volunteering at White Pine Berry Farm, UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau has been trying to make the most of every moment. Twenty-six of our members attended the Young Farmer and Agriculturist Conference in December. At the conference, they attended workshops, listened to motivational speakers, networked and had fun. We are very proud of Amy Jentges and Michelle Stangler for competing in the state Discussion Meet. Michelle won the Discussion Meet and will represent Wisconsin in the national Collegiate Discussion Meet during the FUSION Conference in Jacksonville, Florida, in March!

Looking forward to the future, 2023 is going to be a great year.

We are excited to bring so many more opportunities to our members, through speakers, tours and a variety of other avenues. Additionally, we will be hosting our 11<sup>th</sup> Ag Day on Campus! This year's theme is Deep Roots, Bright Future. As said in the theme we are excited to honor our agricultural traditions, while looking forward to a stronger future. Sustainability will be one of our biggest focuses at this event. It is a cause that we know both Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau holds dear to our hearts and a practical way that we can help make a brighter future.

We would love to connect with every one of you! If you are interested in sponsoring or helping us at Ag Day or interested in speaking at one of our meetings, please do not hesitate to contact us at cfb@uwrf.edu. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at @uwrfcollegiatefarmbureau, as well, to keep up to date with all that is happening.

Thank you again for your continued support of young leaders like us and the UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau.

All the best, UWRF Collegiate Farm Bureau Officer Team





## Meet the New District 9 YFA Representatives: Lexi and Matthew Cook



Hello, I am
Lexi Cook; and
my husband,
Matthew Cook
and I will be
serving as the
District 9 YFA
Committee
representatives.
Matt and I live
in Baldwin and
are members of
St. Croix County
Farm Bureau,
where I serve as

the county YFA Chair and Vice President.

I am a graduate of UW-River Falls, where I studied dairy science and professional writing. I am now a DHI Specialist for Central Star Cooperative. I started my Farm Bureau career at UW-River Falls, as a member of the collegiate chapter. After graduating, I was elected to the St.

Croix County board as the YFA Chair. I enjoy working with the county board and planning events to engage other YFA members in our county and neighboring counties. I also compete in the YFA Discussion Meet.

Matthew is new to Farm Bureau, he grew up in White Bear Minnesota and is quickly learning more about the agriculture industry and Farm Bureau through our involvement. Matt works at Origination, a feed company in Minnesota.

We are excited to start our role as District 9 YFA representatives this year. We look forward to meeting new members in our district and getting to work with all of the county chairs. At the YFA Conference in Wisconsin Dells this past December, we were given some great ideas for events and activities that our members want to see happen, and we hope to do a few of them! One of those events we want to host is a line dancing lesson, we had one last year in St. Croix County and want to take the fun district wide. We were also given ideas such as a maple syrup demonstration and trap shooting events. We hope to make our way around the district with events so we can get everyone involved.

If there are any events you would be interested in attending or hosting within your county, please reach out (715.415.6701), we would love to connect with you.

## **WFBF Announces Sustainability Statement and Resources for Farmers**

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation announced an organization-wide sustainability statement and additional resources for farmers during the WFBF Annual Meeting in December.

The statement was created by a small group of Farm Bureau members who are engaged in sustainability and conservation on their farm and in their communities.

St. Croix Farm Bureau member Leslie Svacina participated in the working group tasked with creating the statement.

"I enjoyed collaborating with other like-minded individuals to create the WFBF sustainability statement," shared Leslie. "Even though we come from different types of farms: crops, livestock, sizes, practices and regions, we all share the same goal of caring for our natural resources so we can continue our work in agriculture."

Other members included Pete Badkte, Green Lake County; Lindsay Baneck, Jefferson County; Joe Bragger, Buffalo County; Ray Diedrich, Brown County; Robert Nigh, Crawford County; Tony Peirick, Dodge County; Chris Pollack, Fond du Lac County; and AV Roth, Crawford County.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is proud to announce an organization-wide sustainability statement and additional resources for farmers.

WFBF's statement directly states how the organization interprets the broad area of sustainability. The statement is as follows:

"At Wisconsin Farm Bureau, we all have a responsibility to make a positive impact to protect our natural resources and preserve our livelihood and communities to ensure the success of future generations."

The statement highlights the three pillars of sustainability — environmental conservation, economic viability and community involvement. Farm Bureau members are innovators and conservation leaders. They are involved in their communities and fueling local economies. Finally, Farm Bureau members are passing their legacies on to the next generation.

"Sustainability is unique and relative to each community, each farm and each family. This statement outlines our priorities as an organization and defines what sustainability means to us as farmers and agriculturists on the frontlines," added Krentz.





