



Grassroots

District 7 News

District Director's Report



Brian Preder

WFBF District 7 Director

Another year has come, and I continue to be proud of the work and dedication of the members and leaders in District 7.

Our members continue to promote and advocate for Wisconsin farmers and agriculture. You may remember D7 has had graduates from the Leadership Institute; this year is no different. During Annual Meeting, Mary Fronck (Langlade County) was recognized for completing the year-long program.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, it's important to remember the impact each of us has when speaking with our representatives. We started the year with Ag Day at the Capitol, where our members take the opportunity to speak with our representatives on issues that are important to Wisconsin farmers. Thank you for taking the time to have your voices heard.

With the upcoming Gubernatorial election and mid-term elections the Volunteers for Agriculture (VFA) committee will be busy interviewing candidates. Be sure to watch for communication from VFA as they start their work. Across the state, we continue to see an increase in local ordinances targeting farming. That's why we need to continue working with our local townships and county board of supervisors to show the importance of agriculture. In addition to our continuing lobby efforts on behalf of Wisconsin farmers, there is an array of projects and events taking place this year. We are also continuing to implement our new strategic plan.

I'm excited for the work and opportunities that we as Wisconsin Farm Bureau members have, to continue advocating for, promoting, and expanding Wisconsin agriculture.

Wisconsin
Farm Bureau
FEDERATION

A Unified Voice for Agriculture

As the leading voice for Wisconsin agriculture, WFBF ensures that farmers' concerns are heard and addressed, allowing you to focus on what you do best—feeding, clothing and fueling our communities.

Shaping Policy

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation champions policies that protect farmers' rights, making sure that agriculture remains a thriving industry through proactive engagement at all levels of government.

Developing Members

Members gain access to leadership development, business resources and networking opportunities designed to help farmers expand their businesses and influence.

Engaging Consumers

Through outreach and education, WFBF bridges the gap between farmers and consumers, promoting a deeper understanding of modern agriculture and its role in everyday life.

1241 John Q. Hammons Dr.
P.O. Box 5550
Madison, WI 53705
(608) 836-5575

Join WFBF Today
or Pay Your Dues



WFBF Policy Development Committee – Help Wanted!

Wayne Steingraber

Outgoing WFBF Policy Development Committee District 7 Representative

I'm Wayne Steingraber and have been your District 7 representative on the WFBF Policy Development Committee for the last three years. Policy development is one of the most important jobs in Farm Bureau. This is what guides the government relations staff throughout the year. Our first meeting, usually in April, is a one-day meeting. At this meeting we will get a brief outline of the expectations of the committee for the year. Usually, we would meet with representatives of different agencies, such as the DNR or DATCP, to discuss topics of interest.

Our next meeting is a two-day meeting in October, after all the county Farm Bureau annual meetings and they have sent in their resolutions. It is at this time that we go through all the resolutions submitted and discuss each one and try to put together the best way to handle each. Sometimes they go right into the policy, sometimes we send them back for more information, allowing the county to resubmit them. At times, we send them back because we want the county to resubmit them so that the delegates can vote on it and make the decision. But rest assured, we take our job seriously, and a lot of sometimes very intense, discussions are held. It is a very enjoyable and satisfying two days.

The next time we get together is at the WFBF Annual Meeting during the resolution session.

I have completed my three-year term and Brian Preder will be looking for someone to step up and take on the challenge. If you are interested in helping decide the future policy of Farm Bureau, please let Brian know.



Delegates at the WFBF Annual Meeting vote on various resolutions and bylaw changes.

District 7 News

Meet Your New District 7 Promotion and Engagement Chair



Samantha Solin

District 7 Promotion and Engagement Chair

Hi! My name is Samantha Solin and I am the new District 7 Promotion and Engagement Chair! My husband and I run a 25-head operation of beef cows in the great north woods with our two little girls never far behind us. I work for DATCP as a dairy inspector and enjoy working with the people of the dairy industry. I am excited to be a part of the committee and host different events that bring those involved with agriculture and our community together!

I'm excited for the work and opportunities that we as Wisconsin Farm Bureau members have, to continue advocating for, promoting, and expanding Wisconsin agriculture.

Abts Wins Farm Bureau's Farming for the Future Award

Stephanie Abts was selected as the winner of Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Young Farmer and Agriculturists Farming for the Future Award at the organization's 106th Annual Meeting and YFA Conference on December 7.

Abts and her husband, Keith, operate a 260-cow registered Holstein and Guernsey farm near Coleman in Oconto County. They raise 400 heifers and steers along with growing their own feed. Stephanie also does part-time nutrition consulting work for Rio Creek Feed Mill out of Algoma. She has been involved in the Wisconsin Farm Bureau for the last ten years. The Abts' have three children: Theodore, Maureen and Oliver.

