

Grassroots

District 4 News

"The Man in the Arena"



Joe Bragger

WFBF District 4 Director

After what is becoming a rather long winter, and a protracted birth of spring we once again see new life and opportunity all around us. The snow is gone, the darkness of winter has turned to the bright and warm days of summer and even the air is full of the sounds of nature. We made it once again!

How many of us have new ideas – perhaps the optimism that something we are going to try will provide greater yields or more production on our farms – how many of us have sharpened our pencils, worked with our suppliers to try to save wherever we can while not trimming so much as to “cut off our nose to spite our face”? Will we have a good or bad summer? Who knows – yet we go at it once again! And when we finish our work, we still take time to volunteer in our communities sharing our blessings of time, talent and treasure.

I share with you the “Man in the Arena” by President Theodore Roosevelt:

“It is not the critic that counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is

marred by dust and sweat and blood:

Who strives valiantly: who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming:

But who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions: who spends himself in a worthy cause:

Who at best knows in the end knows the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he falls at least falls while daring greatly.

So that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”

While farmers work so hard day in and day out, there are still critics who try to point out our failures and shortcomings. Those that would question our land ethic, animal welfare and food production methods; we continue on.

Little do those critics know our great enthusiasm to do our absolute best every day, constantly improving on past failures leading us to the point where we really hold the keys to many of the issues that plague all of us today such as climate change. Our conservation efforts have led to some of the greatest environmental outcomes in history and yet we continue every day, each and every one of us as “the man in the arena”.

As always enough is too much.

“The hard-working farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crop”
2 Timothy 2:6

District 4 Excels at WFBF Annual Meeting

District 4 had an outstanding Annual Meeting. Savannah Brown was elected as the chair of the State YFA Committee; Brenda Dowiasch was elected as the chair of the Promotion and Education Committee; and

District 4 Director Joe Bragger was elected WFBF Vice President on the board of directors. District 4 had two state finalists for the YFA Farming for the Future Award: Heather and Steve Erdman, Eau Claire County; and Dustin and Ashley Ellis, Buffalo County. Buffalo County YFA member Collin Weltzien advanced to the Sweet 16 round of the YFA Discussion Meet. Finally, Eau Claire County Farm Bureau was recognized in the County All Star Program with a booth in the tradeshow.



District 4 Council of Presidents

District 4 hosted its Council of Presidents meeting at District 4 Coordinator Kevin Whalen's residence in rural Arcadia on March 2. Representatives from the six-county district met for social time and planning to strengthen county Farm Bureau activities.

District 4 Director Joe Bragger was the driving force behind the local Council of Presidents.

“It was a great time to plan and to develop relationships among our district leaders,” said Bragger.

The schedule for the meeting included happy hour and a meal. Dessert featured a cake in celebration of Joe Bragger's birthday. The get-together allowed leaders to plan who would be at the State Council of Presidents and Ag Day at the Capitol. Thank you to all that attended. We plan on having District 4 Council of Presidents again next year.



Wisdom From Whalen



Kevin Whalen

District 4 Coordinator

Spring is always the season of newness and renewal. As farmers, many of us look forward to starting anew with fieldwork with the promise that this will be the best year yet. I had that feeling as I unloaded a heifer from the trailer this afternoon. The thought of having new cattle, whether purchased or delivered by their mother, fires me up with

optimism.

Like a new present I would receive each spring with my birthday, I always wanted spring to come to put everyone into a little better mood. The new plants and animals that arrive, whether from the store or God-given, create the feeling that all is well in our rural countryside.

The feeling of newness is very prevalent with the Wisconsin Farm Bureau this spring. New staff members, combined with new opportunities, give me tremendous optimism with each activity we attempt. The new activities are a challenge, but they lead to such discovery and renewal, everyone gets into a little better mood. Many people are relying on District 4 Farm Bureau and it is something we should take great pride in. Legislators showing up at monthly meetings, addressing annual meetings and seeking our opinions are showing that Farm Bureau memberships matter in the real world.

Our old traditions allow us to experience success since we have members and staff that guide the people to achieve more than the year before. We will continue to do more in District 4 because of our members' success. It is a great privilege to work with all of District 4 to continue moving forward.



Tim Fiocchi Hired as WFBF's Senior Director of Governmental Relations



Tim Fiocchi has been hired as the Senior Director of Governmental Relations by the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation.