The WFBF Sustainability Highlight in the tradeshow at WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference showcased conservation efforts across the state. Members were encouraged to place a pin on their farm to represent their conservation practices and fill out a card to enter to win a Stihl weed trimmer donated by R Braun Inc. in St. Nazianz. Neil and Rebekah Gustafson from Polk County were selected as the winner and took home a brand-new weed trimmer! Congratulations to all our members on their conservation

The sustainability statement is housed on a new webpage on the WFBF website. This webpage will serve as a hub for sustainability and conservation-related information. It is a tool for members and farmers to find upcoming events, new ideas and other resources related to preserving the future of agriculture. The permanent hub of information for members can be found at wfbf.com/programs/sustainability.

During the WFBF Annual Meeting a video presentation was shown with comments by American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall.

"We applaud Wisconsin Farm Bureau for their commitment to sharing agriculture's sustainability story. You are setting a great example for others to follow, and we can't wait to see what you accomplish next," said Duvall.

If you are interested in learning more about WFBF's sustainability initiatives and activities, please contact Rachel Gerbitz, WFBF Director of Sustainability Communications and Partnerships, rgerbitz@wfbf.com or 608.828.5709.

## **Call to Action: Wolves**

By Brad Olson, WFBF District 9 Director

It has been almost a year since a judge in California put the Grey Wolf back on the endangered species list here in Wisconsin.

Current Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation policy states: "We support keeping the wolf population at or below 350 animals." We support requiring the WI DNR to include farmer participation in wolf management planning. The WI DNR's own plans in 1999 and again in 2007 called for a number of 350 wolves over an area of 5,800 square miles.

Fast forward to today and what does the WI DNR "draft wolf management plan 2022" call for? The WI DNR has no numerical number set as to what the wolf population should be. This leaves the number wide open so that any number may not be enough.

The original plan identified 5,800 square miles of primary wolf habitat based on research. Today wolves occupy 28,828 square miles. This is nearly a fivefold increase in landmass habitat for wolves, or the equivalent of 53% of the total landmass of Wisconsin. This expansion of landmass can only lead to more problem encounters between wolves and humans.

The vast increase in wolf occupation of Wisconsin has led to more wolf conflicts over the last 18 years since the wolf goal of 350 was surpassed.

So, what can we do? We need to make our voices heard, we need to submit comments asking the WI DNR to keep the goal of 350 wolves or less, to follow the science and listen to those individuals who have been impacted by wolves in their area of the state.

- Email comments to: dnrwildlifeswitchboard@wisconsin.gov, also copy sarahk.barry@wisconsin.gov. The email subject line must read "comments draft wolf management plan" on all emails.
- Submit public comment online: surveymonkey.com/r/DC2M8W6.
   Comments must be received by Feb. 28, 2023.

A **public sharing session** on the wolf plan has been put together by some sportsman groups, DNR may or may not be there. It will be held at the Solon Springs Community Center on **Feb 18.** Time to be determined.

Please feel free to contact District 9 Director, Brad Olson, at 715.566.2249 with any questions.

## Sands Appointed to the American Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee



By Haily Sand, AFBF YF&R Committee Member

While serving on Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee, we had the opportunity to meet and work with many other YFA members throughout the state who share our same passion for agriculture. One of them was Sally Turpin. Towards the end of her appointment with YFA, she

applied and was appointed to the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee. Sally gave her national reports, explained the items they were working on, how the individuals in the group had similar passions, and the sparkle in her eye got us curious. Sally mentioned there is a monthly 'Connect Call' we could attend via ZOOM, which is open to all Young Farmers throughout the nation, so we signed up! The connect calls start with a fun education piece, then we breakout into smaller groups where we introduce ourselves and talk about anything. The breakouts is where we have heard about how other YFA groups have fundraising events to how crawfish and rice are grown and harvested together, and that Louisiana rice is much different than the rice on the west coast!

After attending a few connect calls, talking with Sally more and getting some encouragement from our YFA Committee Advisor (Wendy Volkert), we decided we wanted to apply! So, after filling out our application in August, getting a state nomination, and sending it off, it was a waiting

game. We got a call in November, AFBF staff wanted to set up an interview. Great! Finally, mid-December, we got an email from AFBF President Zippy Duvall. It's the email we had been waiting for... we have been appointed to the AFBF 2023-2025 YF&R Committee!

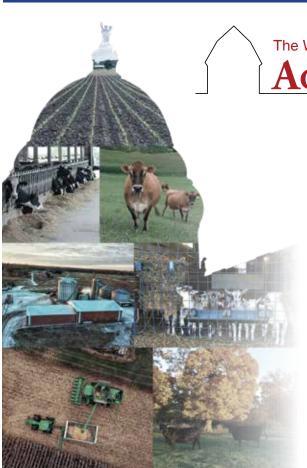
## What is YF&R: YF&R in the national platform for Wisconsin's YFA

Purpose: The Committee serves an integral part of the AFBF organization and provides opportunities for members ages 18-35 to develop their skills in public speaking and advocacy, network with other young farmers and ranchers from across the U.S. and help to tell agriculture's story.