"The Farming for the Future Award recognizes young farmers leading with clear vision in their communities, Farm Bureau and beyond," said WFBF President Brad Olson. "Stephanie is a prime example of the caliber of our membership and the future of our organization."

The Farming for the Future Award is presented to a Farm Bureau member between the ages of 18 to 35 who derives a majority of their income from on-farm production.

Abts will receive \$1,500 courtesy of GROWMARK, Inc., will have the opportunity to attend the 2026 American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference, will be eligible to participate in the 2027 YFA Washington, D.C. Fly-In and be a guest of WFBF at the 2026 YFA Conference.

Other finalists included Cosette Henthorne of Vernon County, Austin Vandertie in Door County and William Wallester in Vernon County.

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation co-sponsors this contest with GROWMARK, Inc. and Rural Mutual Insurance Company.



YFA Conference Recap



Amanda Williams

District 7 YFA Chair

Another YFA Conference has come and gone. District 7 was well represented in attendees and contestants. Mason Jauquet (Shawano County), Hallie Rehn (Oconto County) and Bryan Maring (Oconto), competed in the discussion meet. Victoria Havlik (Waupaca County) competed in the Collegiate Farm Bureau discussion meet finals. Stephanie Abts (Oconto County) was a finalist for the Farming for the Future Award. I am proud to say that after the interview process, Stephanie was selected as the winner of the Farming for the Future Award as well! Congrats Stephanie, we are so proud of your dedication to agriculture and Farm Bureau!

The YFA Committee started the conference off with something new this year. We hosted a county YFA chair training. We had a great turnout, including several county chairs from District 7. Then it was all glitz and glam as YFA members got dressed up for a New Years Eve themed evening – complete with a ball drop! We were shining brightly and leading boldly. Emily Reuschel was Saturday morning's keynote and led a very interactive workshop. YFA members engaged in facilitated conversations and thought-provoking questions to explore what it truly looks like to shine brightly and lead boldly. Saturday afternoon provided many great workshops. YFA conference always provides so many opportunities to learn and grow, all while networking with other young agriculturists from Wisconsin. I hope to see even more of you there next year!

Mark your Calendars

The District 6 and District 7 Green Bay Gamblers Hockey Game is set for February 27. Puck drop is scheduled for 6:05 and we will be having pizza afterwards. Find the event on Facebook for more information and to purchase tickets. Reach out to Amanda with any other questions.



#FarmNeighborsCare

GRANTS NOW AVAILABLE!

The Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation will provide 10 - \$250 grants to support county Farm Bureau projects related to Farm Neighbors Care.

Application deadline is February 13, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

GRANT INFORMATION AND APPLICATION CAN BE FOUND AT

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/FNCGRANT26](https://bit.ly/FNCgrant26)

District 7 News

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation Supports Education, Leadership Development and Promotion

Ken Harter

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation Board Member

The word “farmer” instantly invokes visions of people caring for livestock and producing crops. That’s what farmers do, but Farm Bureau members and those involved in supporting the work of farmers in agriculture are much more. They are neighbors, active community members, local leaders, educators and promoters.

The mission of the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation is to invest in education and professional development to grow awareness and understanding of agriculture among the public and develop Farm Bureau members’ leadership and promotion skills.

Programs supported by the Foundation and the impact in 2024 are:

- Agriculture in the Classroom – impacting 111,000 students
- Promotion and Engagement Program – impacting 16,000 education professionals and consumers
- Young Farmers and Agriculturists – impacting 500 YFA members attending Annual Conference and over 100 involved in leadership activities statewide.
- Leadership Institute – 204 graduates from among the fifteen Institute classes are serving in leadership positions in county government, WFBF and AFBF.
- Gather Wisconsin – 200,000 social media impressions recorded and 44,000 magazines distributed.
- Farm Neighbors Care – 1,000 farmers impacted.

The Foundation conducts activities to raise funds to support these programs, including voluntary donations with membership renewals, soliciting donations from individuals and businesses, auctions and raffles at the WFBF annual meeting as well as a giving day in August.

Members are encouraged to support the programs supported by the Foundation by making tax deductible donations.



WFBF Foundation hosted a live auction to raise funds to support its programming. Over \$13,000 were raised during the auction! Thank you to all who supported it.



70% of farmland will transfer in the next 20 years

PRESENTED BY
Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation **Rural Mutual Insurance Company**

Farm Transition Seminar

Is your legacy protected for future generations? Join us for a meal and educational session to:

- » Map a strategy for successful farm transition
- » Address financial, emotional and family dynamics
- » Gain insights on documents needed to get started

JOIN US! **MARCH 5, 2026: Johnson Creek & Ridgeway**
MARCH 6, 2026: Plover

Space is limited! Register by Feb. 18, 2026:
www.bit.ly/farm-transition

REGISTER HERE
 LIMITED SPACE

President's Message



Jake Bula

Langlade County Farm Bureau President

Howdy folks, as I sit down and write this it seems as if winter is here to stay for a spell. The harvest season was successful and seemed to go smooth this year.