Fiocchi has over two decades of legislative experience, most recently as Chief of Staff to State Senator Jerry Petrowski, serving Marathon, Taylor, Rusk and Sawyer counties.

He has extensive experience working on agricultural, transportation and local government issues.

"I've always enjoyed working with Farm Bureau and am excited for the opportunity to be part of a strong team working to support agriculture," said Fiocchi. "I look forward to working with our members and state policymakers to address challenges and take advantage of opportunities to make Wisconsin an even better place to farm and raise a family."

Fiocchi will manage WFBF's state-level governmental relations functions, which will support Farm Bureau members and advocate for policy on their behalf.

"I know that Tim's experience in state government will be a great asset for Wisconsin Farm Bureau's membership," said WFBF Executive Director of Governmental Relations Jason Mugnaini. "Tim will be a vital member to our Governmental Relations team and will broaden our ability to develop policy initiatives and progress them through the legislative process."

Fiocchi began his duties on March 14.

DISTRICT 4 POLICY DEVELOPMENT MEETING & DISCUSSION MEET CONTEST

Pull up your seat at the table!

Join us for the District 4 Policy Development Meeting and Discussion Meet Contest as we draft resolutions to be considered for 2023 Farm Bureau policy. All Farm Bureau members are encouraged to consider attending.

Save the date:

Thursday, August 10, 2023

AGENDA:

6pm - Discussion Meet Contest
8pm - Policy Development Meeting

REVOLUTION COFFEE

38 Main Street,
Black River Falls, WI 54615

Ag LEAD Summit Held in Fond du Lac

The Ag LEAD Summit gave over 80 attendees the opportunity to learn more about tools, resources, ideas, and best practices when advocating for agriculture and conducting promotional events. The summit was 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. The Promotion and Education committee is chaired by District 4 representative Brenda Dowiasch.

The conference was broken into four tracks: Leading Your Own Self Development, Engaging Consumers, Advocating for Agriculture and Developing Agribusinesses.



Clara Hedrich facilitated a workshop at the 2023 Ag LEAD conference.

and learning how to maximize your natural strengths and leverage the strengths of those around you is a most noble and fundamental life endeavor. There are solid proven principles and practices that all effective leaders have embraced throughout history. Becoming someone who people willingly want to follow (whether a paid employee or volunteer participant) is a constant work in progress, working towards inspiring

The opening session started with the keynote Chris Hinrichs presenting on "Transformational Leadership: How to Inspire the Best in Others". The main theme for his session included: "The world is starving for competent and trustworthy leadership. Continuously advancing your leadership skills

commitment from others instead of mere compliance." The session focused on those principles and practices that can tap into one's courage to embrace the path of becoming a transformational leader.

Chris also presented a workshop on "Turning Information into Action".

Additional workshops included: Andrea Brossard, AFBF Promotion and Education Vice Chair, leading "Why Promotion and Education is for YOU!"; Amy Ries, Director of Agricultural Programs, Fond du Lac Agri-Business Council; Advocating "Moo-Velous Educational Events" and topics on developing agribusinesses.

The event concluded with an eye-opening consumer panel presented by the Center for Food Integrity. A group of consumers with a limited background in agriculture were invited to share insights regarding their food purchasing decisions and perceptions of agriculture. Participants had the opportunity to submit questions regarding these topics and receive direct answers in real-time.

Ag LEAD is offered every other year alternating with the IGNITE workshop.



State YFA Chair Savannah Brown and State Promotion and Education Chair Brenda Dowiasch participated in the 2023 Ag LEAD Summit.

WFBF Launches Gather Wisconsin Website for Consumers



Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation unveiled its new website project, Gather Wisconsin, on March 17.

The focus of Gather Wisconsin is to build meaningful relationships between consumers and the farmers growing and raising their food. The site connects food, farming and families through valuable information, insightful blogs and delicious recipes.

"Wisconsin agriculture impacts you regardless of where you eat, work, shop or live," said WFBF Director of Media Relations and Outreach Cassie Sonnentag. "Our goal is to provide meaningful opportunities for you to connect with your food and the farmers behind it."

Gather Wisconsin is a source for understanding food labels, sourcing quality ingredients and learning more about farming in Wisconsin. Visitors will have the opportunity to hear from Wisconsin farmers and agriculture experts on topics influencing food, farming and families.