Duties: While serving, we will help evaluate and update the YF&R long-term plan; assist with planning, promoting, and executing AFBF YF&R Leadership/Fusion conferences; and work with other committee members to promote the YF&R program and involvement in Farm Bureau. In addition, we will be trained to speak on behalf of AFBF.

Our term begins in March at the commencement of the AFBF Fusion Conference, and we cannot wait for this wonderful opportunity. We have had several past members, along with currently serving YF&R members already reach out to us with congratulation and welcoming us into this elite opportunity.

Are you interested in learning more? We encourage you to check out the YF&R Connect Calls, which take place virtually on the third Monday of each month. These connect calls provide professional development and networking opportunities for members. Be sure to follow 'America's Young Farmers and Ranchers' on Facebook for more fun and exciting thigs that will be taking place.



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation invites you to attend

# ${f A}{f G}$ ${f D}{f A}{f Y}$ at the ${f C}{f A}{f P}{f I}{f T}{f O}{f L}$

Wednesday, March 29, 2023 Monona Terrace Convention Center • Madison, WI

#### Early Registration Deadline: March 22

Cost: \$30 per person by registration deadline; \$60 after deadline and at the door.

#### **Tentative Schedule of Events:**

11:00 a.m. Registration

11:30 a.m. Opening Program

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Legislative Briefing

3:00 p.m. Leave for Capitol Visits

Visit wfbf.com/events/ ag-day-at-the-capitol for the latest information.

Interested in more information or carpooling options to attend Ag Day at the Capitol? Contact District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison at 715.418.0795 (call or text) or kmattison@wfbf.com.

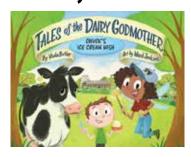


Thank You to Our Sponsors:





# You're Gonna Need Milk for That – Wisconsin Dairy Fuels our Bodies, Communities and Economy.



The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation - Agriculture in the Classroom Essay Contest is an opportunity for fourth- and fifth-grade students to explore Wisconsin history, geography and economics through the lens of Wisconsin agriculture. An annual essay prompt challenges students to research and write an informative essay.

The contest supports Wisconsin academic standards including English Language Arts and Social Studies. Top essays are recognized at the county, district, and state levels. The generous support of sponsors and volunteers make this learning opportunity possible each year.

The essay contest gleans the annual theme from the annual Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Book of the Year. "Tales of the Dairy Fairy – Chuck's Ice Cream Wish," by Viola Butler, illustrated by Ward Jenkins, has been chosen as the 2022-23 Book of the Year for its accuracy in depicting dairy farming and dairy farmers, as well as for the nod to the processing that must occur for dairy products to be produced.

View the 'Contest Essay Guide' at wisagclassroom.org for the full contest details, support materials including lessons, videos and resources for the 2023 Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Essay Contest!

Thank you to our sponsors for providing support for the 2023 Essay

#### Questions about the book or essay contest can be directed to your county Ag in the Classroom Coordinator:

• Barron

Teresa Marker 715.829.5584 | tmhanson 98@yahoo.com

- Chippewa Lori Gardow 715.559.1057 | lgardow@ruralins.com
- Dunn
  Kristyn Jensen
  715.937.7953 | kristynnygon@gmail.com
- Pierce

Kevin Ballman 651.212.1982 | kevinballman@gmail.com

• Polk-Burnett

Maria Owens 218.290.1305 | Menart87@gmail.com

• Rusk

Betsy DuSell 715.415.0124 | dusell.betsy@gmail.com Sawyer

Andy Winiarczyk 715.558.2562 | andrew@wincoservicesllc.com

• St. Croix

Melanie Peterson 715.665.2142 | garmel@centurytel.net

• Superior Shores

Gregg Jonson 715.413.1238 | greggsdiscovery@gmail.com



LEADERSHIP • ENGAGEMENT • ADVOCACY • DEVELOPMENT

MARCH 17-18, 2023

Radisson Hotel and Conference Center | Fond du Lac

Register now at bit.ly/2023AgLeadSummit

Early Bird Registration by Feb. 17: **\$140** 

After Feb. 17: **\$175** 

**Presented by:** 





The Ag LEAD Summit gives attendees the opportunity to learn more about tools, resources, ideas and best practices when advocating for agriculture and conducting promotional events. The summit is coordinated by WFBF's Promotion and Education Committee, whose mission is to build awareness and understanding of agriculture and provide leadership development for the agricultural community.

#### **FRIDAY, MARCH 17**

Keynote Speaker - Chris Hinrichs Entertainment - Midwest Dueling Pianos







Chris Hinrichs

Jordan Henry

#### **SATURDAY, MARCH 18**

Keynote Speaker - Jordan Henry

General Session - Center for Food Integrity Consumer Insight Panel

Summer Edition 7

## **Holte Receives Distinguished Service Award**

On Dec. 5, Jim Holte received the 'Distinguished Service to Wisconsin Agriculture' award during the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation's Annual Meeting in Wisconsin Dells for his outstanding contributions to Wisconsin's agricultural industry.