As I write this the WFBF Annual Meeting has concluded and it was a very exciting and educational event. We celebrated our

accomplishments of the last year and set policy to guide us into the future.

As I reflect on our year as a county Farm Bureau, I'm very happy with all the events we presented and were able to be part of over the last year. I really enjoyed chatting with members from all over the county and a few of those interactions really changed my outlook on things. I can't recall how many of these reports I have written over my years as your county president, but I always try to hit on important topics. I never really thought anybody really read what I had to say, but after receiving some compliments from some of our members, it really drove home to me how much of an impact my words can make.

So once again I'm going to take this opportunity to speak on something that I believe is very important. While I have spoken on it many times before, I believe it is something that always needs to be in the back of our minds and that is checking on your friends and neighbors. The suicide rate among farmers is three times higher than the general population. It is important that everyone knows there is always someone who cares, someone who will listen and not judge. I have attended far too many funerals that have been the result of suicide, and I can only speak for myself, but I'm always available to talk. There is always someone who would rather listen to your story than listen to your eulogy. So please, if you are struggling, please reach out to someone before making a permanent decision. We are all in this together, and we need to band together and be there for each other as farmers, neighbors, and most importantly, humans.

In closing, I just remind you to check on your neighbors and maybe stop by for a chat or maybe a friendly phone call. You never know how much that little bit of kindness may mean to someone. And as usual for this time of year, I'll leave you with a quote from great grandpa Billie, "Keep thinking about next year and think next year will be better." Until next time, keep your furrow straight and be safe.

It's essential to talk about mental health.

Contact our 24/7 Farmer Wellness Helpline
1-888-901-2558

FARM NEIGHBORS CARE

#FarmNeighborsCare

THERE'S HELP

If you or someone you know is struggling with chronic stress, anxiety or depression there are free, confidential resources available to every farmer in our state through the Wisconsin Farm Center.

Wisconsin Farm Center
Ph: 1-800-942-2474
Hours: 7:45 am - 4:30 pm, Mon - Fri
Email: farmcenter@wisconsin.gov

Tour with Insight FS



Bob Nash

Langlade County Farm Bureau Vice President and Event Chair

Members of the Langlade County Farm Bureau recently toured the Insight FS facility in Antigo, learning about the key role this cooperative plays in supporting local agriculture.

As part of the GROWMARK system, Insight FS supplies seed, fertilizer, crop protection, fuels, propane, precision tech and grain services to farmers in northern Wisconsin.

The group saw custom applications, soil sampling and variable rate technology that boost yields and sustainability.

The visit-built connections among farmers and highlighted cooperatives' importance in Langlade County's strong potato and dairy sector. Insight FS carries on its longstanding tradition of serving local producers



Attendees were able to drive Insight FS's simulator, participate in an engaging tour and enjoy a delicious pizza lunch.

Meet Dave Wilson



Hi, I am David Wilson, the newest Langlade County Farm Bureau board member. I am a crop grower in the southern part of Langlade County. I was previously a dairy farmer. I milked cows for 30 years. I retired from that eight years ago. I then raised heifers for a dairy for several years. I am a 30-year Army veteran. I also serve on the Insight FS board. I am married and have

a daughter who works on a feed lot in Colorado. In my free time, I enjoy ATV riding.

I am looking forward to serving the agriculturalists of Langlade County. Feel free to reach out if I can be of assistance.

Meet Karin Koepfel



Hi, my name is Karin Koepfel. My husband Aaron and I own and operate his family's fourth-generation farm. There we raise dairy, beef, corn, soy, oats, alfalfa, forestry products and our children.

I am looking forward to being involved with the Langlade County Farm Bureau. Please reach out!



Langlade County Farm Bureau Scholarships

2 - \$500 Scholarships will be awarded | **Applications are due March 31, 2026**

Eligibility: Any student who has not previously received a Langlade County Farm Bureau scholarship. Any current high school student or currently enrolled college student who has been accepted into an agriculture, ag education, agribusiness, animal science, agronomy, or forestry program at an accredited technical college or university. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above, on a 4.0 scale. Either the student, their parents(s) or grandparent(s) must be an active Farm Bureau member.

