

Wyoming Agriculture

VOL. 41, NO. 6

MARCH 2024

Published by Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation



Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week 2024

Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon proclaimed the week of February 19th as Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week. The proclamation recognized the importance of agriculture literacy and the WyFB YF&R “Ag Books for Kids” program. Wyoming students and teachers are encouraged to visit their school’s elementary library to check out the 2024 book “Seed, Soil, Sun” by Cris Peterson. Three contests are offered for Wyoming students Kindergarten-5th grade. The contest deadline is March 29, 2024 and details are available at wyfb.org. ■



Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members and staff met with Governor Gordon for the formal proclamation signing in February. (l to r): Brett Moline, WyFB; Todd Fornstrom, WyFB President; Mattie Wakefield, UW Collegiate FB; Aspen Nesvik, UW Collegiate Farm Bureau; Annie and Tucker Hamilton, Weston County; Governor Gordon; UW Collegiate FB: Marie Lawson, Jennifer Parker, Hailey Rasmussen, Aida Hester, and Jordan Anderson; Kerin Clark, WyFB; Matt Stroh, Weston County; Brooke Roes, WyFB; and Ken Hamilton, WyFB. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE PHOTO.

Cultivating emerging leaders at WyFB YF&R 2024

BY KERIN CLARK

“This is probably one of the most important things you can do to fill your cup as young leaders in agriculture,” said Dr. Whit Stewart as he began the “Agricultural Research Conversations” at the 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Young Farmer & Rancher (YF&R) Feb. 2-3 Conference in Laramie. “I applaud you for being here.”

We couldn’t agree more. Investing in oneself and net-

working with others in agriculture is an important part of any agricultural business plan. The 21st annual WyFB YF&R Conference “Cultivating Emerging Leaders” provided a variety of topics and resources to cultivate and encourage young Wyoming agriculturalists. The conference provides a platform for young farmers and ranchers to network with like-minded individuals and learn and grow as agriculturalists and as agricultural leaders.

EMERGING LEADERS ... Page 19



Cultivating agricultural knowledge with “Agricultural Research Conversations” at the University of Wyoming Laramie Research & Extension Center during the 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference. Hannah Cunningham-Hollinger, UW Assistant Professor Animal Genetics, talked about beef cattle research in the feed efficiency barn. KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY/KADRA CLARK PHOTO.

WyFB Legislative Meeting 2024



Agricultural conversations, connecting with legislative happenings, and listening to speakers on a variety of topics impacting agriculture were on the agenda at the Feb. 15-16, 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting. Senator Cheri Steinmetz (left) was the guest speaker at the opening luncheon. Senator Steinmetz is the chairman of the Wyoming Senate Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee. WyFB Executive Vice President Ken Hamilton (right) thanked Senator Steinmetz for providing an agricultural legislative update and working on Wyoming agriculture issues. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.

Sheridan College student Becka Nutting wins WyFB Collegiate Discussion Meet

BY KERIN CLARK

Sheridan College student Becka Nutting discussed agriculture issues at the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Young Farmer & Rancher (YF&R) Collegiate Discussion Meet and earned a \$1,000 cash scholarship and an expense-paid trip to the national competition in Omaha, Neb.

Students representing Sheridan College, Central Wyoming College and Eastern Wyoming College competed February 1 in Laramie. The competition is designed to simulate the Farm Bureau Federation’s policy development process in a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected. The competition provided a challenge to discuss real time agriculture issues of concern and determine a potential solution.

DISCUSSION MEET ... Page 16



Sheridan College’s Becka Nutting (right) won the 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Collegiate Discussion Meet. Sheridan College Agriculture Business Instructor Angel Sparkman (left) congratulates Nutting who won a \$1,000 cash scholarship and an expense paid trip to compete in the national competition. KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY/KADRA CLARK PHOTO.