"As a farmer, I want you to have confidence in the food you are serving your family," said Wisconsin dairy farmer Brittney Muenster. "This website is a valuable resource for enhancing your family's experience with food from farm to table."

Information housed on the site falls into three main categories: food, farming and family.

In the food section, visitors will gain valuable information in selecting and preparing food, understanding food labels, and mouthwatering recipes to share with their families. In the farming section, visitors can ask

questions and receive answers directly from farmers themselves.

The section also details supporting roles in agriculture, life on the farm and environmental practices farmers utilize across the state. Finally, visitors can check out the family section for nutrition tips, agritourism experiences in Wisconsin and sustainable swaps to reduce their carbon footprint at home.

This is a space where food, farming and families gather. Visit Gather Wisconsin now at www.gatherwisconsin.com to ask questions, seek answers and learn more about Wisconsin agriculture.



WFBF Director of Media Relations and Outreach Cassie Sonnentag unveiled Gather Wisconsin during the Ag LEAD Summit on March 17.

Council of Presidents, Ag Day at the Capitol Events Keep Farmers Connected

On March 28, the Farm Bureau Council of Presidents began at the Sheraton Hotel in Madison. Presidents and vice presidents from all 61 county Farm Bureaus were invited to meet to discuss potential opportunities for the new year.

District 4 Director and WFBF Vice President Joe Bragger handled the chairman responsibilities for the start of the day where he allowed each Farm Bureau Board of Director and District Coordinator to share positive statements to get the conference off to a strong beginning. Our top leaders shared challenges and worked to improve the organization's communication.

Reports were given from Farm Bureau's staff divisions: member relations, public relations, governmental relations and operations. A highlight for all presidents were five counties who presented great community activities with details on "how to do it" for the audience.

A highlight of the Council of Presidents was a presentation by FBI Special Agent Scott Mahloch on "FBI Weapons of Mass Destruction: Food and Agriculture Threats". The material offered was thought-provoking and challenged our Farm Bureau leaders to think like a FBI agent on where threats could occur to our food chain.

On March 29, more than 250 farmers and agriculturists gathered at the Monona Terrace in Madison for Ag Day at the Capitol.

Ag Day at the Capitol is an annual event for Wisconsin farmers and agriculturists to learn more about state issues affecting agriculture and meet with their state legislators.

"We appreciate our members taking time off their farms to speak up on key issues impacting our rural communities," said WFBF Executive Director of Governmental Relations Jason Mugnaini. "The strength of our rural community lies within the voices of our state's farmers and the ability to share their stories with their legislators."

Attendees started the day with Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary Randy Romanski who served as the event's keynote speaker. Secretary Romanski outlined initiatives impacting agriculture outlined in the 2023-25 biennial state budget, including

increasing trade opportunities, investments to the processing industry and connecting the general public with agriculture.

He encouraged farmers and agriculturists to continue to be strong advocates for Wisconsin's rural communities.

"Events like Ag Day at the Capitol are great because we have the opportunity to talk on common interests," said Sec. Romanski. "I am appreciative of your efforts and the efforts of our legislators that collectively help us move agriculture forward."

Following the Secretary's speech, the afternoon session was a legislative panel comprised of Senators Howard Marklein and Joan Ballweg, and Representatives Tony Kurtz and Nancy VanderMeer.

The panel discussed:

- Agriculture's role in developing solutions to protect the food supply and government's role in aiding that protection.
- Pressing issues facing Wisconsin agriculture in the current budget cycle.
- The statewide need for rural road infrastructure improvements.
- Farmer-led conservation initiatives including producer-led watershed programming.

The program concluded with issue briefings with a strong focus on farm supply chain protection. Topics included improvements to local transportation, labor, animal health and disease prevention, and food distribution and aggregation solutions. Additional issue briefings focused on farmer-led conservation, rural prosperity, and the organization's legislative session priorities.

The afternoon's program concluded with attendees traveling to the Capitol where they met with legislators from their respective areas.

Rural Mutual Insurance Company and FS GROWMARK, Inc., were major sponsors of the event. Co-sponsors of the event, with Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, included the Dairy Business Association, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association, Wisconsin Corn Growers Association, Wisconsin Pork Association, Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association, Wisconsin Soybean Association and the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers Association.



District 4 was well-represented at the 2023 Ag Day at the Capitol.