APPLY NOW | Find the application at <https://wfbf.com/about/counties/langlade/>

Langlade Agriculture in the Classroom Update

Roseann Hoffman

Agriculture in the Classroom Chair

I think snowstorms are so beautiful... while I am tucked snugly in my wood-heated, draft-tight, loving home. Beef and sheep are hunkered down behind wind breaks, chewing their cud and the pasture pigs are buried in bedding in their comfy huts. Here I sit at my desk, looking out my window, contemplating the 2026 Agriculture in the Classroom projects and ordering my garden seeds.

The Langlade County AITC has really grown around the Boys & Girls Club of the Northwoods. This past November, I completed another 10-week session. We explored all things soil. From soil components, erosion and cover crops to amendments, decomposing and vermicomposting. That's right, we made soil through the efforts of worms.

With pretty minimal supplies, small totes, garden compost, coconut coir, dry leaves and grass, some shredded paper and old egg cartons. Don't forget the table scraps, banana peels, watermelon rind, eggshell and lettuce. I needed plenty of stuff for the kids to touch, you know, hands-on learning. And I had to order some very special composting worms, red wigglers. The next several weeks were amazing and in the words of the kids, gross!

The worms came home with me and now live in my kitchen. My plan for spring is to team up with the local garden club to improve the Boys and Girls Club's raised gardens and install an inground vermicomposting bin where my house guests will live permanently. Approximately 130 kids, K-8th, will get their hands dirty and grow their own delicious food this coming summer.

In closing, if anyone has a 275gal IBC food-grade tote (or two) they would like to donate, I could use it.



President's Message – WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference Weekend Recap



Alexandria Broderick
Marinette County Farm Bureau President

Lennon Sadorf and I recently had the opportunity to attend the newest training offered for YFA chairs. At this training we got to talk with other YFA chairs and heard about all the fun events that YFA offers throughout the state. We also had the chance to brainstorm ideas about new events and things that we could do for events. Along with talking to YFA chairs throughout the state, we had some time to meet within our individual districts and talk about potentially doing more district events to get more involvement.

After this training, we got to jump into the YFA conference festivities. During the conference we had the opportunity to listen to different speakers and mingle with other YFA members. We also got to meet many new friends at our district meeting and got to know each other pretty well. Not only did we get to meet new people and listen to industry professionals, but we also had the opportunity to attend fun activities like a dance that was New Year's themed. We also attended a live auction with a band afterwards. Along with the entertainment we also had a chance to participate in a silent auction where we donated a basket and even bid on a few. All money raised went to the Wisconsin Farm Bureau Foundation.

After all the fun festivities and learning opportunities of the weekend, the business had to begin. Earlier in the year, the district delegates met and went over the policy book revisions and talked about them as a district. Then we had the opportunity to attend the Annual Meeting, where we discussed and debated the revisions that different counties proposed. After discussing and debating these issues we had the opportunity to vote on the revisions as a state to determine if they would be seen in the newest version of the policy book. Overall, the weekend was very fun and we learned a lot to take back to our county Farm Bureau.



Marinette County Annual Meeting

Alexandria Broderick
Marinette County Farm Bureau President

In October, we held our county annual meeting at Equity Hall in Pound. Prior to the business portion of the night, we enjoyed a fried chicken meal prepared by the bar, which graciously opened for us on a day they were closed. We had the opportunity to meet and talk with Farm Bureau members and our Rural Mutual agent Jim Pickett about the year we had as a county. Our guest speaker was our very own Brian Preder. He talked about what we are doing and how we are doing as an organization at the state level. During our business meeting we elected our new board, which overall has remained the same, and we also had the opportunity to go over a few policy book items that we voted upon as a county.

REGISTER NOW

Ignite 2026

Join us to network, learn new ideas, and energize your county Farm Bureau!

3 Dates and Locations!

- FEBRUARY 7
MADISON
- MARCH 3
EAU CLAIRE
- MARCH 26
DENMARK

Session agendas and registration can be found at wfbf.com or scan the code.

President's Message



Dennis Jahnke
Oconto County Farm Bureau President

I guess I can put another notch in my belt as I have made it another year. My farm (gardens) did well this year. Lots of potatoes and onions but the turkeys got my peas. Lots of apples for pies and eating. The regular crops around here looked fantastic even though we have been in drought for most of the year.

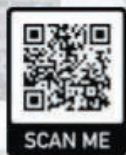
I do most of the grocery shopping now that I am retired, and I could swear that the stores are price gouging. The only reasonable things are dairy, eggs and meat (other than beef). The American farmer still can't be surpassed when it comes to efficiency which keeps the prices reasonable. I bought breakfast McGridle the other day. If they get any smaller, they won't be able to cover a quarter. When I was actively farming, I could have eaten three or four of them and still been hungry.

We had another white Christmas this year. The snowmobilers have been having fun this year in part because the town plow forgot how to get the snow off the road. I hope everyone had a great holiday. I'm thankful I have a great group of people on the board who have made it easy for me to be president these past couple of years. Have a great 2026!