Inside:

Picture of ag with census.....2
National news update.....3
Cowboys at heart4
WTA keeps the wheels moving5

Meet the volunteer: Stetson Nield6
Weather, not climate8
Membership awards.....9
UW Collegiate Farm Bureau..... 11

Property taxes and you17
WDA technical services18
Legislative Meeting photos20

www.wyfb.org

CALENDAR
OF EVENTS

March 2024

- 1 WyFB Scholarship application deadline
- 8-11 AFBF YF&R Conference and AFBF YF&R Collegiate Discussion Meet-Omaha, Neb.
- 19 National Agriculture Day
- 29 "Ag Books for Kids" contests county deadline

April 2024

- 12 "Ag Books for Kids" contests district deadline

May 2024

- 31 WyFB Membership Committee Meeting-Hilton Garden Inn in Casper

November 2024

- 7-9 WyFB 105th Annual Meeting-Casper

Visit wyfb.org
for calendar updates

Wyoming
Agriculture

Volume 41, Issue No. 6
March 2024

USPS 10331 ISSN 1071-0272

Official publication of
the Wyoming Farm Bureau
Federation

307-721-7719
www.wyfb.org

Wyoming Agriculture is published
monthly, except for combined July/
August and December/January
issues,

by the Wyoming Farm Bureau
Federation, 931 Boulder Drive,
Laramie, WY 82070. Periodicals
postage paid at Laramie, WY and
additional entry offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address
changes to: Wyoming Agriculture,
PO Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.

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.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Ken Hamilton

EDITOR
Kerin Clark
kclark@wyfb.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Todd Fornstrom – President
Cole Coxbill – Vice President
Lane Hageman, Director-at-Large
Tim Pexton, Central District Director
Thad Dockery, Northwest District Director
Raenell Taylor, Northeast District Director
Kevin Baars, Southeast District Director
Justin Ellis, Southwest District Director
Tucker Hamilton, YF&R State Chair

The big picture of U.S.
agriculture with the 2022 Census

Zippy Duvall

American Farm Bureau Federation President



From a window atop my grandfather's old barn, you can see my family's whole farm, from the hay fields to the chicken houses to the pasture where the mama cows are grazing. I love watching the sunrise from there, taking in the big picture. But even from that bird's eye view, I can only see so far. I can't see across the country, my home state, or even my whole county. That's where USDA comes in, bringing us all the big picture of U.S. agriculture with its Census of Agriculture. Every five years, this census offers a sweeping view of America's farms and ranches, and February 13, USDA released its latest data.

So, what did we learn about the farm landscape from the 2022 Census? A key takeaway is an overall decrease in the number of family farms across the country. While the number of producers held steady, the number of farms and ranches is down 7% from 2017. This decrease largely hit small- and medium-sized farms, with the number of large farms up slightly.

We have all seen the for-sale signs pop up across farmland, so this number is likely not a surprise to most farmers. From rapidly increasing regulatory requirements to inflation to skyrocketing labor costs, it's getting harder for small- and medium-sized farms to hold on, and we're starting to see an increase in consolidation of farms.

This big picture from the Census of Ag should serve as a wakeup call to our lawmakers. These aren't just statistics to farm and ranch families across the country: they are deeply personal stories of heart-breaking decisions. Farm and ranch families, and the men and women they employ, cannot hold on for long overdue reform on issues like the farm bill, tax reform, and farm labor—to name a few.

Now, it's not just dark clouds on the horizon. I firmly believe we can find hope when we look at the big picture, and it's no different here. I, for one, am encouraged by looking to the future with the growing number of beginning farmers. According to USDA, in 2022, the number of beginning farmers was just over 1 million. That's up 11% from 2017. That said, the average age of a farmer ticked up again to 58, so we need to find ways to encourage more young people to get involved in farming or to come back to the farm. With expenses and high startup costs, such as interest rates up 43%, young farmers need more tools to keep them farming rather than obstacles that drive them out of business. We need to keep exploring ways to ensure that farming is economically sustainable for all farmers. The importance of the farm bill cannot be overstated here. So, I'll say it again: we need a modernized

farm bill in 2024, one that helps family farms stay in business during difficult times and keeps our food supply secure in all seasons.

