



# Wyoming Agriculture

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FARM BUREAU® FEDERATION

## Ag land valuation for 2025

BY BRETT MOLINE

The estimates for the change in agricultural land values for the 2025 tax year have been released by the Wyoming Department of Revenue.

Dry crop land will increase by roughly 0.8 percent, so the increase will be nominal. The increase is caused by the increased weighted average in the price of wheat.

Both irrigated and range land will decrease slightly. Irrigated land will decrease 3.5 percent. This is partially due to the decrease in the weighted average of the price of hay. Range land will decrease 3.2 percent because the value of pasture rent has been steady.

All three of the land types were favorably affected by the interest rate values. The increase of the weighted average interest rate increased from 4.703 percent to 4.982 percent.

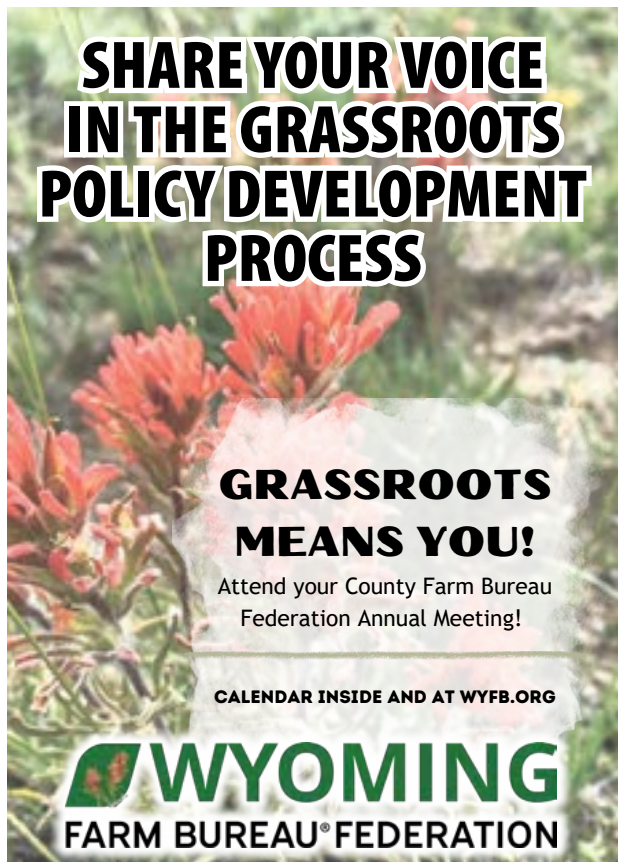
The valuation of agricultural land is based on normal production rather than sales price like other types of property. Dry crop land is based on the price of wheat, irrigated land is based on the price of all hay, and range land is based on the private land grazing rates. Higher production classes of land will, because of higher normal production, have higher land values.

Net income is calculated by subtracting expenses from gross income. This value is then divided by the interest rate on long term real estate loans, provided by Farm Credit Services. Dividing by a larger number, the higher interest rate, will make the value decrease. That is why even though net income from range land was constant, the value of range land decreased because of the higher interest rate. ■



### Wyoming fires

Wildfires in Wyoming this summer have caused devastating losses for Wyoming farmers and ranchers. We recognize the tragedy of these natural disasters while also being reminded of the outpouring of support Wyomingites show in times of need. The full extent of the damage caused by the fires is unknown, but it will be staggering. Communities impacted by fire have come together to assist in providing food, searching for livestock, and donating hay and fencing supplies. If you would like to aid in fire recovery efforts, visit wyfb.org for a compilation of resources sourced from the local county Farm Bureau Federations. If you have additional information to share, please email kclark@wyfb.org. This photo was taken in Goshen County in late July and is just one of many stories of fire impacts in Wyoming. *LANE HAGEMAN PHOTO.*




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### Wyoming Needs Agriculture event Sept. 14 in Laramie

BY KERIN CLARK

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation will host the 11th annual Wyoming Needs Agriculture event on Sept. 14 in Laramie. This event gives Cowboy fans of all ages the opportunity to interact with farmers and ranchers and learn more about agriculture.

The event will feature interactive games and the chance for the first 400 participating fans to receive a Wyoming Cowboys/Wyoming Needs Agriculture t-shirt.

The event will be held in the Indoor Practice Facility during pre-game festivities. The Cowboys play BYU on Sept. 14 with kick-off at 7 p.m.

Wyoming Cowboys are steeped in traditions; both the Cowboys on the football field and the Cowboys in the pasture working in agriculture. Agriculture is the heart of Wyoming. From the food we eat to the open spaces we enjoy to the economy to the people... Wyoming Needs Agriculture! ■



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[www.wyfb.org](http://www.wyfb.org)





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**SAVE THE DATE**



**WYOMING FARM BUREAU FEDERATION**

105th Annual Meeting  
November 7-9, 2024  
Casper, Wyoming

**WYOMING FARM BUREAU FEDERATION**

**Wyoming Agriculture**

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**MISSION:** To represent the voices of Wyoming farmers and ranchers through grassroots policy development while focusing on protecting private property rights, strengthening agriculture, and supporting farm and ranch families through advocacy, education, and leadership development.

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Ken Hamilton

**EDITOR**  
Kerin Clark  
kclark@wyfb.org

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## Farm Bureau's policy development: from the grassroots up



**Zippy Duvall**

*American Farm Bureau Federation President*

**F**arm Bureau's policy development process is heading into full swing. As a grassroots organization, this is the time when our members speak up on challenges they are facing on the farm and within their communities. Those concerns become policy resolutions, which work their way up through the county, state and, ultimately, the national level. Every policy resolution brought to the floor at the delegate session of the American Farm Bureau Convention in January started with one farmer speaking up.

Farm Bureau stands as the Voice of Agriculture, thanks to this active partic-

ipation by our members. From the farm bill and ag labor reform to infrastructure and rural broadband, your American Farm Bureau team is working diligently on a wide array of issues here in Washington. We rely on you to guide our policy because you know better than anyone what works, and what doesn't, on your farm. That is also why our nation's leaders and elected officials know that when Farm Bureau speaks, we are speaking for farmers and ranchers.

Occasionally, there are new or emerging issues that impact farmers and ranchers, but we don't have specific policy to

guide our work. This is when our team in Washington asks for direction directly from our grassroots members via the policymaking process. With many critical tax benefits for farm and ranch families set to expire in 2025, we are asking members to ensure we have clear policy in light of the potential for severe economic consequences. We have a second ask of you and it's important. We need farmers and ranchers across the country to meet with lawmakers this year, so they act swiftly to implement the tax reform farmers and ranchers need in 2025.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT ... Page 16**

## Are you a sheep or a wolf: perspective on the proposed constitutional amendment



**Todd Fornstrom**

*Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation President*

**B**eing an informed voter is a cornerstone of our nation's existence. In the coming general election Wyoming residents will have a proposed constitutional amendment concerning property taxes on the ballot. The Wyoming Constitution is the supreme law of the state and where our judicial system looks to for clarification on statutory and regulatory judgment. Voting decisions on amendments to the constitution are an important consideration for citizens.