FBI Special Agent Scott Mahloch presented on food and agriculture threats at Council of Presidents.



Door County Farm Bureau members describe their county's media program at Council of Presidents.



Members from Districts 4 and 9 met with Senator Jeff Smith during a legislative visit as a part of Ag Day at the Capitol

District 4 News

More Than 240 Attend WFBF's FFA Farm Forum

More than 240 high school juniors and FFA advisors from across Wisconsin attended Wisconsin Farm Bureau's FFA Farm Forum in Wisconsin Rapids on Feb. 17.

"FFA Farm Forum is a time for learning and leadership," said WFBF President Kevin Krentz. "These students are the next generation in agriculture. I hope members in attendance are able to take back what they have learned during this conference to better their organizations and communities."

The keynote speaker was Joe Schlies, a member of the UW-River Falls Collegiate Farm Bureau. Schlies shared his experiences with the Wisconsin Association of FFA and Farm Bureau and how they have shaped him as a young leader. He shared how everyone has the power to seek out opportunities in their lives to develop impactful traits within themselves.

During the one-day event, FFA members attended career-based

workshops including: 'Food Science 101' with Sara Menard Huber, Research and Development Manager at Brakebush Brothers; 'Agricultural Product Applications' with Andrew Dal Santo, an instructor at Southwest Technical College; 'Supercharge Your Ag Technology Knowledge' with Teri Raatz, an instructor with Mid-State Technical College; and 'From FFA to YFA: Connecting the Dots in Your Ag Experience' with Joe Schlies.

"FFA Farm Forum is a great partnership between Wisconsin Farm Bureau and Wisconsin FFA," said WFBF Director of Member Relations Mandy Ganser. "Our organizations have worked together for many years to offer

students a conference that showcases the many career paths and leadership development opportunities available in agriculture."

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation sponsors FFA Farm Forum in cooperation with the Wisconsin Association of FFA.



Buffalo County

wfbf.com/about/counties/buffalo
BuffaloCountyFarmBureau

WFBF Leadership Institute Class 15



Ed Rippley

Buffalo County Farm Bureau President

It is like a scene from the movie "The Breakfast Club" except instead of five people there are 14 individuals that come together to learn more about Farm Bureau. Instead of the jock, the nerd and the rebel, it is the tax accountant, a former Alice in Dairyland, and a radio personality. I signed up for the WFBF Leadership Institute to enhance my skills in public speaking, media

training and interviewing – or maybe it was a reason to get off the farm.

In January we met at the Farm Bureau office in Middleton and did some "get to know you" activities. I quickly found out that three of us are county presidents representing Buffalo, Columbia and Lafayette counties. Our class ranges in professions: some work in the dairy industry, some sell seed, one runs a tiling company, some grow small grains for the cosmetic industry, and others are loan officers working in the financial world.

Jordan Henry from American Farm Bureau Federation attended our first session. She taught us about public speaking and we were asked to give a three minute speech on the topic of sustainability.

The February gathering was at Stevens Point. We had the chance to meet the new



Buffalo County Farm Bureau President Ed Rippley participates in a mock interview scenario as a part of the third session of Leadership Institute.



WFBF Leadership Institute Class 15 participants

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation CAO Bradley Uken and Rural Mutual Insurance Company CEO Dan Merk. In this session, we had give a group presentation about leadership books we had read between sessions. Mine was "How to Say Anything to Anyone".

In March our adventure took us to Green Bay. We were inspired by Wisconsin Farm Bureau's public relations team members Cassie Sonnentag and Rachel Gerbitz who presented about about media trends and advocacy opportunities. Touring Lambeau Field home of the Green Bay Packers hearing the history of the Packers and Green Bay was very interesting. That Saturday, we met Johnna Miller from the America Farm Bureau who facilitated media training for interviews.

Our meetings in September will be in Madison at the Capitol and in November we will travel to Michigan to visit their state Farm Bureau office.

Buffalo County Sponsors FFA Members

Buffalo County Farm Bureau sponsored the following students to attend the 2023 FFA Farm Forum: Finley Noll and Emma Myren from the Alma FFA Chapter; Skyler Case and Josh Hawley from the Arcadia FFA Chapter; Janelle Wolfe from the Cochrane-Fountain City FFA Chapter; Olivia Taylor and Kaden Miller from the Mondovi FFA Chapter; and Edward Weinzirl and Charlie Salbeko from the Durand FFA Chapter.