The Census of Ag data isn't just about the big picture, however. The census gets down in the weeds with 6 million data points. That level of detail (all confidential) is critical for USDA in their work to ensure farms of all sizes and types have the support they need. The big picture—and all the details in it—helps USDA allocate funds down to the county level to support farms and ranches of all types and sizes. In the days to come, you'll also see insights from our team of economists as they dive into this important research. And you'll see Farm Bureau employing USDA data along with our analysis throughout the year, from sharing the great strides farmers are making in sustainability to helping consumers better understand where their food comes from.

But none of this research and analysis would be possible without participation across the country by farmers and ranchers. The Census of Ag is another critical tool in sharing our farm and ranch stories. The big picture of agriculture should matter to all Americans, because we are all counting on the success of America's farmers and ranchers. ■

Political lessons to learn
from overseas politics

Ken Hamilton

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President



Can American politicians learn from European politicians? And if so, what message can they take home from our political counterparts in Europe? As I write this column we see politicians in France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Ireland are experiencing protests against policies adopted by the European Union, many of which are the Union's efforts to address climate concerns. Articles from Germany indicate that the politicians are trying to find a way to pay for their climate agenda and decided to remove tax refunds on diesel fuel to their farmers. This may have been the last straw for those folks because they immediately began protesting this proposal, but they also are protesting other costly rules and regulations. Farmers in France are also protesting the EU driven rules as well as rules adopted by their own governing body that added to their costs. Of course, farmers in the Netherlands have seen the actions by their government to reduce the number of dairy cattle by a significant number. The Irish have also taken a page from the Dutch handbook. Spain and Portuguese farmers are also protesting the costly regulations.

The question US policy makers should be asking themselves is what did the EU do wrong that upset the very food producers that help keep their citizens fed?

Unfortunately, the solutions some in the ag community are proposing for these problems appear to be to demand more support from the taxpayers to offset these ill-conceived policies. As I've mentioned before, he who has the gold rules and to seek a solution that keeps you even more indebted to those government officials who hold the purse strings starts you on a dangerous path.

Want to get those pesky independent farmers under your thumb, propose a policy that will be costly for them to implement and then when they complain, suggest the solution would be to pay them for some of those costs. Then once those funds come to the farmer, start to put conditions on the funds. "Sure, we're glad to help you out, if you just change the way you're currently doing things." "What's that you say, it doesn't make sense and will be costly? Sure, but then we're paying you for it." Then next year there will be another set of conditions. Bureaucracies

are, if anything, patient. If you can't get what you want today, be patient and try it again next year.

The first thing these politicians should do is to roll back the laws and their subsequent rules that led to the costs in the first place. However, this solution is rarely contemplated and is certainly resisted by many of those politicians as well as the bureaucracies that were charged with carrying out the law. The natural inclination for those politicians is to solve the problem by sending taxpayer money to those whose costs have increased due to the passage of their laws.

So, what lesson will our politicians take home from what's happening overseas? I can only hope they will resist passing costly laws in the first place, so the people don't have to protest them. This means they need to take to heart advice from these farmers about costs. Given the efforts agriculture expended in trying to prevent adoption of ill-conceived WOTUS rules, which EPA/Army Corp of Engineers ignored, I'm fearful politicians will follow the path of European politicians and just attempt to buy off the unhappy citizens for a little while. ■

National news update

BY KELLY CARPENTER

Interstate Commerce

As previously mentioned in articles of *Wyoming Agriculture*, the 2018 California ban on the sale of pork from pigs housed in cages or crowded group pens has been challenged in the US Supreme Court (SCOTUS) recently with an unfavorable ruling when the Dormant Commerce Clause was brought to question. SCOTUS ruled that California has the right to decide what products appear on their store shelves. Of course, this is very concerning for pork producers outside of California because the state consumes 13% of U.S. pork and is one the largest markets

in the country but produces very little pork per the United States Department of Agriculture. Although this case was decided in the Supreme Court, there are legislative options to add to the upcoming Farm Bill. The Ending Agricultural Trade Suppression (EATS) Act may be added to the upcoming Farm Bill.

