

# FARM BUREAU® Connection

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Spring is in the Air

By Brad Olson, Wisconsin Farm Bureau President



Dare I say it? I think spring might have sprung. For farmers that means that it's go time for the season. It is the time of year for mud, dirt and seeds.

It's an exciting time of year for everyone as we break out of our hibernation, get our hands dirty with outside work and activities and look ahead to the year.

That dirt on our hands is an important tool for everyone but especially farmers. On our farm we use our soil to grow various crops like corn and soybeans. It's an essential item for growing food.

I can tell you that as a farmer I don't take this resource for granted. As farmers across our state head to the fields, be assured that farmers are using best practices to put safe and nutritious food on your table. Good healthy productive soil, as well as clean ground water is important to farmers and communities. Farmers everywhere work continuously to improve soil and water quality.

My wife and I live near Frederic and have two grown children and two grandsons who live nearby. Spending time together as a family is

something we enjoy, especially if it involves the outdoors. As you gather together in these warmer months, consider how you can support your local farmers in the process.

One idea might be taking a family trip to an ag-tourism spot or a county fair. Find local farms who are willing to give tours. This can be a first-hand way of learning about agriculture, and what goes on at a farm daily. Or you could purchase some food from a local farmer at a market or farm stand. Maybe you just make a conscientious effort to look for Wisconsin-made products in the grocery store by looking for certain labels. There are lot of options to connect with Wisconsin agriculture.

No matter what, know that farmers are not only here as a resource but are also working to the best of their ability to take care of essential resources.

And by being a member of Farm Bureau you are also supporting Wisconsin farmers. We sincerely appreciate that.

A last reminder as spring comes, farm equipment that moves slowly and sometimes turns suddenly will be traveling roads more often. All drivers need to be patient and safe because we all want to get home to our families.

Enjoy the warmer weather and the time outside. I know I will.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### Setting Your Own Sustainability Goals

Earth Day is an annual celebration that raises awareness of the need to protect the Earth's natural resources for future generations. On Earth Day, we recognize farmers' commitment to providing safe, sustainable food while protecting and preserving resources for future generations. Every day is Earth Day for farmers!

Did you know that farmers set sustainability goals? For example, dairy farmers have an action plan in place to be carbon neutral by 2050. Corn growers are working hard to reduce soil loss caused by erosion by 2030. All types of farmers share the goal of producing the safest and most sustainable food for your family to enjoy.

A goal we can all have in common this spring is to be responsible stewards of our resources.

We all have a responsibility to care for our planet. You can help by getting creative about sustainability in your own home this spring!

#### #1. Reduce food waste.

Approximately one-third of human food in the world is wasted. Food waste takes up valuable space in landfills and contributes heavily to greenhouse gas emissions. You can reduce food waste at home by sticking to your grocery list, storing produce properly and creatively reusing leftovers. Instead of tossing unused items from your pantry, check the expiration date and donate them to your local food bank.

#### #2. Use reusable water bottles and shopping bags.

The average American will use 156 plastic disposable water bottles a year. You can reduce your impact by opting for a reusable water cup. Plastic shopping bags are not recyclable and take up space in landfills. Bring your own bags to the grocery store as an alternative to plastic shopping bags. Reusable items are versatile and economical.

#### #3 Recycle.

Bottles, cans, paper and cardboard are safe to recycle. Recycled items should be rinsed and free of debris that will dirty the other materials in your bin. Try placing extra recycling bins around your home to encourage you and your family to recycle outside of the kitchen. Be mindful of placing non-recyclables in the recycling bin. Non-recyclables must be removed by hand or mechanically sorted so they don't contaminate the high-value recyclables. Learn more about your local recycling programs by searching for your waste management facility guidelines online.

We all share the responsibility to care for our planet and leave it better for the next generation. Visit [gatherwisconsin.com](http://gatherwisconsin.com) for more ways to bring sustainability into your day to day life. What can you do to be more sustainable this year?



## Wisconsin Farm Bureau Members on the Frontlines of Conservation

By Rachel LaCount

There's no doubt that Wisconsin Farm Bureau members make things happen. Whether serving on committees, executing an event or advocating for policy, in the hands of a WFBF member, things will get done.

Every August, Green Lake County Farm Bureau and the Green Lake Association co-host a Conservation Field Day to showcase the efforts farmers are taking to protect Green Lake.

The Green Lake Association is a nonprofit group that promotes the conservation of Green Lake and its watershed with a focus on water quality. The group has 1,000 members interested in protecting the lake.