1st Annual RC Tractor Competition

Are you ready to test your skills at driving RC Tractors and implements on 4 Skills Courses? A courtesy RSVP is appreciated but not necessary. Scan the QR Code to register today. Enter OFHS by the main entrances of the student parking lot or staff lot. Look for the ENTER HERE signs.

Saturday, February 7, 2026
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Oconto Falls High School
Old Gymnasium



FREE EVENT but donations are kindly accepted.
Concessions for sale by OF FFA & Alumni

Sponsored by
Oconto County Farm Bureau



NOMINATE A NEIGHBOR

Do you know a story of farm neighbors helping each other? Perhaps you helped out a neighbor or were helped by a neighbor during a difficult time. Nominate them today as a Hero of Hope!

Nominations are open and can be found at <https://bit.ly/FNCHeroHope>



An Opportunity to Impact Ag Policy

Ken Harter

Oconto County Farm Bureau Vice President

In an era of scarce public resources chasing increasing demands, the need for those of us in the agriculture sector to be actively involved with policy decision makers is more important than ever.

A great opportunity to engage at the state level is Ag Day at the Capitol, which was held January 21, 2026, in Madison. Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation co-sponsored the event with a variety of organizations representing dairy, livestock, corn, soy and other animal and crop interests.

The day included a keynote speaker, briefings on critical issues affecting agriculture, and the opportunity to meet with our legislators and staff to advocate for policies that are important to the agriculture community in the state.

Ag Day is an opportunity for farmers and others working in agriculture to learn about critical issues facing the industry and connect with legislators and agency personnel. Watch for specifics for the 2027 program and registration information.



Stephanie Abts Receives WFBF YFA Farming for the Future Award

Ken Harter

Oconto County Farm Bureau Vice President

Congratulations to Stephanie Abts, named Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Farming for the Future award winner at the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference.

Stephanie and her husband, Keith, operate a 260-cow dairy farm near Coleman in Oconto County. They also raise 400 heifers and steers and grow their own feed. Abts' are relatively new to Oconto County having previously farmed in Manitowoc County. Stephanie also does part-time nutrition consulting work for Rio Creek Feed Mill of Algoma.



Oconto County Fair Recap

Bryan Maring

Oconto County Farm Bureau Board Member



The 2025 Oconto County Fair was a great success. There was much to do and see. At the fair we had an RC Tractor event where attendees were able to test their tractor driving skills. We had a great number of kids as well as adults participating in the event. Along with the tractor driving course we had different raffle items. Another item we had was a scavenger hunt for kids and adults to do. We have great ideas for 2026 and if there is anyone who would like to help and plan the 2026 event, please reach out to a board member.

President's Message



Bob Fox

Outagamie County Farm Bureau President

Hello fellow members,

As I write this, I look back at this year's growing season. In my travels around the area, the planting of corn and soybeans were completed early this year. The weather was great for the growing season, corn and soybeans yielded very well. Unfortunately, prices were not good this year. Farms also got a

good jump on the hay crop.

September 11, 2025 Outagamie County Farm Bureau held our county annual meeting at Buzz's Pub and Grill. We had 25 members in attendance. Bernie Vander Hieden lead us in an invocation. We had dinner (it was very good). Our guest speaker was Jason Mugiani. Jason is WFBF's executive director of government relations. Jason gave a little bit of information about his background and that he had been chief of staff to state Senator Robert Cowles. Jason spoke on changes to Livestock Fees going forward. DATCP originally wanted to increase fees paid by auction yards, cattle haulers and others in the cattle business. DATCP had proposed raising fees by 1700%. On November 11, 2025, after receiving feedback from hundreds of farmers throughout the state, DATCP brought

forward changes reducing fees from the proposals they announced earlier in the year.

The 106th WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference was December 5-8, at the Kalahari Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells. Over 1000 people attended the banquet and all went smoothly. Bernie Vander Hieden, Mike Salter and I attended the Annual Meeting as delegates. Saturday was the Farm Bureau Proud Banquet, where they recognized all members that signed up five or more new members. Sunday started with a morning devotional. There was a workshop on "Inside Lobbying in Agriculture." The description was "get a first-hand look at how Wisconsin's leading agricultural groups work together to shape the policies that impact your farm". We then had a buffet brunch and general session with keynote speaker Joby Young. Afterwards, there were the district caucuses as well as the WFBF and Rural Mutual Insurance Company business and financial report. From there we attended the Farm Bureau Awards Banquet and Program. Monday was breakfast and the resolutions session.

Upcoming events:

- WPS Farm Show, March 24-26.
- Outagamie County Farm Bureau is sponsoring high school juniors and FFA advisors to attend the FFA Farm Forum February 11, 2026 at Rothschild, WI.