Holte retired as President of Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation and Rural Mutual Insurance Company Boards in 2019. That same year he also retired from the American Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors.

"In all of his roles Jim worked tirelessly to make agriculture a top priority for the state of Wisconsin," said nominator and WFBF Vice President Dave Daniels.

Jim started his farming career as dairy farmer before eventually transitioning to a beef and grain farmer.

In 1995, he was elected to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Board to represent District 9, which includes the counties of Barron, Dunn, Chippewa, Pierce, Polk

Burnett, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer and Superior Shores. In 2012, he was elected president of WFBF and Rural Mutual Insurance and continued in that position for seven years.

During his tenure, Jim represented agriculture in numerous ways. For example, he hosted U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue on his family's farm, provided testimony to the U.S.

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on modernizing the Endangered Species Act in Washington, D.C., and appeared dozens of

times on RFD-TV and other media outlets.



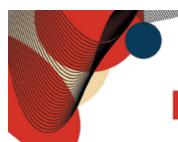
(from left:) Erin Holzbauer, Gayle Holte, Jim Holte and Jen Birkholz.

Jim also was a member of Wisconsin Rural Leadership and served on the board to keep the program a mainstay to develop leaders for rural Wisconsin.

As a graduate of UW-River Falls, Jim was named Wisconsin Distinguished Agriculturist by the Collage of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences in 2015.

"Jim embodies Wisconsin agriculture and the Wisconsin Farm Bureau," said WFBF President Kevin Krentz. "Jim is extremely deserving of this award."

Jim and his wife Gayle live in the Elk Mound area. They enjoy spending time with their two grown daughters and their families.



Come And Join Us For The District 9

## **LEGISLATIVE** LISTENING SESSION

MARCH 4 | 1-3 P.M. **ROLLING OAKS SUPER CLUB** 450 DIVISION AVE., BARRON, WI 54812

On March 4, Farm Bureau District 9 will be holding a legislative listening session. Legislators from across our district were invited and at this time we have confirmation that some will be in attendance. Snacks will be provided.



#### TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED ARE:

- 1. Milk and feed trucks on roads during spring road bans
- 2. Ambulance and fire funding in rural Wis.
- 3. Wildlife damage
- 4. Any other issues you would like to bring up

RSVP appreciated, but not required, to District 9 Coordinator, Katie Mattison at 715.418.0975 (call or text) or kmattison@wfbf.com.

## **Guest Column: If You Give an Activist A Cookie**

By Ashleigh Calaway, District 8 Coordinator

A few years back my daughter was obsessed with the book "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie". Recently, she asked to bring that book back into her library circulation. My favorite nighttime routine is listening to her read to me. It was shortly after the last round of her reading it I realized; that little mouse has similar qualities to the activists we are up against today.

#### "If you give a mouse a cookie, he's going to ask for a glass of milk."

We have a prime example of that right in our district. Two counties are dealing with water quality issues where member farms are blamed for contamination. With the most recent instance, the county board has already offered free Reverse Osmosis (R.O.) systems, clean and freely available water, as well as state-level grant funding to repair and replace wells to residence in the community. With all of that being offered.... that's not enough. They still want more. In this instance they are targeting a specific farm. A farm that has already adjusted hundreds of acres of farmland out of a corn rotation and planted alfalfa close to a village, in an area the residents consider to be a recharge zone for the majority of their wells. The group has made it clear that no matter how hard they work to improve their conservation practices they will continue to ask for more. It is not necessarily about clean water but more about stopping animal agriculture.

#### "When you give him milk, he'll probably ask you for a straw."

What I have learned over the years is that activists like to pinpoint one aspect of agriculture at a time. Not that long ago activist groups found themselves struggling to win their battle at the county level. They then started targeting production agriculture at the town level. In some counties the towns are creating ordinances that limit operational hours of farming to 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday, require specific odor plans, and much more.

#### "When he's finished, he'll ask for a napkin."

They are targeting concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs). They are blaming them for any water quality issues without taking the time to evaluate other reasons why their wells could have issues. I am sure some of you reading this are thinking, this would never happen where I live, I am here to tell you it can. I also understand that everyone has their own views on CAFOs, but if you think about it — they are just an easy

target. All the rules and regulations they must follow are clearly and transparent and they are audited and enforced at the state level. Their farm locations can be easily looked up and are often pinned on maps. Most of the ordinances they are trying to put into place won't impact a CAFO but rather the farms that aren't CAFOs.

#### "Then he will want to look in a mirror to make sure he doesn't have a milk mustache."



In other states right now, activists are targeting mink, releasing thousands of mink that then have to be disposed of. Their hope is to end the fur industry and once that happens, their focus will switch leaving those of us left in animal agriculture as the next potential target.