Rodenticide Comments

In late 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency released a draft Biological Evaluation (BE) of 11 rodenticides and their possible impacts on endangered species. The draft BE evaluated 11 rodenticides and included all listed species and critical habitats, registered uses, and

currently approved labels, among other things. The EPA determined that some changes needed to be made to its assessment. It's building upon previous mitigation measures and adds to these in the current BE. Results of the evaluation indicated that of the 11 rodenticides, none will cause any effect on 88% of listed species and 95% of critical habitats. However, there is still a small percentage remaining that might have an adverse impact on endangered species. WyFB and AFBF submitted comments on mitigation measures and other potential impacts to farmers and ranchers should the draft BE not have any changes. ■

**Innovation & Stewardship—
All in a day's work!**

NATIONAL AG DAY

AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL AG DAY — MARCH 19, 2024

CASPER NOLAND FEED 307-237-8926 www.nolandfeed.com	SCOTTSDLUFF TRANSWEST FORD 308-635-3701 www.twford.com	WHEATLAND LARAMIE PEAK MOTORS 855-652-8941 www.laramiepeakmotors.com	agday.org
--	--	--	------------------

What you see: **What we see:**

CASPER
NOLAND FEED
307-237-8926
www.nolandfeed.com

WHEATLAND
WHEATLAND COUNTRY STORE
307-322-3922

© 2019 Purina Animal Nutrition LLC. All rights reserved. Feed shown is Omolene® 200 Horse Feed. Other feeds may vary.

125 YEARS OF FEEDING GREATNESS

Member-CENTS

WYOMING FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

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** 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** 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** or call 307-721-7723.

FEATURED BENEFIT: AVIS

GET UP TO 35% OFF Road Trip Rentals

AVIS

Farm Bureau Member Benefits

Savings of up to 35% applies to Avis PAY NOW rates and is applicable only to the time and mileage charges of the rental. All taxes, fees and surcharges are extra. Holiday and other blackout periods may apply.

Wyoming's Young Farmers and Ranchers: Cowboys at Heart

BY **QUADE PALM, WYFB YF&R COMMITTEE MEMBER**

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation's 2024 Young Farmer and Rancher Conference was held in Laramie, February 2nd through February 3rd hosted between the Farm Bureau Center and the University of Wyoming. The quality of weather and events brought attendees in from all around the state, including representatives from three of Wyoming's Community Colleges (Sheridan College, Eastern Wyoming College, and Central Wyoming College) and the University of Wyoming (UW). Presentation topics included Anti-Average Leadership training, the Three Secrets for Increasing Ranch Profit, Agriculture Policy in Wyoming and the US, and Finding Your Farm Bureau Why. However, holding this conference in Laramie provided more unique opportunities making this conference very special.

While all of our presenters were great, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the words and work of the presenting UW faculty and the work of our Land Grant University. The portions of our conference at UW facilities allowed everyone an opportunity to get a deeper look into the operations of UW's College of Ag. Friday morning opened with a tour of the University Meat Lab; a facility housing scaled down versions of some of the most modern equipment seen today in America's Meat Packing Industry. The facility processes beef, lamb, and pork. This provides students unique job opportunities in college, educational opportunities, and the ability to acquire a full set of skills applicable to the packing industry straight out of college.

Next, three faculty from the University met us all at the Laramie Research and Extension Center (LREC) where UW Extension Sheep Specialist Dr. Whit Stewart discussed the Wyoming Wool Initiative and how they are striving to re-define the definition of "Value Added" and provide better



Quade Palm introducing a speaker at the 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference. *KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY / KADRA CLARK PHOTO.*

prices and market access to Wyoming's sheep producers. Next, Rangeland Extension Specialist Dr. Derek Scasta spoke on grazing livestock and its relationship with rangeland health. He was followed by Hannah Cunningham-Hollinger, Assistant Professor of Animal Genetics. She discussed UW's High Altitude Bull Test and current research projects on beef cattle. Those in attendance were able to see the Bull Test facilities, where performance traits are measured. Animals eat from a Grow Safe System, which uses an EID tag reader at a feeder on a

scale to measure the intake of each individual animal. After 45 days in Laramie, all the animals are PAP Tested as well to test for their susceptibility for High Altitude Disease or Brisket Disease.