Eau Claire County

Chippewa and Eau Claire Counties Co-Sponsor Eau Claire Farm Show Booth

Chippewa and Eau Claire County Farm Bureaus co-sponsored a Farm Bureau membership booth at the Eau Claire Farm Show on March 7 and 8. Thousands of people came out to one of the longest-running farm shows in the state of Wisconsin.

The 59th Eau Claire Farm Show featured the latest innovations in farm and dairy equipment. The show was a chance for farmers to see equipment and supplies up close. It provides a networking opportunity for farmers and farm families.

Teamwork was the main term to describe the activity with members of the Farm Bureau, State Farm Bureau staff and a representative Rural Mutual Insurance company answered questions about Farm Bureau and

recruiting new members. The booth also allowed us to promote upcoming activities and hand out scholarship applications. Many current members from five different districts of Farm Bureau stopped by to share ideas and conversation.



Tuesday afternoon, the annual 'Aggie Award' was presented to retired CVTC Campus Administrator and Agriculture Educator Dave Gavin, and Chippewa County Agriculture Extension Agent Jerry Clark. The award honors those who have made significant contributions to agriculture in West Central Wisconsin.

Sally Henry with North Country Enterprises said, "You know, you have vendors that come from year to year and then you meet people that come back from year to year, and you have these little kids. I love seeing the little kids' reactions on their tractors and stuff."

The Wisconsin FFA Foundation sponsored a silent auction on a variety of items. The Wisconsin Association of FFA had state officers from three different sections attending along with State FFA President Casey Denk from Mondovi.

A big thank you goes out to all that helped set up the booth and worked the shifts. Also, a thank you needs to go out to Wisconsin Farm Bureau for sponsoring the prizes that made the prize wheel so fun. The grand prize of a flip flop grill went to Dean Suchla, who is already a Farm Bureau member. All involved hoped we can sponsor this activity for next year's show!



The winner of the grand prize flip flop grill was Dean Suchla, a Trempealeau County Farm Bureau member who visited the booth on Wednesday.

Van Orden Visits with Eau Claire Farm Bureau Board Members

Eau Claire County Farm Bureau board members met with Congressman Derrick Van Orden on Friday, Feb. 17 at Gizmo's Bar and Grill in Fall Creek, Wis. They discussed the 2023 Farm Bill and other current agriculture issues. Each one of the board members spoke on a researched topic that allowed Con. Van Orden to understand the challenges of agriculture at the grassroots level.

Brandon Boettcher led off the discussion speaking about the specifics of crop insurance for the new Farm Bill. Mark Karow spoke on milk and the improper marketing practices competitors use to mislead consumers. Kevin Whalen spoke on providing the opportunity to purchase milk to students in school and Steve Strey related many current topics including ESG in financing that may affect money available to farmers.

Board members that attended were Alvin Kohlepp, Brandon Boettcher, Matt Krenz, Steve Strey, Mark Karow and WFBF District 4 Coordinator Kevin Whalen. Representative Van Orden will be establishing advisory committees in each of his counties that are part of the 3rd Congressional District.



Jackson County

wfbf.com/about/counties/jackson
JacksonCountyFarmBureau

35 Under 35 Report

By Amelia Hayden, 35 Under 35 Sustainable Future Finalist



I was able to represent Jackson County in the 35 Under 35 program at this year's Young Farmers and Agriculturists Conference from December 2-4. Through this experience, I

was able to meet many other young Farm Bureau members who are putting in work to ensure agriculture remains strong for many generations. It was especially valuable because we had specific networking time within our individual categories.

I was recognized in the "Sustainable Future" category, which focused on folks who are growing the next generation of leaders in agriculture. Being able to learn from others who are also working with youth in agriculture was valuable to gain new ideas and insights.

The other categories in the program were Sustainable Self, Sustainable Service, Sustainable Environment and Sustainable Storytelling. It was also valuable to learn from the finalists in these other areas about what they were doing and their specific niches within agriculture. I really appreciated the opportunity to attend this event and look forward to staying involved in Farm Bureau's various opportunities and events. Thank you very much for contributing to making this possible!



WISCONSIN FARM BUREAU 35 UNDER 35

NOMINATIONS OPEN

NOMINATIONS CLOSE JUNE 1, 2023.