"When he looks into the mirror, he might notice his hair needs a trim. So he will probably ask for a pair of nail scissors."

In some parts of our state, mink farmers have established a telephone tree. They follow a standard operating procedure of communication if you see something, hear something, say something, repeat, until everyone is prepared. Those of us in the rural countryside need to do the same. This is why the local affairs program was implemented.

"When he's finished giving himself a trim, he'll want a broom to sweep up. He'll start sweeping. He might get carried away and sweep every room in the house. He may end up washing the floors as well!"

We need Farm Bureau membership and involvement to be as solid and formidable as the religion of activism is to the activists. We need to continue to grow and add one person at a time until we have a group of farmers/agriculturists standing together tackling the same issues with the same mission of protecting and preserving the industry we love. The only question is ... are you willing to stand next to your fellow farmers and help? Are you willing to say we have given out enough cookies. It's time we become proactive, it's time we start running for local office, it's time we start attending meetings/events, it's time that we say, "I stand with my fellow farmer."

## **Barron County**

wfbf.com/about/counties/barron
BarronCountyFarmBureau



## **Barron County**



## President's Message



Sam Olson

Baron County Farm Bureau President

Season's Greetings from snowy Barron County!

2023 has certainly come in like a lion. This volume of snow reminds me of the winter of '13-'14. That winter was my senior year at UW-River Falls. The three most memorable events for me from that winter include milking cows on Feb. 1 for a farmer on vacation in shin-deep

water (a cow pulled the hose off of a drinking cup in the night), our oldest machine shed falling in under snow load, and, most importantly, meeting my now wife, Brittany.

Dealing with a flooded barn in the middle of winter is no fun but cannot be ignored. One way or another the cows need to be fed, milked and cleaned. Thankfully, I didn't need to face that situation alone. Besides the three college boys earning some spending money, the vacationing

farmer's father and brother came to help solve the problem. The cows were really showcasing udders by the time we decided we could milk with tall boots on. Everyone was thankful for the raised cow platforms leaving only the guilty cow with saturated bedding. The father and brother worked all day and we missed them by mere minutes when we returned to do evening chores.

Doing some occasional milking during college helped keep me around cows while away from home, meet other farmers, learn different ways to do things and prevented my checking account from rubberizing. More importantly, I was able to stay on top of my studies and improve my college experience.

One of Barron County Farm Bureau's goals for 2023 is to provide our members with opportunities to serve on committees to increase member involvement and continue to improve each committee's outcome. We understand one of the most valuable assets each member possesses is time. Investing a small amount of your time will pay big dividends not only for you but for all our members and all of agriculture across Barron County, Wisconsin and our country. Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization and thrives best when our roots at home are strongest.

Here are the committees we have established, so far, along with the chairperson and approximate time of year the committee will meet and take action:

Karyn has led by example showing

how we can improve agriculture and

rural life through the efforts of Farm

Bureau. She leaves big shoes to fill but

has blazed a solid path forward in the

process. We're glad to have you continue

#### Ag in the Classroom

Teresa Marker February-April, June Dairy Breakfast

#### Farm City Banquet

Craig Hamernik January-March

#### Food Stand (Barron Co. Fair)

Chair Needed June-July

#### **Policy Development**

Sam Olson July-September, WFBF Annual Meeting

## Thank A Farmer (in conjunction with local Rural Mutual agents)

Noah Voelker April-May

#### Young Farmer and Agriculturist

Mitch Hoff Two events per year

As you can see, we are still searching for an individual or two to take the lead of our Food Stand committee. The Food Stand is our prime fundraiser for the year and we are proud to showcase our local foods like Ellsworth Cheese Curds, Kitchen Kleen potatoes, North Star Bison, Jennie-O Turkey, and Burnett & AMPI cheeses. Please contact myself or another board member if you are interested or have questions about chairing the Food Stand committee.

The snow this year seems to mean business. We've had lots of heavy snows and some rains to weigh it down even more. You should contact your Rural Mutual or other insurance agent to be sure your buildings are adequately covered; not just the building itself but everything inside, the cost of cleanup, and replacement costs. Building materials have gone up drastically the past few years and your coverage may not be enough if it hasn't been updated! Once

you've made that call, consider finding a way to safely clear snow off your buildings. Snow rakes are a good start if you can stay ahead of the next storm. We purchased a Snow Razor from MinnSnowta after that winter of '13-'14 and can now clear snow from every roof on the farm while standing on the ground. Clearing off roofs is not a fun task but it's much better than cleaning up a shed full of mangled equipment, bent steel and splintered wood.

Finally, I'll take a brief moment to introduce myself but not before thanking Karyn Schauf for her many years of service as President of Barron County Farm Bureau. Karyn has led by example showing how we can improve agriculture and rural life through the efforts of Farm Bureau. She leaves big shoes to fill but has blazed a solid path forward in the process. We're glad to have you continue on the board, as well!