Tom Foulke visited from the Ag Econ. Department to share his experiences reviving ancient or "First Grains" with the Neolithic Brand to open new markets to farmers within the State of Wyoming. He has big hopes for his project and is working to overcome the obstacles he's encountered thus far, however a barrel of wheat whiskey distilled from some of his Neolithic Spelt is aging in Loveland right now, so we can all toast his success once he finds it. The final demonstration at the University was a PAP Test, or Pulmonary Arterial Pressure Test. Dr. Scott Lake, UW Extension Beef Specialist, and his wife performed the demonstration.

While I looked forward to Laramie as the conference location for a number of reasons, I seemed to underestimate the value of the work done by those at the University. Nobody understands the land we work on and the challenges we face in this state like those who live on the land and work it every day. Old jokes and anecdotes aside, few people have the knowledge



Quade Palm (center) assisting Dr. Scott Lake with the Pap Test demonstration at the Laramie Research & Extension Center.

and resources to help those of us on the land or to help give future generations an extra leg up like those right here in our own university. The Land Grant System was established to help the people on the land make the most of their resources to provide for those who aren't. The pillars of the Land Grant are established to protect the basis of our way of life and support a thriving society. This enables us to find new opportunities to market our products, to find specific organisms inside our animals responsible for optimal digestion of the native grasses unique to our great state, and to help us make the most out of our high-elevation arid landscapes, or pivot irrigated fields to deliver the best possible product to our consumer year after year. At the end of the day, I believe we have the same goals, the Farm Bureau Federation's Young Farmer and Rancher program and the University of Wyoming are both developing the next generation of leaders, thinkers, farmers, and ranchers. With a common goal, a united voice, and a passion for agriculture, and a few more cowboys, our future is bright! ■

From Carbon County, Palm is a Central District representative on the WyFB YF&R Committee. Palm is a sixth generation Wyoming rancher. He works on his family's ranch near Medicine Bow.

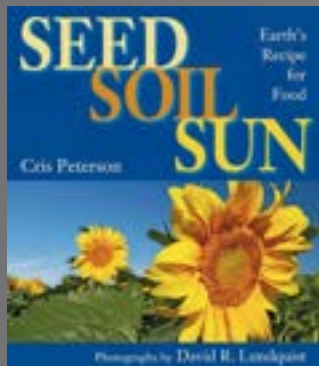


Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week Proclamation Ceremony
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Young Farmer & Rancher State Chair Tucker Hamilton (standing) speaking to Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon during the February 2024 proclamation ceremony for "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week." Hamilton shared about the WyFB YF&R "Ag Books for Kids" program and the importance of building a collection of accurate agriculture books in Wyoming elementary school libraries and classrooms. The 2024 proclamation marks the 17th year in a row of Wyoming Governors issuing a proclamation for "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week." *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*

Wyoming Teachers & Students K-5th Grades



"Ag Books for Kids" 2024



Step 1: Read this book donated by your county Farm Bureau Federation.



Step 2: Complete contests (details at wyfb.org) by March 29, 2024

- K-1: Coloring
- 2-3: Poster
- 4-5: Marketing Ad

Questions: www.wyfb.org (Get Involved/Education tab) or kclark@wyfb.org

Wyoming Trucking Association keeps the wheels moving across the state

BY CALLIE HANSON
For Wyoming Agriculture

With nearly 70 percent of communities in Wyoming relying on trucking alone to send and receive goods, the success of the trucking industry is of interest to a vast majority of Wyoming communities, inside and outside of agriculture. Similar to issues plaguing agriculture, the trucking industry is no stranger to federal red tape and a checkerboard of state regulations complicating their day to day operations.