Oktoberfest Cream Puffs

Bernie Vanderhieden

Outagamie County Farm Bureau Vice President

September 27 was the Appleton Oktoberfest, and we made a profit of over \$3,000 that day from selling our handmade cream puffs. It was a busy day for all who helped to make it a successful fundraiser again this year. A heart felt thank you to all who helped or purchased a cream puff that day.

The money raised will be used to support 4-H, the Outagamie County Agriculture in the Classroom program and local FFA groups.

Because of the success we had this year, we will again have a booth on College Avenue next year! So, mark calendar for September 26, 2026, to help at Oktoberfest. Again, thank you to everyone who supported or worked in the booth this year!



Outagamie County members fill our delicious cream puffs at the Appleton Oktoberfest!

Shawano County

Agriculture Career Day Planned

Ken Matsche

Shawano County Farm Bureau Promotion and Engagement Chair

The Shawano County Farm Bureau in conjunction with the Wittenberg-Birnamwood FFA Chapter is planning an agricultural career fair this spring. Schools from all throughout the region will be invited to attend and explore agricultural careers and educational opportunities from all different areas of agriculture.

The career fair will have representatives from agribusinesses, farms, food companies, ag technology, conservation groups, government agencies and educational institutions. Students will have the opportunity to explore how diverse the field of agriculture is from production-based careers to cutting edge tech jobs and business careers.

If your agricultural business or organization would like to participate in the career fair or if you would like more information you can contact kenmatsche@gmail.com.



The last Shawano County Farm Bureau Ag Career Day was in 2024 and it was well received. We hope you will join us in 2026!

President's Message



Neil Christianson
Shawano County Farm Bureau President

Greetings and Happy New Year!

We had a successful county annual meeting in September at Stubborn Brothers Brewery in Shawano. There were 50 people in attendance. One of the highlights was recognizing our members who have had continuous membership for 40 and 50 years. They were: Gary Luebke and Walter Smith (40 years); Richard Klemens and Kenneth Kohn (50 years). I'd like to thank everyone for their years of dedicated membership.

Some of this year's accomplishments were:

- Sponsored six \$500 scholarships for students continuing their education post high school
- Brunch 2025 hosted by the Olson Family near Birnamwood was a huge success
- Handed out string cheese and other dairy products at local parades
- Sold ice cream at the Farm Bureau stand at the fair
- Sponsored awards for the Shawano County fair youth
- Donated cheese curds for Gresham chem-free graduation party
- Donated \$1,000 towards the FRESH Project
- Sponsored Meals in the Fields
- Helped finance a sawmill for Bonduel High School's Tech Ed and Agri-Science classes

Your county delegates participated in the WFBF Annual Meeting in December at the Kalahari in the Wisconsin Dells. County delegates voted on new policies for Wisconsin Farm Bureau to advocate for on behalf of members. There were lots of topics impacting our farms, businesses and rural communities. One of the hot topic items was controlling the Jackson County Elk herd because of the major crop damage and cranberry crop damage. Ken Matsche was recognized as part of the "Top Ten" membership workers for 2025, he signed up 12 new members. Scott Breित्रick was also recognized for signing up five new members.

I want to thank each of you for your participation and I am looking forward to next year!

Now time to pick on my Norwegian heritage....

Ole and Sven were out in the boat when Ole suddenly dropped his beer over the side. Sven says "Ole, why ya jumpin' in after it? It's just a beer!" Ole yells, "Yah, but dat one had da opener!"

Meet Shawano's New YFA Chair

Hello! My name is Mason Jauquet, and I am serving as the 2025 Shawano County YFA chair. I reside outside of Pulaski in the southeast corner of Shawano County. I grew up here on my family's dairy farm, Synergy Dairy, where we currently milk 600 cows. We milk mostly Holsteins with a few Jerseys and focus heavily on maximizing cow comfort. I enjoy exhibiting cattle with my family and our friends at many shows throughout the year.

I went to Iowa State for dairy science and currently work ST Genetics as a salesman in Northeast Wisconsin. I really enjoy discussing dairy cattle genetics and have a passion for working with all types of cattle. In my free time I like to spend time with friends and family. This year I also coached the Shawano County Junior Dairy Judging team.

I am excited for the opportunity to be the Shawano County YFA chair and hope to get more active YFA members in the county! If you have any questions about how to get involved or about Farm Bureau in general, please reach out to me. My phone number is 920.639.2997. I look forward to meeting more of you as the new year arrives!



Get to Know Scott Frank

Hi! I am Scott Frank. I spent the best 12 years (from age 5 to 17) of my childhood on a dairy/hog/beef/cash grain farm, where my parents rented the upstairs of the farmhouse, near Hartland in Waukesha County. I graduated from UW-Steven Point with a bachelor's degree in watershed management and a minor in soils.

