

FARM BUREAU® *Connection*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Giving Time and Thanks

By Kevin Krentz, Wisconsin Farm Bureau President



For farmers fall means a busy harvest season and realizing the fruits of the many hours of labor from the spring and summer. In Wisconsin we were fortunate enough to receive timely rains throughout the growing season this year. Unlike many in the drought stricken western parts of the U.S. We are grateful for what we have, and we need to celebrate our bounty this season.

Fall brings people together.

It's Farm Bureau annual meeting season. County Farm Bureaus around Wisconsin are holding their annual meetings and celebrating their successes from this past year. Following years of COVID-19, many people looked forward to getting back out into the community.

County Farm Bureau members had big impacts on communities. Community outreach projects, fundraisers such as fair food stands and golf outings, road and equipment safety sessions, engagement opportunities to simply have conversations with consumers about what we do on our farms were all part of the event line up this year.

We know it's important for people to know where and how their food is grown and local Farm Bureaus are working hard to be there for those conversations. Dairy breakfasts, fall festivals, Ag in the Classroom

activities, and pork and beef month promotions, just to name a few, all give the opportunity to help promote the wholesome farm products we grow and raise.

Farmers are proud to discuss how and why we farm and most importantly, how we protect our natural resources for future generations.

This year our Young Farmer and Agriculturist Committee created the 35 Under 35 program. The 35 Under 35 program recognizes the creativity and innovation of young farmers and agriculturists who are preserving agriculture through leadership in environmental, social and economic activities. I'm proud to say we've had more than 60 applications and the top 35 have been named. I'm excited that we can shine a light on the many ways our members are thinking about our future.

As you gather around the table for Thanksgiving dinner this year I hope for just a second you reflect on the labor of love that went into that meal. Not only the hands that grew and raised it but the hands that came together to prepare it. We all have a role in our food system. We all have a role in making sure future generations have something better than we did.

Thank you for being a member of Wisconsin Farm Bureau. We are glad you are here.

I wish you and yours a blessed Thanksgiving and holiday season.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Unlock Your Benefits

Wisconsin Farm Bureau is a membership organization comprised of non-farmer and farmer members. Its members support and advocate for agriculture. If you're a farmer, landowner, involved in agribusiness or if you like to eat then you're involved with agriculture.

By being a Farm Bureau member, you not only support the farmers who produce your family's food and fiber but also gain access to the organization's many member benefits and discounts.

These are the member benefits available to you:

Code- or Account-Based

To get your Farm Bureau membership savings, go online or call the partner company to begin shopping or making a reservation. At checkout, members must reference a specific WFBF discount code or account number to redeem the discount. The discount code is available from the WFBF website or member benefits flyer. Examples of member benefit partners that use a code- or account-based system include: Choice Hotels, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts, Avis car rental, Budget car rental, ODP Business Solutions, AgriPlan, Scriptsave and Grainger.

Member Verification Certificate

Member benefits partners such as Case IH, Ford and Caterpillar

use online systems to verify your WFBF membership. To unlock savings with these partners, a member visits the WFBF member benefits partner page and enters their contact information to generate a discount certificate. Then they present the certificate at the dealership to receive the Farm Bureau discount.

Digital Account Verification

To access WFBF member benefit savings with John Deere, members visit the John Deere website to create a user profile. Follow the sign-up instructions to attach the Farm Bureau discount to your user profile to verify your Farm Bureau membership digitally and unlock savings.

Rebate After Purchase

Members can receive a rebate after purchase when buying qualifying products from an authorized Yamaha dealership. Prior to purchase, a member should verify they have an active WFBF membership and confirm with the dealership that the product meets the rebate requirements. After purchase, a member completes an online rebate form with their purchase information to request the rebate.

For more information, visit wfbf.com/membership/member-benefits.

Rooted from the Heart

Apples, wine and weddings thrive at Dixon's Apple Orchard

By Cassie Sonnentag

It is often said when one door closes, another door opens.

That sentiment rings true for Chippewa County Farm Bureau members Jim and Becky Mullane. From the ashes of natural disaster, the Mullane family started anew, bringing family traditions from the southwest United States to Wisconsin's Chippewa Valley.

The Mullane family owns Dixon's Apple Orchard near Cadott. Alongside their son Luke and his wife Kelsey, the Mullanes grow six varieties of apples, make 15 varieties of wine and manage a one-of-a-kind wedding destination.

Dixon's Apple Orchard got its start more than 1,300 miles southwest in Peña Blanca, New Mexico, in 1944 by Becky's grandparents, Fred and Faye Dixon. Raised in Duluth, Minnesota, Becky always had an interest in her grandparents' orchard. At the age of 18, Becky departed for Peña Blanca where she began learning from her grandfather.

"I learned everything from him," Becky recalled. "I ended up falling in love with the apple business."

Becky and Jim met in 1992 and married the following spring. They stayed involved in the family apple business until 2011 when a series of challenges struck the orchard. That June, the Los Conchas Wildfire swept through the area, destroying the family's ranch and the 60-acre orchard.

"We wanted to push forward, as some trees survived," Becky said. "But then came the flood."

A series of floods impacted the area, resulting in a late August flood that destroyed the entire community.

"It can only be described as catastrophic," Becky said. "It was absolutely massive. Our road systems, irrigation systems – all of it. Gone."

The Mullanes remained tenacious as the family forged ahead and began searching for an opportunity to transplant its roots – both figuratively and literally.

"All we cared about was getting access to water and back to doing what we love," Becky said.

Becky aspired to get closer to her family in Duluth, which led her to Wisconsin's Chippewa Valley. Upon seeing the place her family now calls home, she knew she had found her next venture.