LEARN MORE AND SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATIONS
AT <https://bit.ly/WFBF35Under35>



Jackson County Agent Recognized as One of the Top Farm Bureau Recruiters



Matt Rhodes, a Rural Insurance agent in Black River Falls, was recognized at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau 103rd Annual Meeting as the third highest recruiter of Farm Bureau members among RMIC agents.

Matt, who started as an agent in 2018, earned the "Rookie of the Year" in his initial year of employment. He has continued to earn recognition by being listed as a "Top Performer" for the last five years and earning the Leader's Trip in each consecutive year.

Matt's office is in downtown Black River Falls, and it serves the neighborhoods of Jackson County along with adjacent counties. Products offered include agriculture and farm insurance, business insurance, auto insurance, home insurance and life insurance.

Matt stays directly involved in agriculture by continuing to work on the family farm. His hobbies include riding motorcycle along spending time hunting throughout the area.

District 4 thanks Matt for all the work he does recruiting members in all of his counties and we appreciate the great collaboration he supplies to all of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau members.

Jackson County Sponsors FFA Members



Black River Falls FFA members (from left) Katie Sedelbauer, Jennifer Marecek, and Jaymee Graham recently attended WFBF's FFA Farm Forum Conference. The students were sponsored to attend by Jackson County Farm Bureau.

Monroe County

Coloring Contest

A prize is given to a winner in each age group.

To participate, you must be a resident of Monroe County.

Mail entries by **Friday, May 6, 2023**, to:
Peggy Wright
605 W. Wisconsin Street
Sparta, WI 54656

Age Groups: 3 & 4
5 & 6
7 & 8

Name:

Age:

Address:

Phone:



Rural Mutual Insurance Remains Strong

By Randy Palmer, Rural Mutual Insurance District Manager

Greetings Farm Bureau members!

It is a pleasure to be writing my first newsletter especially now that I have the entire county of Trempealeau assigned to my district.

2022 was a challenging year for most insurance companies in Wisconsin and it was not different for Rural Mutual. We experienced several weather events that really challenged our claims teams, but they rose to the occasion and really stepped up to take care of our clients. Besides being a year with large and unusual amounts of claims, the investment markets and inflation did not work in anyone's favor.

Among these three things, many companies are now having to take some very large premium increases to rebuild their reserves. I am happy to say that Rural Mutual is a very strong company that is run very efficiently and even with all of these challenges, we were able to hold our own and are not in a position where we have to increase premiums anywhere close to what we are seeing happen in the industry.

We have a great team of agents in my district, and they do a great job. Our customer retention and satisfaction report are looking very good, and I am really proud of our team. Once again, our company has approved the 5% dividend return on our farm policyholders, so we are glad to be able to do that. Have a great year and please be careful as you work so hard to feed a hungry world. You and all your hard work is greatly appreciated.

Tomah FFA Members Attend FFA Farm Forum

Monroe County Farm Bureau sponsored Caleb Fox, Josie Bailey, Morgan Jensen, and Brad Granahan from Tomah FFA Chapter to attend WFBF's FFA Farm Forum Conference in February.



Trempealeau County

wfbf.com/about/counties/trempealeau
TrempealeauCountyFarmBureau

Goplin Elected to Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has certified the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board (WCPB) election results. The following corn producers started their three-year terms as elected members of the WCPB on Feb. 1, 2023:

- **District 1: Randall Woodruff of Chippewa Falls**

Representing Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, Iron, Vilas, Burnett, Washburn, Sawyer, Price, Oneida, Polk, Barron, Rusk, Lincoln, Chippewa, Taylor, Eau Claire, Clark, Marathon, Jackson, Wood, Portage and Waupaca counties.

- **District 2: Shane Goplin of Osseo**

Representing St. Croix, Dunn, Pierce, Pepin, Buffalo, and Trempealeau counties. Goplin is a former board of director and President of the Trempealeau County Farm Bureau.

- **District 7: Ken Rosenow of Oconomowoc**

Representing Green Lake, Dodge, Washington, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, and Waukesha counties.

The Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board is composed of nine producers in nine districts across the state. The board oversees the collection and use of approximately \$1.7 million in assessment fees paid by Wisconsin corn growers. This funding is used to support the corn industry through research, education, and promotion of Wisconsin-grown corn.