Our board held elections for officers at our October meeting and I was honored to be elected Barron County Farm Bureau President. "Well,

who are you, already?" I'm Sam Olson. My wife, Brittany, and I are dairy farmers from just east of Dallas. Berglane Farm has been home my whole life as I am the fifth generation to farm here. We welcomed our firstborn, Titus Knute, on Mother's Day as the sixth-generation on the farm. Some of you may remember my grandpa, Harold Berg, who served on the Farm Bureau and FS boards once upon a time. I graduated from UWRF in 2014 with a Bachelor's in dairy science with a minor in farm

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mow off your from UWRF was founded while I attended, and I served on the inaugural officer team. In 2015, I joined the BCFB board of directors and most recently served as Vice President. The WFBF Leadership Institute welcomed me as a member of ut it's much ent steel and whow to impact agriculture starting at the local level. Leadership Institute is an excellent investment in the people who further strengthen our grassroots.

Have a safe and profitable 2023!

## Save the Date: Farm City Banquet, Monday, March 20

The Rice Lake Farm City Banquet was originally started by the Rice Lake Holstein Club. This great social event has continued for more than 80 years with the support of the Rice Lake Kiwanis, Lions and Rotary Clubs. The Barron County Farm Bureau is now supporting this great event as well. A delicious meal will be prepared by the Women of the Moose. The banquet has always been held during National Agriculture Week

## This year it will be held Monday, March 20, at the Moose Club in Rice Lake. The banquet begins at 7:30 p.m.

The purpose of the Farm City Banquet is to bring farmers, civic organizations and businesses together to recognize the important contributions made by agriculture to the local community. This event is also a great way for businesses in the area to thank a local farmer by purchasing a few tickets to give to some of their loyal customers.

Tickets will be available starting in February from members of the Barron County Farm Bureau, Rice Lake Holstein Club or at the door. For more information contact John Brickner at 815.341.9953 or Craig Hamernik at 715.418.0053.







## **Chippewa County**



### President's Message



Wayne Geist
Chippewa County Farm Bureau President

Hello Chippewa County Farm Bureau members. I am Wayne Geist. My wife Lisa and I own and operate Bushel and a Peck Market. Our farm is in Chippewa Falls and is fully covered under the Produce Safety Rule. The farm produces more than 36 varieties of apples, as well as currents, raspberries

and blackberries while practicing ecology-based growing practices, promoting soil and tree health, nurturing pollinators and protecting biodiversity. The market offers wholesale, pick-your-own and prepicked orchard selections as well as baked goods, fall produce, school tours, wagon rides and more. In addition to the orchard, we also own Geist Electric.

I am also a member of Wisconsin Apple Growers Association, an Army veteran, master electrician and have an Associate's degree in electrical and a bachelor's degree in industrial management.

I look forward to listening, learning, working with our members and other local organizations and helping where I can.

Thank You, Wayne Geist II

## **Chippewa Valley Producer-Led Watershed**

The Chippewa Valley Producer-Led Watershed will host a Winter Crop Management Workshop **March 13**. The program begins with a free lunch at 11:30 a.m. at Goetz Town Hall, 8985 257<sup>th</sup> Street, Cadott.

#### Program:

- · Soil Health and Management for Diversity
- Precision Ag
- Funding Sources for Implementation of Practices
- Presentation by National Conservation Farmer from Wisconsin

## Free lunch will be provided for those that are pre-registered by March 10. RSVP to Bob Panzer by texting 920.539.8728.

The Chippewa Valley Producer-Led Watershed project is funded by Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and is in cooperation with the Wisconsin Farmers Union serving as fiscal agent, Chippewa County Land Conservation and Forestry Management as collaborator agency and made up of Chippewa Valley Farmers who are focused on improving conservation practices that improve farm profits and the environment. **Membership is open to all.** 

Contact Bob Panzer at 920.539.8728 for additional information.



## **Dunn County**



## President's Message



Ben Sand

**Dunn County Farm Bureau President** 

Hello All! For those who don't know me, my name is Ben Sand. My wife, Haily, and I live near Downsville where we farm a few acres of row crops and sell sweet corn and pumpkins for the kids' college funds. We have two beautiful little girls, Rye (3) and Ryv (9 months) who love all the sparkly things yet also enjoy checking crops, eating straight from the

garden and getting dirty. By day, I work for 715 Ag Supply as a Pioneer Sales Associate and Agronomist. I also run a crop insurance business, 715 Risk Advisors.