The first field day was in 2017 at Dave Wilke's farm. The lake association wanted to partner with real farmers to witness first-hand what was happening in the fields and farmyards. The goal was to get farmers together to talk about soil health and conservation practices. That first field day was open to the public for everyone to see and learn.

Forty people attended the first field day. It has since grown to more than 200 attendees.

Most of the attendees are people who live on the lake or are interested in recreation on or around the lake. They want to know what farmers are doing to keep it clean.

"The 'Lake Lovers' are hungry for more information about what farmers are doing to preserve this beautiful lake," said Green Lake County Farm Bureau president Pete Badtke.

The annual event is held at a farm within the watershed. The event rotates farms as much as possible to showcase a variety of tools and practices. A farm tour during the field day highlights the conservation practices on the farm. The committee invites guest speakers from

UW-Extension, USDA-NRCS and Soil and Water to discuss on-farm sustainability practices. Topics of discussion at the field days include cover crops, rotational grazing, creek and stream restoration and equipment demonstrations. The event also features face painting, corn hole and a petting zoo for kids.

Farm Bureau members volunteer to help make the event successful.

Green Lake County Farm Bureau donates funds to the event every year to help offset the costs.

Three Green Lake County Farm Bureau members serve on the Conservation Field Day planning committee – Pete Badtke, Dave Wilke and Jim Hebbe. Jim Hebbe also serves on the Green Lake Association board of directors.

There is a healthy crossover between Farm Bureau membership and Lake Association membership in Green Lake County.

"As farmers and Farm Bureau, we have developed a nice working relationship with the Green Lake Association and its members by showing them we want to be

good stewards of the land and that we care about the lake as much as they do," said Badtke.

Having a community of support to bring an idea to life is a benefit of being a Farm Bureau member. These members have proved that when you leverage the Farm Bureau network you can have a positive impact in your community. These three stories are just a few examples of the many ways Farm Bureau members are investing in sustainability.

Have you considered how you can engage in the conservation conversation in your community?



**Mat Boerson, Green Lake Association board member and host farmer, discussed the ecological benefits of rotational grazing.**

*To read the full story, visit [wfbf.com/general-agriculture/connect-collaborate-celebrate](http://wfbf.com/general-agriculture/connect-collaborate-celebrate).*

## 3 Ways to Avoid Small Business Owner Burnout

A recent survey shows 75% of American entrepreneurs are concerned about their mental health. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses make up more than 99% of business in Wisconsin and employ nearly half of all workers. This means there's a good chance you're feeling burned out at work or know someone who's struggling.

### What is Burnout and 3 Ways to Beat It

#### Breaking Down Burnout

Job burnout can be broken down into three categories:

- Feeling regularly fatigued
- Feeling negative about work or feeling detached from work
- Feeling ineffective

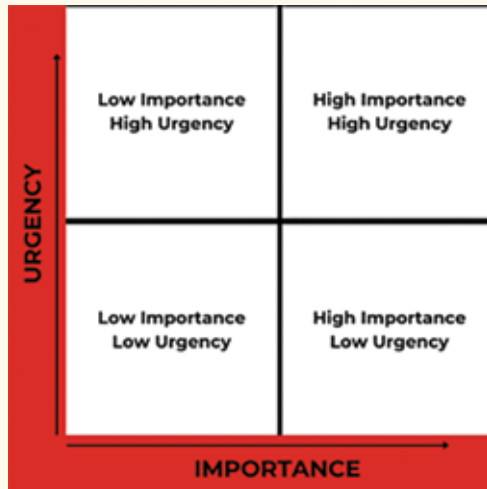
Within these categories, common burnout symptoms are:

- Sense of defeat
- Avoidance of work
- Depersonalization
- Detachment
- Loss of motivation
- Loss of satisfaction in your work
- Feeling flat or numb
- Feeling trapped or you don't have control

#### 1. Beat Job Burnout by Making Time Management A Priority

As a small business owner, you have several competing priorities which can feel overwhelming. Using a time management tool will add structure to your days and weeks and help you prioritize tasks and projects. It could be as simple as writing a "to-do" list on a notepad every morning. Having a tangible list of tasks you can check off as you complete them is empowering and gives you a greater sense of control.

For small businesses with dozens of



employees and multiple teams, project management software is a great solution. Platforms like Teamwork, ClickUp, and Monday.com are not only user-friendly but also cost-effective.

Lastly, if you still find yourself struggling with prioritizing, the Urgent/Important Matrix (aka Eisenhower Matrix) is a simple, yet powerful tool developed by President Dwight Eisenhower while serving as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in World War II. As you sort out tasks and projects, you may be pleasantly surprised that some can wait, be delegated, or not done at all.