My wife (Joelle) and I have lived in the Town of Pella since 1998. I have been working for Shawano County since 1995 with most of my time in the Land Conservation Department (LCD). I have overseen the LCD in my current role as county conservationist since 2009. I credit Bob Krause for getting me involved with the Brunch Committee in 2018, which I really enjoy helping with. I like gardening, fishing, golfing, woodworking and cheering for all of Wisconsin's major sports teams. Over the years, I have gotten to know and work with many farmers in Shawano County and I look forward to serving in this new capacity of supporting agriculture and our members.



HAVE YOU HEARD?

THE NEW
SHAWANO CTY.
PLAT BOOKS
ARE NOW
AVAILABLE FOR
ONLY \$40



Available at: Shawano Cty. Treasurer's Office,
Shawano Cty. Courthouse
Kropf's Meat, Bowler

Also available online at:
<https://www.shawanofarmbureau.com/plat-books>

Or by mail at: Ken Matyas N3876 State Hwy. 22,
Shawano, WI 54166

Shawano County Farm Bureau Announces 2026 Scholarship Opportunities

Ken Matsche

Shawano County Farm Bureau Promotion and Engagement Chair

In an effort to expand access to educational and career opportunities, the Shawano County Farm Bureau is proud to announce its 2026 scholarship opportunities. The mission of the Shawano County Farm Bureau is to lead the rural community through legislative representation, education, public relations and leader development. To help achieve our mission, the Shawano County Farm Bureau will once again be awarding up to eight scholarships.

There will once again be two types of scholarships awarded. The first type is academic based. The academic based scholarship is awarded to individuals who are planning to continue their education at a university or technical college. This scholarship looks at academic achievement, extra and co-curricular involvement, community involvement and volunteer experience. Preference for this scholarship is given to graduates who are planning to pursue educational pathways in agriculture and those who have volunteered at the annual Shawano County Brunch on the Farm event.

The second type of scholarship is the production-based stipend scholarship. This scholarship is reserved specifically for individuals not pursuing a traditional post-secondary education program but rather are planning to attend a trade program or are going straight into production agriculture. Individuals who are selected to receive this award will create a purchase plan for program costs or items that will help them start their venture, whether it is tools, cattle supplies or other similar items. Preference for this scholarship are individuals who have volunteered at the annual Shawano County Brunch on the Farm event and have been involved in other agricultural organizations promoting agriculture.

Shawano County Farm Bureau SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

8 Scholarships will be awarded
5 academic | 3 production-based
Applications are due March 2, 2026



Academic Based

Those who are planning to continue their education at a university or technical college. This scholarship looks at academic achievement, extra and co-curricular involvement, community involvement and volunteer experience. Preference for this scholarship is given to graduates who are planning to pursue educational pathways in agriculture and those who have volunteered at the annual Shawano County Brunch on the Farm event.

Production-Based Stipend

Reserved for individuals planning to attend trade program or are going straight into production agriculture. Individuals who are selected to receive this award will create a purchase plan for program costs or items that will help them start their venture. Preference for this scholarship are individuals who have volunteered at the annual Shawano County Brunch on the Farm event and have been involved in other agricultural organizations promoting agriculture.

APPLY NOW

Find the application at <https://www.shawanofarmbureau.com/>

The deadline to submit applications and supporting materials is March 2, 2026.

Applications can be found on the Shawano County Farm Bureau website at wfbf.com/about/counties/shawano or by contacting Ken Matsche at kenmatsche@gmail.com.

Waupaca County

President's Message: In Like a Lion



Jake Hoewisch

Waupaca County Farm Bureau President

Winter is here like it or not. After one of the most picture-perfect fall seasons I can remember, winter is following right in its tracks. We went from the latest killing frost to snow that is sticking around in a

matter of weeks.

On September 10, Waupaca County held our county annual meeting at Bear Lake in Manawa. We had a guest speaker, Karen Endres, the farmer wellness program coordinator at Wisconsin Farm Center. She spoke to the difficulties farmers may have with mental health and the free support they provide. I managed to lead the meeting successfully making the completion of my first year as president. It was a very pleasant experience as I have a lot of great advisors as fellow board members that believe in the next generation. I want to thank them for giving me the opportunity to serve them as president.



Attendees at this summer's appreciation event enjoying their meal!

One week prior to our county annual meeting we had a member appreciation chicken BBQ. It was held at the Iron Furrow, owned by the Madden Family. It was the perfect "barn" for the event. We fed between 40-50 people and sent home another ten meals. Thank you to all who attended. We are currently looking for ideas for next year's member appreciation event, please reach out to Al Tank or myself with any suggestions.