As of October, I have been appointed the Dunn County Farm Bureau President. I wanted to take some time to share my involvement and strengths as a WFBF member:

• District 9 WFBF YFA Committee Representative: While on the state YFA committee I met a lot of great people, not only the county YFA chairs within our district, but also members across the state by networking through our committee and during the YFA Conference! With my one opportunity to travel to a national conference, I attended as many sessions as possible but prioritized making contacts with fellow young farmers throughout the U.S. Other duties I had while on the committee included planning and running the state YFA Conference, hosting meetings/outings in District 9, working with District 9 county YFA chairs, and providing updates during our county annual meetings. Serving as a state committee representative, I was invited to attend our county board meetings, which anyone is allowed to attend. While there, I would give our state update, listen to

the remainder of the meeting, and I would leave curious and intrigued for more. When it came time for our annual meeting, I thought why not run for Dunn County YFA Chair and I got it!

- Dunn County YFA Chair: Serving as our county's YFA chair, I wanted to add to what was already working, to help others get involved, and help grow the program. This is a one-year term, and it didn't take me long to figure out this was interesting. While serving as the Dunn County YFA chair I took an interest in working with the more experience and greater knowledge from the board members along with the policy and how rules and regulations progress and how we can have an input and a voice for agriculture, right here in the county. With some encouragement from my wife and our fellow State YFA Committee members, I ran for a seat on the board.
- County Board Member: I have served two years on our county board and found outreach in the community to be the most rewarding. I have worked along with the YFA Chair to create some educational events that aren't necessarily just for young farmers, but for those who are in the phase of transition or entering new and unchartered territories. We had great success this past year; have been able to help those throughout our county, district and even state; and got a state award! This is what has really hit home for me; Afterall, Farm bureau is a grassroots organization and I wanted to assist in the things that matter most to our members.

We have a lot of good things going on in Dunn County and, as we look into 2023, I want to continue to work on matters we have been successful at as well as try new things. I have already attended a County Presidents Training in December and have a lot of ideas to bring to the county after my experience networking with other county presidents across the state.

If you are looking to get involved, please contact me. There are many opportunities, you don't have to be a board member to get involved!

# Meet Dunn County Promotion and Education Chair: Kristyn Jensen



Hi, I am Kristyn Jensen, and I am serving as the Promotion and Education Chair for Dunn County Farm Bureau. I farm with my husband and father-in-law south of Menomonie, where we raise beef steers, cows, cash crop and produce maple syrup. This is my first year as a member of the Dunn County Farm Bureau and I am very excited to get involved with the Farm Bureau organization. In my new role, I look forward to connecting with area school districts to get

fourth- and fifth-grade students involved with our annual essay contest this spring. While promoting our essay contest, I will also be educating our local students on basic agriculture, such as where their food comes from. My hope is that our youth will develop a new appreciation for all farmers and ranchers.

Since I am new to Dunn County and this position, I do not have many contacts for area school districts. If you have any resources that would help me, please email me at kristynnigon@gmail.com. I look forward to working beside you all in the future!

-Kristyn



#### President's Message



**Travis Kopp** 

Pierce County Farm Bureau President

Hello Pierce County Farm Bureau family. I, Travis Kopp, would like to introduce myself as your elected county Farm Bureau president.

I have been a Farm Bureau member for six years and have sat on the board for five years. My family and I farm in the Grange Hall/Plum City area. We raise corn, soybeans, hay and wheat. Beyond the farm, I am employed as a service tech at the local ag dealership.

My passion for agriculture runs deep and believe all farms contribute to a healthy rural community. We all have a dependence on each other. From the food producers to the electrician installing services at local businesses, or the educators inspiring the next generation, we all matter to bring success to the community.

As your president, I will do my best to keep the Farm Bureau voice strong. I hope we all have a chance to meet at our county gatherings throughout the year. Happy New Year and God Bless.



## **Polk Burnett**



wfbf.com/about/counties/polkburnett

polkburnettfarmbureauwi

## Vice President's Message



#### Rebekah Gustafson

Polk Burnett Farm Bureau Vice President

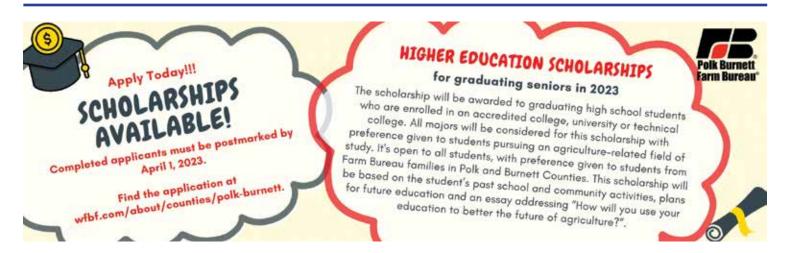
First, I can't begin without saying Happy New Year! 2022 was a great year for the Polk Burnett Farm Bureau. We made all of our membership goals for the year and met some new faces along the way. It has been a busy year for all of us with lots of hot topic issues arising in our local communities. Polk Burnett Farm Bureau strives to do its part in supporting its members with these issues.