Created in 1984, this market order board has nine members who represent some 18,000 corn growers. Its purpose is research, new product development, international marketing, and education.

This board is responsible for the oversight of an annual assessment. The assessment is \$0.005 or one-half of a cent per bushel of corn.

Wisconsin is a major corn-growing state, and it produced 510 million bushels of corn for grain in 2017 on nearly 2.93 million acres.

About 50 percent of all the corn grown in Wisconsin is used for livestock. Recently, much of Wisconsin's corn is used in ethanol production for fuel. A byproduct of ethanol production, dried distillers' grains with solubles, is used in livestock feed. Wisconsin corn also is used as corn sweetener for soft drinks or corn gluten meal for livestock feed. In addition, some of the corn grown

in the state enters the world market through the Milwaukee port or is loaded on barges and sent down the Mississippi River.

DATCP administers elections for all Wisconsin market orders. To learn more about the market order boards, visit DATCP's agricultural marketing boards.



Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board members (L-R) Shane Goplin, Mike Berget, Loren Jesch, Mark Hoffman.

The Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network Sponsors Soil Health Workshop

On Thursday, March 23, the Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network held a full-day workshop to educate members on proper soil health for the upcoming growing season. Grand Occasions of Osseo hosted over 80 individuals that had interest in soil sustainability.

Topics ranged from soil biology and health to forage innovations along with practical applications of all important material. Network chair Karl Geske served as the greeter to allow for proper registration for all who attended. Brad Sirianni, Instructor at Western Technical College, kept the activity organized with announcements and technology assistance.

The morning started out with Casey Staloch from Agrigo traveling through soil biology to background attendees on basics in developing healthy soil profiles. He expressed concern in farmers maintaining active biologicals to allow land to be productive and sustainable. A major point Casey addressed was to be aware of new soil amendments that are dominating the market arena. He differentiated probiotics versus prebiotics.

Expressing purchasers know that prebiotics allow for growth of native biomes rather than introductions of new biologicals into the soil. Probiotics use live organisms that can be affected by water chlorine levels and environmental conditions.

Dan Olson continued the high-level practical experience by presenting innovative forages for dairy producers. Dan, a dairyman from Lena, Wisconsin, spoke on what he is actually doing on his farm for rotations of crops using a variety of different forages rather than standard alfalfa. Fescues, Timothy, and cocktails using Brassicas were some of the ingredients that Dan incorporates into his successful forage system. One of the most interesting parts of Dan's presentation included how he keeps his nine children involved in the farming operation.

The conclusion of the morning was established with a farmer panel of network members who gave input on what they do to increase soil sustainability. Leading off was Ryan Guza of Buck Moon Garlic who

spoke on garlic production along with his cattle operation. Bill Sylla of Sylla Acres spoke on chicken manure management that he provides services to reuse chicken litter. Comparisons were made with new manure management with relations to reduced impact of environmental nitrogen. Final panel participant was Kyle Nilsestuen, a cattle producer from the Tamarack area who also works as an agronomist. Kyle spoke on cover crops and pasture regeneration to avoid the "golf course" technique of grazing. He produces corn and soybeans on a majority of his land.

Grant Breitkreutz of Redwood Falls, Minn. brought the workshop back to session with his presentation on his home grazing technique and the 20 years of success he has had in bringing his land back to balance with the environment. Over the past 20 years they have converted their conventional crop and cow/calf operation into a multi-enterprise regenerative family business. They run a minimum of a three-crop rotation, with cover crops incorporated whenever possible in their 100-percent no-till cropping system. They utilize adaptive grazing across their pasture systems and their farm fields. Grant continually experiments with cover crops to speed the healing across their acres. They have received numerous awards for their conservation efforts. Grant is active with the Minnesota Cattlemen's Association and the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition.

The day ended with Erin Silva giving a summary on use of crimp rollers. Silva leads University of Wisconsin's Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension program and has been researching how to succeed with organic no-tilled soybeans. The goal

is weed suppression with limited or no use of herbicide. Timing is essential and killing the rye, the most common cover crop used, reduces impact on soybeans. She explained that though her work is in organic soybeans, crimping is consistent as a management toll with conventional soybeans.

A big thank you to all members, guests and supporters who made the workshop a success. We are hoping that these producer-led workshops continue to give farmers additional knowledge for their operations.