At the present time housing prices have sky-rocketed leaving homeowners with an elevated tax burden. In 2023, the Wyoming Legislature passed a joint resolution providing for a proposed constitutional amendment that would add another class of property taxes. Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation policy supports the

three existing tiers written into the Wyoming Constitution.

The Wyoming Constitution requires all property to be placed within three (3) classes as defined by the Constitution:

- gross production of minerals and mine products in lieu of taxes on the land where produced;
- property used for industrial purposes; and
- all other real and personal property.

The property is to be assessed uniformly at full value as defined by the legislature except agricultural lands which are valued according to the ability to produce agricultural products.

The proposed constitutional amendment, if adopted by Wyoming voters, would add a fourth category separating "residential real property" into its own class. In addition, the legislature would have an op-

tion to create a sub-class of owner occupied primary residences.

As a taxpayer, I believe it is important that we be aware that some group will pay more in taxes to make up for any decrease in taxes for a specific class. That increase will have to come to make up for the lost revenue unless a decrease in spending is implemented. If more classes of properties are established, shifting the tax burden from category to category will become easier for future legislative bodies. There are multiple factors that affect property tax increases. Is this the system we want? Are we looking for short term relief and ignoring a long-term issue?

I encourage you to do your research and make an informed vote. An informed electorate is essential to keeping our republic strong. ■

## Taxation classes - a look back



**Ken Hamilton**

*Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President*

**ORIGINALLY PRINTED IN APRIL 2008 ISSUE OF WYOMING AGRICULTURE**

*Editor's Note: As Ken nears retirement we are taking a look back at past columns he has penned for Wyoming Agriculture. This particular column was written in April 2008. With the ballot question this November to consider amending the Wyoming Constitution to add another category of property class for taxation it seemed fitting to reprint this column. When you read the column (minus the year reference) one might imagine this was written in 2024.*

**T**he 2008 Budget session is in the bag and most have already read the headlines in the papers on what was accomplished. Some editorial writers declared the session a dismal failure while others trumpeted the successes. Like everything the perspective depends on what the person wanted out of the session. One thing which was important for agriculture in this session was maintaining our current 3 class system of taxation. For many Wyoming citizens the history of our current system is not well known, but for some we remember the extensive turmoil

Wyoming found itself in when our Court declared the system in place at the time unconstitutional. Equal and uniform were key words in the 80s when the Court found that what Wyoming had at that time was not in accordance with these concepts.

In order to comply with the Court's decision Wyoming embarked first on a debate about whether to have a single class system of property taxation or a system with multiple classes. Much debate swirled around states that had multiple classes and the complexity of the system.

**TAXATION CLASSES... Page 16**

# Change and you, the member

BY KEVIN BAARS, WyFB MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

It is common to hear people say that change is good. Yet most of us don't handle change well, mostly because of the unknown. We like things that we are familiar and comfortable with. That being said, there have been a few changes at the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB).

First, I am serving my first year as the chairman of the WyFB Membership Committee. I served as vice chair for several years while Tim Pexton from Converse County was the chair. Matt Stroh from Weston County is the new vice chair. For those who don't know me, my wife Denise and I operate a cow/calf and yearling operation in Niobrara and Goshen counties. We also put up irrigated alfalfa hay. In addition, I serve on the WyFB Board of Directors as the Southeast District Director.

Another change at WyFB is with our Executive Vice President (EVP). Ken Hamilton has decided to retire after 41 years at the Federation. Kerin Clark was selected as the new EVP. Kerin started as an intern at WyFB in 1994. She soon became a full-time employee, and is poised to take the reins of the organization November 1st.

That all seems like a lot of change, and it is. But the one thing that hasn't changed is the importance of you, the members. When our lobbyists are at the legislature, or at interim committee meetings throughout the year, it is common for them to say, "This is what our members have to say about" whatever the topic may be. EVERYTHING the Wyoming Farm Bureau takes a stance on comes from you, the membership.



Kevin Baars

Someone has an idea or a problem that needs solved and, after making it through the policy development process, it becomes official policy. That's what our folks in Cheyenne can lobby for or against. Nothing more! Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation celebrated 100 years a few years ago, so we have policy on a lot of things. But that doesn't mean we've solved all the problems. There is always something new that comes up, and one of our members will come to their county Farm Bureau board to start the resolution process.

And speaking of change, it doesn't take much of it to maintain your membership. The Regular member dues of \$80 annually is less than 22 cents a day. We have all had a taste of inflation the last few years, but our dues remain the same. We have an increasing amount of members that voluntarily upgrade their membership to the Century Club level, \$100 annually (still only 27 cents a day). More and more people are realizing the value that Farm Bureau brings to them to help keep their taxes down and protect their private property rights. Quite often, the member benefits that are provided through your membership will more than pay for your dues. Check them out at wyfb.org.

We truly appreciate you as a member! If you or your neighbor have an issue that we can help with, contact your county Farm Bureau Federation and let them know. It's the policy development time of year. Let your membership go to work for you!

Change can be scary, but the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation will be there through good change and bad. Membership matters! ■

# National news updates

BY KELLY CARPENTER

## Pathways National Heritage Area

In 2024, a select group of tourism and county government individuals started a feasibility study for a two-county designation of Pathways National Heritage Area (PHNA) in Natrona and Carbon counties. National Heritage Areas are locally managed, Congressional designations that encourage heritage tourism. The designation would be managed by county tourism officials from both counties, but under the auspices of the National Park Service. This designation would essentially turn the two counties into an "open air museum". Several concerns arise from this designation, some of which are private property rights, property owner involvement in the feasibility study, and cost of federal funding for their staffing, maintenance and projects.

The final draft of the feasibility study was released on Aug. 1 with a comment deadline of Aug. 31. Aligning with WyFB policy and Carbon County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation and Natrona County Farm & Ranch Bureau member input, we submitted comments in opposition to the PNHA designation in that no additional special land designations are needed and that private property rights are paramount to protect. If you are interested in finding out more information on Pathways Na-

tional Heritage Area, or general information on National Heritage Areas, please don't hesitate to contact the state Farm Bureau office.

## Corporate Transparency Act Update

Recently the S Corporation Association reported that Congressman Zach Nunn (R-IA) introduced the Protect Small Businesses from Excessive Paperwork Act (H.R. 9278), legislation which would delay the CTA's reporting requirements by one year. The bill is also backed by Republican Rep. French Hill of Arkansas, as well as Democratic Reps. Sharice Davids of Kansas and Yadira Caraveo of Colorado.