#### 2. Don't Stress, Delegate

As an entrepreneur, you might feel like you must do everything yourself. This approach is not sustainable. If you have an allergy to delegating, start by offloading tasks that don't make you happy. Someone on your staff might love the opportunity to take on a task or project that you find tedious or exhausting.

Remember, everyone needs a sense of purpose. By letting your staff help you, you're helping them, too.

#### 3. A Little Exercise Goes A Long Way

"I'd love to exercise, but there's no time." How often have you heard someone say that?

Just as a balanced diet and proper sleep is crucial to your physical and mental well-being, so is exercise. And just as you make time to eat and sleep, making time for exercise is equally important.

According to the Harvard Medical School, exercise is as effective as antidepressants for some who are fighting depression. Exercise releases the body's feel-good chemicals, meaning it does for the brain what a lot of antidepressants do.

This doesn't mean you need to start doing cross-fit or long-distance running. Regular, low-intensity exercise is what people with busy lifestyles can benefit most from. Pick an activity you can easily turn into a routine, like walking, bicycling, or yoga.

There's no way to completely avoid stress as a small business owner. But by managing your time, delegating duties, and making time for exercise you can avoid getting burned out.

In addition to being smart about self-care, your small business needs smart protection. Learn more about business coverage by reaching out to your local Rural Mutual agent.

## A New Way To Pay Your Bill

### Recurring Electronic Fund Transfer

- ✓ Flexible withdrawal dates; 1st - 28th of the month
- ✓ Monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payment options available
- ✓ Select your payment option and date per policy to fit your budget
- ✓ Electronic delivery of your insurance documents
- ✓ No installment service fees
- ✓ Pay by bank account or credit card\*

Reach out to your agent to get started at [www.RuralMutual.com](http://www.RuralMutual.com)



\* A fee in the amount of 2.75% will be charged for credit card payments on Farm and Commercial policies



# gather

## AROUND THE TABLE

Visit [gatherwisconsin.com](http://gatherwisconsin.com) for more recipes.

### Honey BBQ Smoked Ribs with Bourbon Coleslaw

Recipes and photos courtesy of the National Pork Board, Des Moines, Iowa.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb. baby-back pork ribs
- 1 tsp. black pepper for rub
- 1/4 c. yellow mustard
- 1 c. bbq sauce of choice
- 1/4 c. light brown sugar, packed
- 3 c. coleslaw mix
- 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
- 1/4 c. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. smoked paprika
- 1/2 c. mayonnaise
- 1/4 c. hot honey
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper for coleslaw
- 1 Tbsp. bourbon

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prep the smoker with applewood wood chips and preheat to 200°F.
2. Prep the ribs by removing the membrane from the back of the ribs. Starting at the small end, slide a butter knife under the membrane and peel it back slightly.
3. Fold up a paper towel and grab onto the edge of the membrane and it should easily pull off the back of the ribs.
4. Prep the dry rub by combining the light brown sugar, garlic powder, black pepper, and smoked paprika in a small mixing bowl.
5. Cover each side of the ribs with yellow mustard then season with the dry rub liberally on both sides.
6. Place the ribs on the smoker and smoke for 2 hours. After two hours, baste with the BBQ sauce and close the smoker.
7. While the ribs are finishing cooking, prep the coleslaw by whisking together the Dijon mustard, mayonnaise, hot honey, salt, pepper and bourbon in a mixing bowl.
8. Add in the coleslaw mix and toss with the dressing. Cover and refrigerate.
9. After about 4-5 hours, or when the ribs hit an internal temperature of 200°F, remove the ribs from the smoker.
10. Slice into individual ribs and serve alongside the honey bourbon coleslaw.



### Wisconsin Maple Old Fashioned

#### EQUIPMENT

- 1 muddler (or the handle end of a wooden spoon)

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 oz. brandy (may substitute with bourbon)
- 2-4 dashes aromatic bitters
- 1 tsp. Wisconsin maple syrup
- 1 oz. cherry juice, adjust to taste
- 6 oz. lemon lime soda
- 1-2 maraschino cherries, optional
- 1 orange slice, optional
- ice cubes

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. To a cocktail glass, add brandy, Wisconsin maple syrup and 2-4 dashes of aromatic bitters. Muddle for 30 seconds using a muddler. If a muddler is not available, you may use the handle end of a wooden spoon.
2. Add ice cubes to glass. Over ice, pour the lemon lime soda and cherry juice. Soda and cherry juice may both be adjusted to cocktail strength and taste preferences.
3. Garnish with maraschino cherries and orange slices. Enjoy immediately.