The first weekend in December we traveled down to the Kalahari in the Wisconsin Dells. It was our first year back after being on the YFA Committee. It was a job well done by the current community. The YFA Conference was very enjoyable and very well attended. It was great to see all the young blood excited about agriculture. Moving to Monday's business meeting, we as delegates had 43 resolutions to vote on as a delegate body. Caleb Hamm, Dick Pieochski, Al Tank and I served as delegates this year. I want to thank them for their time and efforts. I also want to thank Wayne Steingraber for his final year serving on the Policy Development Committee. It makes our time very efficient as delegates.

I hope everyone has a safe and blessed New Year. I look forward to serving Waupaca County as president in 2026.

Meet the New Waupaca County Promotion and Engagement Chair

Hello everyone! My name is Heather Kieffer, and I am your new Promotion and Engagement chair. I grew up on a farm near Manawa, and recently my husband, Nate, and I bought a farmette near New London. It is important to us that our kids grow up in the country and experience the best kind of childhood: farm life, including all its freedoms and responsibilities.

We took part in Miracle on Bridge Street on December 13, in Manawa. Even though it was my first event as part of the committee, the P&E committee has been a part of the event for the last three years. This year we handed out milk and cookies, as well as asked the children trivia questions to win small prizes like pencils, stickers and coloring books.

Keep your eyes open for our future events around the county! We are planning to get involved in as many parades throughout the year as possible. If you are interested in volunteering for any of the parades or have any ideas for other events that we could be involved in, please let me know. My phone number is 920.850.6475, feel free to call or text me. Let's work together to get adults and children alike more exposure to agriculture. I look forward to seeing you at our next events!



YFA Conference



Lora Korth

Waupaca County Farm Bureau YFA Chair

As the YFA Annual Conference has come to a close, I would like to share some of the activities and fun had at the conference. This year's theme was Shine Bright and Lead Boldly, and members learned how to lead throughout the next year. On Friday, YFA members were able to participate in a social hour sponsored by Mid-West Farm Report.

During the social, new conference attendees went to the first-timer orientation where members could interact with other first-timers. Then we attended the YFA welcome dinner which was New Year's Themed. Once dinner was concluded members attended district meetings where members played games and learned more about their district. To conclude the night, members had the opportunity to join in dancing and socializing with other members.

Saturday morning started off with YFA members watching discussion meet quarter finals. After watching discussions and gaining new ideas we had the chance to attend brunch where we listened to Emily Reuschel talk about meaningful connections and self-reflection. The discussion meet continued after brunch with semifinal rounds. During the afternoon members had the opportunity to attend the trade show and many educational sessions. Session topics included growing farm revenue, harvesting connections, improving wellbeing, unlocking your impact, succession planning, enduring carbon and connecting at the Capitol. After a very educational afternoon members attended the Farm Bureau Proud Banquet where members were awarded for helping to gain members. Once dinner was wrapped up the night ended with a band and a live auction.

Sunday was a relatively short day for YFA members. The morning started with the Colligate discussion meet. Congratulations and good job to Victoria Havlik from Waupaca County for competing at the collegiate level. We also watched the YFA discussion meet. Once the discussion was finished members who attended brunch listened to Joby Young who shared highlights about American Farm Bureau over the last year. Overall, all members had an amazing time, met new people, and learned a lot of valuable information.

WFBF Annual Meeting

Dick Pieochski

Waupaca County Farm Bureau Board Member

A group of Waupaca County members and delegates recently returned from the WFBF Annual Meeting and YFA Conference. The meeting was held at the Kalahari resort in the Wisconsin Dells December 5-8.

The Young Farmers started the meeting on Friday evening with district meetings and a reception. Saturday was filled with discussion meets with a general session with speaker Emily Reuschel. Saturday was also the start of WFBF meeting with the trade show and breakout sessions. Young farmer awards were presented at the Saturday evening



banquet. Sunday events included district caucuses, the WFBF business meeting and the awards banquet. Micheal Berg of Blanchardville was awarded the Leopold Conservation award. Monday morning the delegates met for the resolution session, where your grassroot ideas and concerns are discussed and resolutions are voted on to be included in the state policy book. Wayne Steingraber served on the state resolution committee this year for our district. Brian Preder was re-elected to serve a three-year term on the state board. Our county was well represented with a large group this year.

Get the **MOST** out of **EVERY DOLLAR** with your **FARM BUREAU MEMBER BENEFITS**

Wisconsin Farm Bureau members qualify for a variety of membership benefits and discounts that serve the needs of farmers, families and businesses in Wisconsin.



WFBF member benefits may be changed or discontinued at any time without notice.

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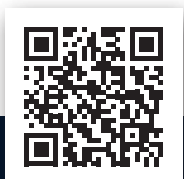
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