While legislative fixes are in progress, implementation of the law is still underway (excluding for those entities that were a party to the NFIB lawsuit that has halted implementation for them). We encourage our members to consult trusted sources, such as an attorney, to guide them through the reporting process for their companies, however we'd like to remind folks about potential looming registration deadlines. If you have created an entity since January 1, 2024, then you will need to file with FiNCEN within 90 days of registration. If you had an existing entity prior to Jan. 1, 2024, then you have until Dec. 31, 2024 to file with FiNCEN. Visit the Department of Treasury FiNCEN site for more details. ■

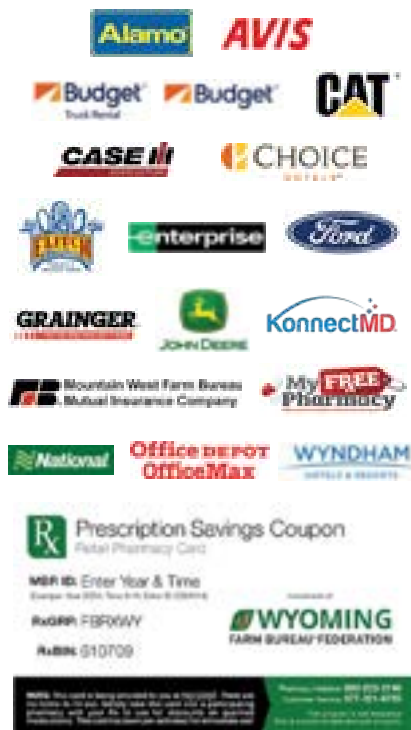
# WYOMING FARM BUREAU® FEDERATION Member-CENTS

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation believes constitutional government, the competitive enterprise system, property rights and individual freedom are necessary components for a strong agriculture, a strong Wyoming and a strong America. We are a centennial grassroots organization that cares about your future. Whether you are a farmer, rancher or a consumer of food...membership is a good investment to secure stability of agriculture here in Wyoming. As a member, WyFB provides you with exclusive benefits as a way to say thank you. These benefits may pay your annual membership fee many times over.

Visit [wyfb.org](http://wyfb.org) and click on the "Membership/Benefits" tab for a complete listing of value-added benefits.

Current members may access member benefits at [www.wyfb.org](http://www.wyfb.org) and click on the "Membership/Benefits" tab. You may also utilize the Farm Bureau Member Benefits app on your phone to access your benefits. Questions: email [broes@wyfb.org](mailto:broes@wyfb.org) or call 307-721-7723.

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\*Farm Bureau Exclusive Cash Reward is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. \$500 Exclusive Cash Reward on the purchase or lease of an eligible new 2023/2024/2025 Ford Maverick, Ranger, F-150, Super Duty or F-150 Lightning. This incentive is not available on Ranger Raptor, F-150 Raptor, F-650 and F-750 Super Duty. This offer may not be used in conjunction with most other Ford Motor Company private incentives or AKZD-Plans. Some customer and purchase eligibility restrictions apply. Must be a Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase or lease and take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by January 2, 2025. See your authorized Ford Dealer for qualifications and complete details. Note to dealer: Claim in VINCENT using #32286.



## YF&R committee opportunities – elections this fall

**BY KAILEY BARLOW, WyFB YF&R COMMITTEE MEMBER AND SUBLETTE COUNTY RANCHER**

As summer turns to fall, County and District Farm Bureau groups begin to meet. While the County Farm Bureaus meet several times throughout the year, the district typically meets once in the fall. During district meetings, there are elections for the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Young Farmer and Rancher (YF&R) State Committee, among many other items of business.

Serving on the WyFB YF&R State Committee is a great experience, and I would encourage anyone interested in the YF&R program to run for a seat on the state YF&R committee as a District representative. There are five districts in Wyoming and each district elects one position to the YF&R State Committee each fall, plus one at-large position is voted on at the WyFB Annual Meeting, making it a committee of eleven individuals or couples. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-35 (must not have reached their 34th birthday by Nov. 1 of the year in which the election is held) and a regular Farm Bureau Federation member. The district committee members serve two-year terms, and the at-large position serves a one-year term.

The YF&R program is truly an exceptional program that offers opportunities in leadership development, legislative awareness, educational conferences, networking with other farmers and ranchers, competitive events, and involvement in the whole Farm Bureau Federation agricultural program. I know that my twelve years on the committee have been worth every minute and mile traveled.

To apply for this wonderful opportunity, please reach out to your county president to request an application and nomination form. Application and nomination forms can also be requested from Kerin Clark at 307-534-6175 or [kclark@wyfb.org](mailto:kclark@wyfb.org). The forms are also available at [wyfb.org/Get-Involved/YFR/Committee](http://wyfb.org/Get-Involved/YFR/Committee). If you have any questions about applying or what the committee does, please reach out to any of the current YF&R State Committee members! We would love to have you join our committee! ■

*Kailey hails from Sublette County and has enjoyed serving on the YF&R committee for many years. She is a rancher, county fair manager, and is active in several local and regional agricultural organizations.*




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## Distinguished Service and Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Award nominations due Oct. 7, 2024

**N**ominations for the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Distinguished Service and Farm Bureau Leadership Awards are due in the state office no later than Oct. 7. These awards recognize those individuals/couples who have devoted much time to the betterment of agriculture in Wyoming and the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation.

**Distinguished Service Award nominees** must be active in the Farm Bureau Federation and/or other areas that relate directly to agricultural interests.

**Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Award nominees** must be an agricultural operator and active on a statewide basis.

Award nominations may be made by any county Farm Bureau Federation. Please note:

- Only one nomination per award may be made by the county.
- Award judging done by the Administrative Advisory Committee of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Board of Directors.

The committee is not limited to considering only nominations from participating county Farm Bureau Federations but may make an independent selection.

The nomination award form is available at wyfb.org, click on the "Events" tab and then scroll to the award deadline link for Oct. 7.

The awards will be presented at the WyFB Annual Meeting on Nov. 8 during the evening banquet. Contact Dee Brewer at 307-721-7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org for more details. ■

## Outstanding Membership Worker Award nominations due Oct. 7

**N**ominations for the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Outstanding Membership Worker Awards are due in the state office no later than Oct. 7. This award recognizes those hard workers in the state for their outstanding dedication and effort in recruiting Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members. There are three categories:

1. Volunteer
2. Agent
3. County Office Staff

The nomination award form is available at wyfb.org, click on the "Events" tab and then scroll to the award deadline link for Oct. 7.