The Buffalo-Trempealeau Farmer Network is dedicated to encouraging farmers to evaluate their farming systems and implement management practices that reduce the potential for nutrient and soil loss, improve water quality and infiltration, and increase long term sustainability.



Save the Date

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation Online Giving Day

Event Schedule

- 10 - 11 a.m.** Kick-off and Power Hour
- 11 - 11:30 a.m.** Ag in the Classroom Challenge
- 11:30 - Noon** YFA Challenge
- Noon - 1 p.m.** Power Hour - County Farm Bureau Challenge
- 1 - 1:30 p.m.** P&E Challenge
- 1:30 - 2 p.m.** Leadership Institute Challenge
- 2 - 3 p.m.** Power Hour

Wednesday, August 2
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

WFBF Facebook & Instagram Accounts

2023 Trempealeau County Youth Conservation Poster Contest Results



Students competed at county and area competitions with the winning posters moving on to compete at the State Competition in March at the WI Land & Water Annual Conference. The first-place posters from the state competition will represent Wisconsin at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) annual meeting. The conservation posters are evaluated on conservation message, visual effectiveness, originality, universal appeal, and individual artwork.

This year's NACD (National Association of Conservation Districts) poster theme was One Water. There were 5 divisions in the poster contest Grades K-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5, Grades 7-9 and Grades 10-12. The contest is open to public, private and home school students. A total of 86 posters were submitted this year in Trempealeau County. First place from each division will move onto the area competition.

K-1st Grade

- 1st: Kennedy Guenther – Arcadia Elementary School
- 2nd: Aliyah Walske – Arcadia Elementary School
- 3rd: Kevin Jimenez – Arcadia Elementary School

2nd-3rd Grade

- 1st: Addi Olson – Eleva Strum Elementary School

4th-6th Grade

- 1st: Kaylen Smith – Arcadia Middle School
- 2nd: Madison Malpert – Arcadia Middle School
- 3rd: Jessica Pablo Lopez – Arcadia Middle School

7th-9th Grade

- 1st: Marriana Seiler – Blair-Taylor Middle School
- 2nd: Lindsey Nerby – Blair-Taylor Middle School
- 3rd: Jasmine Gomez – Blair-Taylor Middle School



Area (Western) Competition

K-1st Grade

- 1st place-Crawford County-Paxton Martin
- 2nd place-Vernon County
- 3rd place-Trempealeau County-Kennedy Guenther

2nd-3rd Grade

- 1st place-Vernon County
- 2nd place-Trempealeau County-Addi Olson
- 3rd place-Crawford County-Calvin Fisher

4th-6th Grade

- 1st place-Vernon County
- 2nd place-Monroe County-Ella Melby
- 3rd place-Juneau County-H. Eckerman

7th-9th Grade

- 1st place-Monroe County-Lilly Berg
- 2nd place-Vernon County
- 3rd place-Crawford County-Kaeli Sime

10th-12th Grade

- 1st place-Crawford County-Deven Marfilus

2023 Trempealeau County Youth Conservation Awareness Speaking Contest

The county youth conservation speaking contest was held January 5 at the Trempealeau County Courthouse. There are three divisions for the speaking contest which include Elementary (grade 5-6), Junior (grade 7-8) and Senior (grade 9-12). The speeches can be written on any conservation topic of the students' choice. Topics should address any environmental issues with emphasis placed on the subject as it relates to locality or to the state of Wisconsin. Students compete at county and area competitions, with the winners moving on to compete in the State Competition in March at the WI Land & Water Annual Conference.

This year Trempealeau County had five speakers in the Elementary Division and one speaker in the Senior Division. The first-place winner will move on to the area competition.



Trempealeau County Youth Conservation Awareness Speaking Contest participants (from left): Ellie Thompson, Delilah Solberg, Katie Butman, Annalynn Busse, Payton Wagner, Charlie Thompson.

Elementary Division

- 1st: Katie Butman – “Erosion Got Big”
- 2nd: Delilah Solberg – “Migratory Birds: The Ball is in Our Court”
- 3rd: Ellie Thompson – “Wisconsin Lakes and Climate Change: A Steamy Relationship”
- 4th: Payten Wagner – “Water Pollution”
- 5th: Annalynn Busse – “Invasive Plant Species”

Junior Division:

N/A

Senior Division:

- 1st: Charlie Thompson – “Runoff's Impact on Soil Health & Agricultural Productivity”



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