"When we arrived, we immediately thought of weddings; it was the perfect destination for a venue," Becky said. "Trees take five to eight years to begin producing apples, so we came here, cleaned things up and

began hosting weddings right away."

Dixon's Apple Orchard features multiple venue locations, a reception site, groom's shack and bridal suite for a start-to-finish wedding destination. Becky has a strong presence in every step of the wedding planning process and said she is focused on making each wedding a unique and positive experience for every couple.

"This is a happy business," Becky said. "The couples mean everything to me."

Tying apples to weddings, couples return the following spring to plant an apple tree in their honor in the orchard.

The Mullanes also brought a piece of New Mexico to their new home. The Champagne apple was patented by Fred Dixon when grafted to host trees from a wild tree found in the very canyon that was their home. Its unique flavor profile and exclusivity made a name for itself in Dixon's orchard.

"It is a unique, sweet, spicy, crunchy apple that is good for every purpose," Becky said. "Sixty acres of the crop would sell out within a week on my grandparents' orchard."

Without hesitation, Becky knew the Champagne apple had to be a part of their journey to Wisconsin.

"After the fire, we saved clippings from the trees and had them propagated to a rootstock that can handle the climate here," Becky said.

To read the full story, visit wfbf.com/member-profiles/meet-becky-mullane.



Tips to Avoid Distracted Driving



Driving while distracted is one of the most dangerous risks one can take. In 2020, more than 3,100 people were killed and about 424,000 were injured in motor vehicle accidents involving distracted drivers, according to the

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Taking the chance is never worth it, and there are simple ways to steer clear of hazards.

Here are a few basic tips to avoid distracted driving and stay safe behind the wheel.

Put the Phone Down

Phones have become extensions of their owners. Many people are addicted to their smartphones and feel obligated to react to every notification in real time. However, phone activity is an extremely reckless habit to engage in while driving. If you are in an emergency and you absolutely must place or answer a phone call or respond to or send a text message, safely pull over on the shoulder or park in a nearby lot. This also applies to surfing the web or checking your social networks, email and other apps. Put your phone in silent mode to avoid interruptions if need be.

Texting while driving is arguably more dangerous than talking on the phone. If you take your eyes off the road even for a couple of seconds to look at your phone, your chances of being in an accident increase up to 23 times more likely. Most smartphones have a built-in setting that allows users to send an automatic message letting others know they are driving and will respond later. Remember that being on the phone

while driving for any reason – other than to report an emergency – is illegal throughout Wisconsin.

Listen to the Radio at a Reasonable Volume

While some people fantasize they are about to be crowned the next American Idol in their cars, it's not always the best move to blast music while driving. Not only can loud music hinder people from hearing sirens, train horns, bridge bells and other warning signals, but it can also impair the other senses. If you like to listen to the radio, feel free to do so. Just make sure your tunes or podcasts are set at a low enough volume to be able to be fully aware of the outside world.

Keep Children, Pets and Items Secure

Make sure kids are wearing their seat belts or properly secured in their car seats and that pets stay in their designated zone in the back of the vehicle. Never let children or pets roam around in the car, as this can result in severe injury. Resist the urge to reach for items if they fall out of place while the car is in motion.

Avoid Multitasking

When you are behind the wheel, the key is to focus on your driving, the other vehicles on the road, and pedestrians. Do not eat, drink, apply makeup or groom yourself, adjust your mirrors, select a new song from your playlist or fiddle with your navigation system. If you have a passenger, have them take responsibility for any navigation tasks. Better yet, take care of these items before hitting the road.

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GOOD EATS



Apple Pie

Ingredients

Crust:

- 4 c. flour
- ½ c. butter
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 egg

- 1½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- 1 c. lard
- ½ c. cold water

Filling:

- apples, sliced
- cinnamon, nutmeg and flour for dusting
- butter

Directions

1. Mix flour, sugar, salt and butter together until crumbly. Beat egg, add vinegar and water. Stir into flour mixture.
2. Roll out for five pie shells or more. Fill with sliced apples dusted with flour, cinnamon and nutmeg and dotted with butter, then

- top with second crust.
3. Brush the top crust with well-beaten egg and then dust with sugar.

*** Pie shells may be frozen for later use or may be kept in refrigerator three days before baking.*

Apple Butter

Ingredients

- apples, enough to fill crock pot
- 1-2 c. sugar (to taste)
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. salt

Directions

1. Peel, core and slice apples. Place in crock pot, filling to the brim (apples settle as they cook).
2. In a bowl, mix sugar, cinnamon, cloves and salt. Pour mixture over apples. Cover and cook about 10 hours, stirring occasionally. Leave lid slightly ajar to allow moisture to escape (helps butter thicken).
3. As apples cook, switch from stirring with a spoon to a whisk.
4. Cook on high for an hour. Stir and turn temperature to low, cook for 8 hours. Whisk and allow to cook until butter has desired consistency.
5. Fill jars leaving ¼ in. space. Wipe rims clean, remove air bubbles and place lids.
6. Follow water bath canning procedures.



Caramel Apple Jam

Ingredients

- 6 c. apples, diced and peeled
- ½ c. water
- ½ tsp. butter
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- 1 pkg. (1¾ oz.) pectin
- 3 c. sugar
- 2 c. brown sugar

Directions

1. Combine apples, water, butter, cinnamon and nutmeg. Cook and stir over low heat until apples are tender.
2. Stir in pectin. Bring to rolling boil over high heat, stirring constantly.
3. Stir in sugar, return to a rolling boil. Boil and stir, 1 minute.
4. Remove from heat. Fill 7 hot ½ pint jars.
5. Place in canner. Bring to boil. Process 10 minutes.