The awards will be presented at the WyFB Annual Meeting. Contact Dee Brewer at 307-721-7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org for more details. ■

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September

- 8 Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting-Farm Bureau Office in Pine Bluffs
- 10 Converse County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 12:30 p.m.- Community Club (Golf Course) in Douglas
- 10 Goshen County Farm Bureau Federation Resolutions Meeting at 7 p.m. - Goshen County Fairgrounds Rendezvous Center
- 10 Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. - Civic Center in Afton
- 11 Platte County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. - Tinker Flats Vineyards in Wheatland
- 11 Carbon County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation Resolutions Meeting at Noon - The Malt in Saratoga
- 12 Big Horn County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 5:30 p.m. - Emblem Gymnasium in Emblem
- 12 Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. - Open Range Restaurant (Historic Sheridan Inn) in Sheridan
- 14 Park County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting
- 14 Wyoming Needs Agriculture at UW Football Pregame-Laramie

- 16 Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 5:30 p.m. – Niobrara County Fairgrounds in Lusk
- 17 Goshen County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 5:30 p.m. - Lincoln Center in Torrington
- 19 Crook County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 5 p.m. - 77 Steakhouse and Saloon in Hulett
- 19 Weston County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 5 p.m. - Pizza Barn in Newcastle
- 19 Campbell County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 4 p.m. - Prairie Sky Venue near Gillette
- 21 Hot Springs County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. -VFW in Thermopolis
- 23 Uinta County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting
- 25 Sweetwater County Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 6 p.m. - Community Center in Farson

### October

- 4 Natrona County Farm & Ranch Bureau Annual Banquet
- 5 Northwest District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m.-4 p.m. - Hot Springs County Library in Thermopolis

- 7 Southwest District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m.-Kemmerer
- 8 Southeast District Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting at 10 a.m. – Location TBD in Laramie County

### November

- 5 General Election
- 7-9 WyFB 105th Annual Meeting - Ramkota Hotel in Casper



### January 2025

- 16-18 WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Conference-Cody
- 24-29 American Farm Bureau Convention-San Antonio, Texas

### March 2025

- 7-10 AFBF YF&R/Fusion Conference - Denver, Colorado

**Visit wyfb.org for event updates**



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# The people of the Farm Bureau Federation

## Meet the volunteer leader: Kristi Ellis

**County:** Uinta

**Leadership Position:**

- Uinta County Farm Bureau Federation President

**Former Positions:**

- WyFB YF&R Committee Founding Member
- WyFB YF&R State Chair
- American Farm Bureau Federation YF&R Committee Member

**Wyoming Agriculture:** Describe agriculture background, family and hobbies.

**Ellis:** I grew up in the southwest corner of Wyoming in Mtn View on a small family ranch that neighbored my grandparents' ranch. I was a member of the Jim Bridger FFA chapter and had the chapter Columbia sheep flock. I married Justin Ellis and after college we moved back to manage my parents' ranch and help it grow. We have seen the benefit of growing up in agriculture and the way of life that we wanted our children to be raised in and we now have a small ranch where we continue to raise cows, horses, goats and most importantly children. Justin and I have five children – three boys and two girls. Our two oldest sons are married adding two of the best daughters-in-law and four, almost five grandchildren. I graduated with an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education. I enjoy anything to do with educating children, photography, spending time in the mountains and time with family.

**Wyoming Agriculture:** How did you get involved in Farm Bureau Federation leadership?

**Ellis:** I got involved in Farm Bureau when our oldest, Logan, was one year old and Justin was recruited as the vice president of the county. It began as a tag along situation and I quickly began to see an area that was such a natural fit for me-educating about agriculture. I had lived it my whole life and I was eager to share my natural love for children and education while incorporating the importance of agriculture.

**Wyoming Agriculture:** Why do you make the time to be involved in Farm Bureau Federation leadership?

**Ellis:** Carving time out for Farm Bureau is sometimes tricky because of all there is going on in life with family and other interests. I feel that there is not a more worthy effort than to share the joy and abundance that agriculture provides for me in my life and doing that by going into the classrooms of our local schools.

We have had the great opportunity to serve on all levels of Farm Bureau, from county, to state and nationally. I feel that my involvement in Farm Bureau at the county level matured over time as I was able to see the benefit that it provided in my life. The networking, experience and education we have been able to draw from have added so much to all aspects of our lives. I was able to go to Washington D.C. to the American Farm Bureau headquarters and that is where my greatest desire to be involved was truly realized. I was able to make the connection...that because this great nation is rooted in agriculture and I take pride in having firsthand knowledge and experience of that agriculture...that I can share that with others.

**Wyoming Agriculture:** What advice do you have on how individuals can make a difference for Wyoming agriculture through the Farm Bureau Federation?

**Ellis:** There are so many opportunities through Farm Bureau to make a difference for Wyoming agriculture. When we can represent the agriculture that comes from Wyoming, we will have a bigger voice and more impact on those around us, not just in our state but on a broader stage. The skills and education that we can gain from Farm Bureau will help us stick together and work in a concerted effort to make sure that the voice of Wyoming Agriculture is heard. There is no better organization that can facilitate us doing that than Farm Bureau. Just getting involved in the area that you are interested in makes a big difference. Not everyone loves to go into an elementary classroom and talk to children about the food and fiber they rely on but that is something I truly enjoy. I didn't have a great desire to know a lot about policy development until I traveled to Washington D.C. and felt that importance to the core. Farm Bureau provides opportunities for all to stand up and be involved in whatever area you are passionate.

**Wyoming Agriculture:** What are some of the issues facing farmers and ranchers in your county?

**Ellis:** We are blessed to live where we have mountains that collect the natural resources for water but those resources are being threatened by overreach of government policy. It is hard to sit by and watch how so many people do not understand the importance of where those things that are necessary for daily life come from and how that is being whittled away.

**Wyoming Agriculture:** How important is each member of the Federation?

**Ellis:** I like to think of the members of Farm Bureau as a wagon wheel. There is a particular structure and for it to operate properly we each need to be there and do our part as we continue to move forward. Sometimes if there is a spoke missing, we could get along without it but there will be wear and tear on other parts that could eventually lead to the breakdown of the wheel as a whole. Those spokes are all tied to a home base in the middle that keeps them grounded and helps maintain the integrity of the structure. Each of the parts of the wheel are necessary just like each of us needs to contribute to help keep the structure and progress of Farm Bureau and Wyoming Agriculture moving forward. ■



Kristi Ellis enjoys time with family, working in agriculture and educating children about the importance of agriculture. Ag lessons in the first and fourth-grade classrooms happen once a month. Lessons are typically a hands-on approach utilizing many resources including Ag Books for Kids books. The object of these lessons is to help students connect to agriculture on a state/local level and also how American agriculture, as a whole, contributes to our lives. Uinta County Farm Bureau has also taken the opportunity to donate and serve pie and ice cream at the local county fair during the Junior Livestock Sale. Board members pitch in and serve as buyers and those selling their animals gather for the sale.





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# Cooking With the Modern Ranch Wife

## BERRY TRIFLE

Recipe by Connie Werner

### Ingredients

- 1 large loaf angel food cake
- Fresh Mixed Berries - strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries
- 1 large container of Cool-Whip, thawed

### Directions

- Wash berries and cut strawberries into bite sized pieces.
- Cut the angel food cake into cubes.
- In a trifle dish, layer angel food cake, Cool-Whip, and berries. Repeat until you reach the top ending with berries.
- Cover and refrigerate for 2-3 hours.
- Serve and Enjoy!