I would like to welcome some new faces that we have representing the Polk Burnett Farm Bureau. Micki Dado is our new YFA chair, Maria Owens is our Promotion and Education Chair, and I was elected as Vice President. Chris Owens was re-elected as President and Trent Jensen is

our secretary. Two new faces were elected on as directors, Josh Roos and Travis Senn. Also on as directors are Andy Gould, Erik Melin and Sara Byl. Welcome y'all! Thank you to those who have stepped in to fill these leadership roles over the years.

At the 2022 WFBF Annual Meeting we were very excited to watch Brad Olson be elected District 9 Director to the WFBF Board of Directors! Congratulations Brad! Isaac Christenson also competed as our local YFA Discussion Meet representative and did a great job!

As we look into 2023, we have set some new goals for PBFB that we hope will help bridge the disconnect between producers (farmers) and consumers that we have been experiencing locally and promote PBFB. The main goal is to get out into our communities and become involved. While we have nothing written in stone yet, events are being planned, some that may coincide with local happenings such as the Polk and Burnett County Fairs. We are looking at ways that will provide opportunities for PBFB to be present and connect with our community members and each other. Keep watch this year, we have plans coming! And as always, new members are always welcome!



## **Polk Burnett**

wfbf.com/about/counties/polkburnett
polkburnettfarmbureauwi

## Field Trip to the Farm



Josh Roos and Derrick Meyer teach students about the milking parlor.

On Wednesday, Dec. 8, a bus pulled up the driveway of Roos Farms LLC in Amery. The Amery High School large animal/dairy science class took a field trip to learn about compost barns, feeding schedules and life on a Wisconsin dairy farm. As the snow was falling, the students walked around to the various buildings and saw the animals face-to-face with their teacher, Mr. Meyer. The students saw how a compost barn is able to benefit a farm year-round by providing light compost for fields, a warm bed for cows and even keeping recycled water from freezing in the larger farms that use bunkers. Even the calves were happy to have the class visit with lots of smiles and pets through the barn.

The last stop on the



Amery High School large animal/dairy science class visits Roos Farms LLC in Amery to learn about compost barns and life on a dairy farm.

tour was at the parlor where the cows are milked. It was a nice break from the wind and snow to be inside the insulated parlor to see the milking stalls and holding pen for the cows. The students were able to ask their final questions and say bye to the Roos family after learning all about life on a dairy farm. What a great experience to get a break from the classroom and tour a farm in-person! Thank you to Mr. Meyer for making this experience possible for the Amery High School students. We hope it sparked the minds of the students and we look forward to seeing a new group of students next year!

## **Rusk County**



The tour continued to the tractors as the students got to see the TMR

mixer up-close and ask questions about feeding rations. Roos Farms LLC

also used bags to store grains for feed, which can be different than other

wfbf.com/about/counties/rusk

Ruskfarmbureauwi

## **YFA Chair Report**



Serenity Hetke, Rusk County YFA Chair

Wisconsin is a national superpower when it comes to agriculture with more than \$82 billion in industry sales in Wisconsin alone. Dairy, cranberries, snap beans, ginseng; we all know the big list of agriculture products that Wisconsin excels in. Most of us participate in these sub sections of the industry!

When governments, townships, counties and organizations crackdown against farmers, who is there to fight?

Hi, my name is Serenity Hetke and I was recently elected as the Rusk County Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Agriculturist Chair. The biggest reason I chose to run is because Farm Bureau is one of the largest lobbying organizations in the state. I want to be a part of something that is going to contribute to fighting for the farmer!

In my time as YFA Chair, I am very excited to help grow our county's program both externally, and internally. Externally, I am looking to bring in a larger number of members while internally, I am excited to offer members opportunities for individual growth and development in leadership and communication skills!

I am grateful for this opportunity, and I look forward to meeting new members as the year progresses!



#### **Higher Education Scholarships**

The Rusk County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce their intent to award higher education scholarship(s) to 2023 graduating high school seniors in the amount of at least \$250.\* The scholarship(s) are open to all graduating seniors living in Rusk County and 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 and are encouraged to apply.

Awarding of the scholarship(s) will be based on the student's past school history, community activities, acceptance into an accredited program, recommendations and a fully completed application submitted by the student.

\*Any amounts over and above the \$250 and the number of scholarships awarded will be based on the completed submissions and upcoming fund-raising activities by Rusk County Farm Bureau.\*

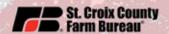
## **Sawyer County**

wfbf.com/about/counties/sawyer
SawyerCountyFarmBureau



## St. Croix County





#### \$500 HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Applications must be postmarked by March 25, 2023, and can be found at wfbf.com/about/counties/st-croix.

St. Croix County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce that it will award up to four (4) \$500 higher education scholarships to graduating seniors.

The scholarship will be awarded to graduating high school seniors enrolled in an accredited college, university or technical college.

The applicant or his/her parents must be a current St. Croix

County Farm Bureau member.



## **Superior Shores**

wfbf.com/about/counties/superiorshores

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Learn more about farm safety and find a local agent at www.RuralMutual.com