For more recipes visit [www.modernranchwife.com](http://www.modernranchwife.com)

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# We support agriculture

**WYFB MISSION:** The primary goals of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation are to represent the voices of Wyoming farmers and ranchers through grassroots policy development while focusing on protecting private property rights, strengthening agriculture, and supporting farm and ranch families through advocacy, education, and leadership development.

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

By joining your county Farm Bureau Federation, you are adding your voice to strengthen agriculture in Wyoming and America. Not sure of the next steps for involvement?

Contact your county president to see how you can volunteer and/or participate in county, state and national meetings. Contact information at:

**wyfb.org**

### Advocacy

We work diligently to protect property rights; minimize taxes and government spending; limit unnecessary regulations; and make government leaders aware of citizen needs at a local, state and national level. We are a grassroots membership organization that cares about your future. We unite as one voice to work together to keep agriculture strong.

### Education

We engage with food system stakeholders as well as advocate for farmers and ranchers. We support agriculture through outreach efforts including, but not limited to, the "Ag Books for Kids" elementary school program, "Wyoming Needs Agriculture" event, and sharing the many unique stories of Wyoming farmers and ranchers.

### Leadership Development

Leadership opportunities are available at all levels of our grassroots organization. Members are encouraged to get involved at policy development meetings, annual meetings, legislative meetings, picnics, Young Farmer & Rancher events, leadership development contests and more. Strengthening leadership skills for agriculture and providing training resources for volunteer leaders is a priority.

### A NOTE FROM WYFB PRESIDENT TODD FORNSTROM:

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation is a grassroots organization led by volunteer farmers and ranchers. The Federation works every day to preserve the agricultural way of life that makes Wyoming strong and thus enhances the lives of Wyomingites. Thank you for your membership. We invite you to renew your membership and join me and my family in continued support of Wyoming farmers and ranchers. I became involved as a leader in the organization nearly 30 years ago. I believe in the grassroots work accomplished for farmers and ranchers and the rural way of life we value in Wyoming. The organization provides me as a farmer the opportunity to be exposed to the development of regulations and policies and the people that have a say in those policies. Membership is important to me. It is a must. It is a part of my business. Membership in the organization is about getting back to the basic values of life and being a part of the solution as we work to keep agriculture strong in Wyoming and America. A strong agriculture is vital to each of our family's security and the security of our country. Thanks again for your support of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation. We look forward to continuing to serve you.





# It pays to be a member!

To access member benefits, visit [wyfb.org](http://wyfb.org) and click on "Membership" then "Benefits" tab or download the FREE "FB Benefits" app in the App Store or Google Play.



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Members are entitled to free classified advertising in *Wyoming Agriculture* for the purpose of selling items they grow or make themselves, selling used machinery or household items, and for posting wanted items

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation is dedicated to the principles upon which our nation was built: constitutional government, the competitive enterprise system, private property rights and individual freedom. We believe it is the right of citizens to organize and speak through one voice, using the principle of uniting to get things done on the basis of majority decision after discussion and debate. Belonging makes a difference!





Wyoming Classifieds

**ALL CLASSIFIED ADS** must be received by the 10th of each month to appear in the next issue. Members may place two (2) complimentary ads, up to 40 words each, per issue. Real estate sales not included. Complimentary ads will run for three issues unless requested otherwise. Non-members may submit an ad at a minimum rate of \$5 per ad (50 cents per word). The appearance of any ad in *Wyoming Agriculture* does not constitute an endorsement or approval of the product or service offered.

**TO SUBMIT ADS**, send your ad along with your name, phone number and member number or member county to [kclark@wyfb.org](mailto:kclark@wyfb.org) or mail to WyFB, ATTN: Classifieds, P.O. Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.

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**2019 JOHN DEERE TRACTOR 5055** E, 4-wheel drive. Canopy Hardware Kit fender extensions put on. Loader prep package. Two remotes. Power shuttle.

380 hours. Kept in the shed when not being used. It is very nice and clean. Asking \$29,500. Call for pictures. 308/641-2362. Located near Torrington, Wyo.

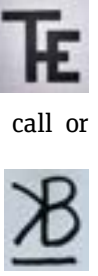
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New Members

**ALBANY**  
 Justin Mazurie, Laramie; Maria Angel, Laramie; Jill Hegy, Laramie; MacGuire Thiel, Laramie

**BIG HORN**  
 Melvin Picht, Shell; Shawn Jones (REG), Greybull; Samantha Kelly, Basin; John Chapman, Basin; Jessica

Shannon/ RJS Ranches (REG), Shell; Joel Neves (REG), Burlington; Katharine Boreen (REG), Basin

**CAMPBELL**  
 Eric Feldhausen, Gillette; Jennifer Liston, Gillette; Frances Drube, Gillette; Charity & Dustin Beck, Gillette; Jumping Cow LLC (REG), Gillette; Ride for the

Brand LLC (REG), Gillette; Larson Land & Cattle LLC (REG), Gillette; Alan Plato, Rozet; Michael & Riley Johnson, Gillette; Shelby & Justin Marden, Gillette; Stacy Praska, Gillette

**CARBON**  
 Daniel Debruyne, Rawlins; Charles Young, Cheyenne; James Anderson,

Rawlins; Patricia & Trevor Hanson, Rawlins; Marcia & Jerry Donnan, Saratoga; Dale Krejci, Rawlins; Teresa Williams Miles, Hanna; Dana Lankford, Saratoga; Ashley Hicks, Rawlins; David Patton, Hanna; Corina Daley, Saratoga; Kjersten Tofte & Joseph Brown, Casper; Tabitha Pearce, Rawlins

**NEW MEMBERS ... Page 11**

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NEW MEMBERS... From Page 10

CONVERSE

Tory Walsh, Douglas; Terri & Mike Marso, Douglas; John Quigley, Douglas; Dustin Everidge, Glenrock

CROOK

Wade Wood, Oshoto

FREMONT

Jeremy & Terri Castle (REG), Riverton; Linette & Robert Hampton, Riverton; Jessica Crippen, Lander; Michael Sutphin (REG), Lander; Samuel R Linden Living Trust (REG), Riverton; Tom Sutphin, Lander; Janice & Melroy Vigoren, Pavillion; Pegan Ward (REG), Lander

GOSHEN

Marlan Wiedman (REG), Torrington; Joseph Murphy, Lingle; Dannette Bounelis & Dennis Raine (REG), Albin; Terami & Kent Mulenburg, Torrington; Mike Hansen (REG), Fort Laramie; Roxanne & Michael Jolovich (REG), Veteran; Kelsea & Hansen Vaughan (REG), Torrington; Gary Jones, Gillette; Nicole Heron, Torrington; Lynnea & Doug Bartlett, Torrington; Patty Guthrie, Torrington; Shari Fox, Torrington; Robert Gorr/ Arrow L Farms Inc(REG), Fort Laramie; Lowell Bonnell, Torrington; John Patrick/ Patrick Brothers Inc (REG), Torrington

HOT SPRINGS

Ally & Brian Bohleen, Thermopolis; Daniel Webber, Thermopolis; Josh Conrad, Thermopolis; Nicole Hays, Thermopolis; Jennifer & Toby Emery,

Thermopolis; Kayte Jenniges & Paul Collamer, Thermopolis; Michael Sinclair, Thermopolis; Carol & Bill Smith (REG), Thermopolis

JOHNSON

Brett McCoy, Buffalo; Sacha & Levi Gossard, Buffalo; Dana & Brice George, Basin; Susan & James Romine, Buffalo; Monica & Norman Jespersen, Buffalo; Victoria Baron, Buffalo; Mindy & Josh Clason, Buffalo; Joanne & Rick Carpenter (REG), Kaycee; Mollie & Travis Green, Douglas; William Suranyi (REG), Arvada; Angella Miech, Big Horn; Florencia Gullick, Buffalo; Ann Tollefson, Story; Sharon Baker, Buffalo; Daniel Peterson, Buffalo

LARAMIE

Shannon Somerset, Cheyenne; Angie & Kevin Lebeda, Cheyenne; William Rooney, Cheyenne; Raymond Adams, Cheyenne; David Ray Simpson, Cheyenne; Jean & Russell Ernst, Cheyenne; Keri & Justin Lovelett, Cheyenne; Raylene & Thad Brown, Cheyenne; Valerie Hansen, Granite Canyon; Allan Weber, Cheyenne; Stephen Puett, Cheyenne; Kylee & Seth Tangeman (REG), Pine Bluffs; Jerry Butcher, Cheyenne; Victoria Pike, Cheyenne; Ernest Vigil, Cheyenne; Jason McLaughlin (REG), Albin; Amy & Chris Newnum, Cheyenne; Bill Wojahn, Cheyenne; Lindsey Riker, Cheyenne; Austine Vye, Cheyenne; Sandy Armstrong, Cheyenne; Mary & James Thompson, Cheyenne; Alexis Hall, Cheyenne; Latisha Nett, Cheyenne; Mary Connell, Cheyenne; John Winslow, Hillsdale

LINCOLN

Dallas Turnbow, Afton; Mark Taylor, Afton; Tanya Hanberg, Afton; Lucas Peavler, Afton; Pace Owens, Afton; Sarah & David Hooks, Kemmerer; Joan McCloud, Kemmerer; Christine Schwab, Smoot; Jody Shumway (REG), Afton; Ashley & Todd Larson, Afton; Jake Masciarelli, Thayne; Paul Egger, Kemmerer; McKenzie & Paxton Wolfley, Smoot; Christina Parlin, Afton; Anne & Brady Barber, Afton; Shelley Fairbanks, Etna; Gerry Larson (REG), Cokeville; Noel Wray, Alpine; Rick Citro, Alpine; Riley Olsen, Thayne; Lois & Richard Carr, Thayne; Britani & Scott Erickson, Afton; Timothy Jensen, Grover; Natalie & Afam Baker, Afton; Tawnie & William Cazier, Auburn

NATRONA

Anthony Cole, Mills; Garland & Jon Keith, Casper

PARK

Jolene & Michael Grau (REG), Powell; Bradley Kolb, Powell; Charity Haukaas, Cody; Edwin Heimer, Cody; Michael Lloyd (REG), Meeteetse; Kelly & James Cooley, Powell; Joyce Ruward, Powell; Lloyd Sullivan, Powell; Debra Bushey, Powell; Beth Light, Powell; Eric Geving, Cody; Jim Ownbey (REG), Powell; Kelly Perkins, Powell; Sydney Thompson, Powell; Clarajo Bennett, Cody; Amanda Skinner, Cody; Victoria Mcilroy, Cody

PLATTE

Nathan Kersey, Wheatland; Pamela Leetch (REG), Wheatland; Jamie Sisson, Wheatland; Charles Stoneking, Hartville; Dylan Molzahn, Hartville; Roger Cheser, Wheatland

SHERIDAN

Teresa Johnson, Sheridan; Robin & Richard Lemm, Story; Greta Wicht, Sheridan; Jennifer & Brady Fairbanks, Rancheater; Justin Zingham, Sheridan; Mark Bede, Sheridan; Robert Marosok, Sheridan; Jennifer Blake, Sheridan; Lance Granger, Sheridan; Michael Mathis (REG), Sheridan; Swam Inc General Partner (REG), Sheridan; Tony Larsen (REG), Sheridan; Andrea & Michael Doyle, Sheridan; Megan & Kurtis Russell (REG), Sheridan; Indra Rapinchuck - Souccar, Sheridan; Brianna Moyer, Sheridan; Dennis Dakolios (REG), Banner; Diana Schmett (REG), Clearmont; John Votaw, Sheridan; Lynn Kirkpatrick, Sheridan; Pamela & Wayne Gable, Sheridan; Carrie & Christopher Mutter, Sheridan; James O'Daniel, Sheridan; David Latini, Sheridan; Eric Hoon, Sheridan; Emma Jean Hando, Sheridan; Rachel & John Billings, Sheridan; Duane Evans, Sheridan; Loretta Anderson, Sheridan; Jess Sams, Banner; Henry Hortenstine, Sheridan; Stephanie & James Schmoyer, Sheridan; Kelli Macha, Sheridan; Martin Lowe, Sheridan; Sandra Markley, Sheridan; Tyson Barnett (REG), Douglas; Kristin & Arnold Ramirez, Sheridan; Ashley & Zach Rogers, Big Horn; Mark Hendrickson, Sheridan; George Constantineau, Sheridan; David & Dane Pearson, Sheridan; Maryann & Richard McCormick, Sheridan; Julie & Robert Greer, Sheridan; Chauncie Anderson, Sheridan; Aubrey Brennemann (REG), Sheridan; **NEW MEMBERS ... Page 15**

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Lander  
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**Justin Jeffers\***  
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**Zack Jacobsen\***  
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# Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation donates trail cams to sheriff's office

SUBMITTED BY DENISE BAARS

The Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation recently donated \$600 to the Niobrara County Sheriff's Office. In light of the recent uptick in livestock and equipment thefts, the Federation board donated funds to purchase several trail cameras and extra memory cards for placement by officers in rural areas. The Sheriff stopped by the NCFB rootbeer float social at county fair to show the board one of the cameras and thank them for their support. NCFB board members pictured with the sheriff are (left to right): James Kruse, Travis Krein, Sheriff Randy Starkey, John Sampers, Kevin Baars, and Tom Marshik (not pictured Seth Allen and Lexie Painter). ■



## GIVE A GOOD HOME TO A **Wild Horse or Burro** Wild Horse & Burro Events

### EVENT DETAILS

Wyoming / Nebraska 2024

**Elm Creek Wild Horse and Burro Corrals, Elm Creek, NE**  
Sept. 20

**Wind River Wild Horse Ranch Day & Adoptions, Lander, WY**  
Sept. 7

**Wyoming Honor Farm Adoptions, Riverton, WY**  
Sept. 13-14

**Wheatland Off Range Corral, Wheatland, WY**  
Oct. 18

**Deerwood Open Ranch Days, Centennial, WY**  
Sept. 28

**Mantle Ranch, Wheatland, WY**

To make an adoption appointment, please call:  
(815) 566-1233 or (307) 331-1311.

**Rock Springs Wild Horse Holding Facility, Rock Springs, WY**  
To make an adoption appointment for Thursday or Friday.

Please call (307) 352-0292.

**Elm Creek Wild Horse and Burro Corrals, Elm Creek, NE**

To make an adoption appointment, please call (308) 856-4498.

Call (307) 775-6162 for more information about these adoption events.



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# Help support the Maude family

REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE TRI-STATE LIVESTOCK NEWS. ORIGINALLY PRINTED AUG. 2, 2024.

Editor's Note: Heather (Hamilton) Maude served on the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Committee in 2012-2013. She was the WyFB YF&R State Vice Chair in 2013.

A grand jury indicted Charles and Heather Maude of Maude Hog and Cattle, Caputa, S.D., June 24, 2024, for theft of government property. The indictment states that "Charles Maude and

Heather Maude did knowingly steal, purloin and convert to their own use National Grasslands managed by the United States Department of Agriculture...approximately 25 acres of National Grasslands for cultivation and approximately 25 acres of National Grasslands for grazing cattle."

This carries a fine of not more than \$250,000 or imprisonment of not more than 10 years, or both, if found guilty.

The Maude family has owned the US Forest Service allotment in question since the Forest Service came into existence and has managed that same land since 1913.

The family has never been advised it was violating any rules and to this day the family maintains its grazing agreement is in good standing.

When the US Forest Service presented concerns to Charles and Heather, the couple immediately sought resolution-presenting options including a special use permit to be put into place until a permanent solution was found, or a land trade. After two meetings, the US Forest Service stopped discussing amicable resolution options and within a couple of weeks, Charles and Heather were indicted.

The fact that the two are indicted separately means they must each retain their own legal counsel – doubling their attorney fees.

The indictment hearing was July 8, 2024. Now they wait to learn what evidence the US Forest Service used to indict them.

Charles and Heather rely on this land including the acres in question for their feed base and are facing a feed shortage and have been unable to utilize it in this manner this grazing season.

A freelance writer and photographer, Heather's stories and photographs have appeared on the pages of Tri-State Livestock News for many years. Her writing slowed down as her two children arrived and her direct sales meat business grew exponentially. She now contributes a bi-weekly column, Day Writing.

Friends opened an account at First Interstate Bank so that those wishing to help defray legal expenses could contribute.



Maude family photo

Please consider helping this hard-working family continue to farm and ranch in Western South Dakota as they have for five generations.

Please support by donating to the Maude Legal Fund: First Interstate Bank, PO Box 98, New Underwood, SD 57761; 605-754-6421. ■

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*There is no charge to join the webinar live but registration is required*

**August 26:**  
Learn about farm/ranch succession coordinators in Wyoming and how this free service can help producers develop plans for the future of their farm or ranch.

**September 9:**  
Where are you now? Why try to reinvent the wheel? We have resources available to give you a broad overview of each step you may want to take.

**NEED WEBINAR ACCESS?**  
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• 307-777-8788  
• [lucy.pauley@wyo.gov](mailto:lucy.pauley@wyo.gov)

**September 23:**  
Where do you want to be and how will you get there? Come learn about the steps you can take to develop and finalize a strong farm/ranch succession plan.



# Voracious grasshoppers threaten western rangeland and crops

BY DANIEL MUNCH, AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION ECONOMIST

When learning U.S. history, narratives of vast swarms of locusts ravaging millions of acres of farmland are often recounted. Not all grasshoppers are locusts, and the swarms aren't quite as big as they were in the 1800s, but grasshoppers and Mormon crickets remain a persistent risk to agriculture in the West, inflicting significant damage to rangeland used for grazing and crops.

Almost 400 native species of grasshoppers inhabit the Western United States, though only a small fraction (about 12 species) are considered pests. Grasshoppers compete with cattle and other herbivores (including wildlife like deer and elk) for forage and are more likely to become a threat in areas with less than 30 inches of rainfall annually. They can consume up to 50% of their body weight each day in forage (while cattle consume 1.5-

2.5% of their body weight). Put differently, just 30 pounds of grasshoppers will eat as much as a 600-pound steer raised for beef in a day. Grasshoppers are an even bigger menace to crop farmers and ranchers on public and private lands when drought conditions are added to the mix.

Grasshopper and cricket outbreaks not only result in the physical destruction of forage and crops but also contribute to soil erosion and degradation, disrupt rangeland nutrient cycles and impede rangeland water filtration, which can have lasting impacts on rangeland ecosystems. Western landowners face heightened risks from grasshoppers due to the substantial amount of federally owned land in the region. Pest infestations on federal lands reduce the quantity and quality of forage available for those with public lands grazing leases. In the absence of grasshopper and cricket management on federal lands, insects can migrate onto private lands, undermining

the effectiveness of common private pest management efforts. This movement from public to private lands complicates the control of these pests.

Literature on current economic impacts of grasshoppers on agriculture is limited. Generally, monetary losses either fall under the value of crops or rangeland consumed by insects that could no longer be sold on the market or consumed by livestock to produce meat or wool and the cost to treat populations that have reached pest-concern levels. Some of the best available data comes from county agricultural commissioner disaster reports in California that indicate more than \$52 million in losses in a single county in one year.

A recent Market Intel analysis (link found in article on wyfb.org in the News tab) scratches the surface in terms of describing these economic damages due to the limited data available and isolated surveying. Efforts to manage and mitigate

grasshopper populations, led by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service through the Rangeland Grasshopper and Mormon Cricket Suppression Program, involve sophisticated monitoring and targeted treatments. Continued coordination and efforts among the federal government, states and private landowners is essential to safeguarding the livelihoods of farmers and ranchers against these small but hungry pests. ■



**NEW MEMBERS...** From Page 11

**SHERIDAN CONTINUED**

Jacob Maker, Gillette; Cheryl Barker (REG), Sheridan; Carri Brewer, Sheridan; Kasey Garnhart, Sheridan; Jody & Lany Bangerter, Sheridan

**SUBLETTE**

Jason McChesney, Cora; Zac Garner, Etna; Frank Lyons, Jackson

**SWEETWATER**

Thomas Thoman (REG), Green River; Jason McFadden, Rock Springs; Michelle & Jay Lyon, Green River; Elizabeth Peralta, Rock Springs; Richard Canestrini, Rock Springs; Darrin Byrd, Green River; Bruce Mandros, Green River; Kelsey Prueitt & Colby Hickman, Rock Springs; Virginia Struck, Rock Springs

**TETON**

Carol Halverson, Moose; Andrea Wollerman, Jackson; Molly Dearing, Jackson; Alice Cornell, Jackson; Nancy & Frank Sansone, Daniel

**UINTA**

Ronnie Kellum (REG), Mountain View; Shelley & Kevin Graham, Mountain View; Jack Hurdsman (REG), Robertson; Allen Lindemood, Mountain View; Jessica Zadra & Eric Major, Lyman; Randy Gross, Fort Bridger; Toby Hadden, Mountain View; Mike Potter (REG), Green River; Jesse Huntington (REG), Fort Bridger; Teresea Nixon (REG), Fort Bridger; Susan Toomer, Lyman; Danny Cantlin (REG), Fort Bridger; Rien Crane, Lyman; Gayle Eyre, Mountain View

**WASHAKIE**

Alice & James Emerson Jr. (REG), Worland; Lisa Roberts, Worland; Sara & Kalon Patridge, Worland; Marilyn & Tyler Voyles, Worland

**WESTON**

Frank Krekeler (REG), Newcastle; Kathy & Shawn Fligge (REG), Upton; Dean Kettley (REG), Newcastle; Irene & Allan Ward, Sundance; Peggy Lenhart, Casper; Cary Colvard (REG), Newcastle ■



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**POLICY DEVELOPMENT...** From Page 2

Tax reform is crucial for ensuring the economic sustainability of our farms and ranches. Lower tax rates, small business deductions and higher estate tax exemptions help our farm families manage finances more effectively, provide opportunities for investment and even help ease the difficult planning for succession. That is also why we have our eyes fixed on this quickly approaching deadline that will

place many of these critical benefits at risk. Without renewal of these benefits, farmers are facing a steep tax increase, and potentially tough decisions going forward. Our farm and ranch families need a permanent tax code that provides stability and recognizes the unique financial challenges farm businesses face as they work to provide a secure food supply for our nation.

At Farm Bureau, the call for tax reform has come in many forms over the years and we are continuing to work with, and on be-

half of our members, to get a solution before the 2025 deadline. That is also why addressing the tax concerns through the policy development process is a top priority. We want to hear from our members about how these issues are impacting your farms and ranches directly. This feedback not only helps us work on your behalf but also gives us farmer and rancher stories - powerful testimonials - we can share to ensure all lawmakers understand the impact of tax reform on farm and ranch families

across the country.

This is your Farm Bureau, and these are your policies. Together, we will continue to shape the future of American agriculture and ensure that our farms, ranches and rural communities thrive for generations to come. I am deeply grateful for the hard work and dedication you put into shaping our great organization at the local, state and national levels and am eager to see what comes from this year's policy development process. ■

**TAXATION CLASSES...** From Page 2

In the end the debate in Wyoming was whether to adopt a single class system of property or a three class system. The proponents of the single class system touted its simplicity and ease as well as its ultimate fairness. The three class system proponents touted its fairness as well since with three classes most property taxation would not need to be raised or lowered in order to remain revenue neutral (another key component of the debate).

In the end Wyoming citizens adopted the 3 class system. The constitution states that the classes would be on gross production of minerals and mine products in lieu of taxes on the land where produced; property used for industrial purposes as defined by the legislature; and all other property, real and personal. The constitution also specifies that agricultural land should be valued according to its ability to produce, which meant the wild upswings in areas where scenery is highly valued would not force agricultural producers to sell off their lands to pay for taxes based on non-ag prices.

The debate this session was on establishing another class or subclasses of property in the constitution in order to offer relief to certain segments of our tax paying citizens. One proposal which received the most debate would have allowed resi-

dential property to be separate from other real and personal property. With agriculture and commercial being about the only remaining categories, many ag leaders expressed concern that commercial and agricultural properties would become "low hanging fruit" in some future effort to raise taxes. Even with separate classes, there would be a need to narrow or segment property further in order to more properly target the relief to those who needed it.

When the debate on classes took place several years ago, we heard that some states had over 20 separate classes. A little thought about this type of a system easily leads a person to conclude that a system with that many classes could be extremely complex.

In the end I believe the case was made that changing our constitution was not the best approach to solving the problem. A decision we in agriculture should welcome. The debate on property tax relief will continue in future sessions but we in agriculture need to continue to educate our representatives about the critical need to ensure agriculture doesn't get put in a position that future legislative bodies can pick off.

One last thing to mention, even when we disagree with the position taken by some of our elected leaders we all need to take the time to recognize the

significant time and effort these leaders spend in order to make our system a representative form of government. ■

— REPRINTED FROM APRIL 2008 WYOMING AGRICULTURE

**Ballot Text of Proposed Constitutional Amendment for General Election**






**2024 PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

**A.** The adoption of this amendment would separate residential real property into its own class of property for purposes of property tax assessments. The amendment would authorize the legislature to create a subclass of owner occupied primary residences.

FOR

AGAINST

Source: Wyoming Voter's Guide from Wyoming Secretary of State's Office

<p><b>New Haven Ranch</b> Hulett, WY • \$7,500,000</p> <p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p> 	<p>Near the Black Hills in northeast Wyoming, this scenic 2,442± acre ranch consists of both contiguous deeded and BLM land. With two primary drainages, TL Creek and Music Creek the ranch is abundant with wildlife and currently used for livestock, hay production, hunting and as a guest ranch.</p> <p><b>Deeded Acres: 2,182±</b> <b>Total Acres: 2,442±</b></p>	<p><b>Ervay Ranch</b> Large Wyoming Grass Ranch • \$6,500,000</p> 	<p>Largely unimproved, this 20,000 acres plus Wyoming grass ranch is all blocked up and contiguous. Ervay Ranch is located at the headwaters of the Powder River, Deer Creek and East Canyon Creek offering upland and big game hunting, with a wide variety of grazing grasses excellent for livestock.</p> <p><b>Deeded Acres: 11,135±</b> <b>Total Acres: 20,936±</b></p>
<p><b>Intermountain Equestrian Center</b> Billings, MT • \$1,800,000</p> <p><b>NEW PRICE</b></p> 	<p>For 25 years IEC has been a well-established and recognized commercial equestrian facility near Billings, MT. Users include professional horse trainers, recreational users, horse lovers, and borders of all types. Opportunity for growth abounds with nearly 30 acres of deeded ground and access to 640 acres of MT. State land.</p> <p><b>Deeded Acres: 30.0±</b></p>	<p><b>Koch Ranch</b> Kaycee, WY • \$6,500,000</p> 	<p>Nestled along 5 miles of the Powder River, this ranch has excellent hay production with priority water rights encompassing 525± acres of irrigation under five center pivots, three side roll sprinklers, plus flood irrigation. Its riparian system, farm and grazing land, provide food and cover for abundant wildlife.</p> <p><b>Deeded Acres: 1,780±</b> <b>Total Acres: 2,020±</b></p>
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