“Trucking is the very heart of America’s supply chain,” Sheila Foertsch, Wyoming Trucking Association President/CEO said in her presentation at the 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Legislative Meeting.

“Trucking accounts for 8.5 million jobs nationwide, with 3.5 million of those being actual truck drivers. In Wyoming, trucking accounts for one in every 16 jobs, which comes out to a little over 6,000 truck drivers just in this state.”

For nearly 20 years, the trucking industry has suffered from a nationwide shortage of drivers. Foertsch noted in 2005 the shortage was about 20,000 drivers and current estimates put this shortfall closer to 60,000 drivers nationwide.

“Motor carriers continue to struggle to find qualified drivers and that is part of the issue,” she said. “Many carriers, despite being short on drivers, are still very selective in hiring their drivers. Carriers have strict criteria, some to their own doing, and some required by their insurance companies, many applications may be denied just based on insurance protocols.”

Foertsch noted the average age of drivers, much like ranchers, is steadily creeping up. The median age of private fleet drivers nationwide is 56 years old and the average age of a new CDL driver is 35 years old.

“The industry is struggling to attract young drivers into the cab of a truck. One of the issues is that federal law requires drivers to be 21 years old to cross state lines with a tractor/trailer.”

“This age requirement means that interstate motor carriers are missing out on a population of 18-21 year olds, a crucial time period when they are making career decisions.”

Although congress recently passed a pilot program to allow 18-21 year olds for intrastate travel, the semantics of the law become cumbersome.

“Not only did the drivers have to meet certain requirements, but there were very specific requirements for what the truck had to be equipped with. As a result, very few motor carriers were willing to participate in the program. The rulemaking process made the program too difficult to be feasible.”

Foertsch noted although the program was not immediately successful, there are efforts being made to make the program more palatable for both drivers and carriers.

Foertsch noted there are some anti-trucking groups, masking as safety groups, lobbying against putting 18 year olds behind the wheel of a truck.

“They have the idea we want to put an 18 year old behind the wheel and let them loose from Washington State to Florida, and that is just not the case,” she explained. “We are talking about very limited areas.”

One point those in favor of the pilot program bring up is 18 year olds in the military given the ability to drive heavy equipment and trucks with and without hazardous materials.

Within the state, there are efforts being made to educate prospective CDL drivers.

“Several Wyoming community colleges are offering CDL training courses and this is a great effort to attract more drivers to the industry,” she says. “We are very supportive of this and are actively working with colleges to help them set the criteria.”

Climb Wyoming, which is a program focusing on giving single mothers job skills, is offering a program to help get women behind the wheel.

In addition to a shortage of drivers, Wyoming trucking faces some unique issues posed by the infamous Wyoming wind.

“For years, WYDOT has closed roads due to wind events, which tend to be very broad and subjective closure protocol in place for vehicles deemed ‘lightweight and high profile,’” Foertsch explained. “The issue is no one really has a definition of what’s light weight high profile. And it came down to if you blew over, you’re lightweight. You’re too light to be out there and that is just not the best way to do it.”

TRUCKING ASSOCIATION ... Page 15



Wyoming Trucking Association President/CEO Sheila Foertsch spoke to WyFB members attending the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting mid-February. Foertsch talked about regulations impacting the trucking industry and thus impacting citizens who rely on the trucking industry to move commodities across the country. *ABBI HAVEY PHOTO.*

Retain Moisture and Get Rid of Compaction

by PAUL SCHNEIDER JR., AG-USA

Is there anything that farmers can do to retain moisture while at the same time get rid of compaction? Yes! Here is a good way to do just that.

Put fungi to work

When I traveled to Albertville, Alabama to attend the South Poll Cattle Association meeting there, one of the speakers stated that it’s best to have a ratio of 50% bacteria to 50% fungi in the soil.

In fact, fungi are key to helping us get rid of compaction and to highly structure the soil. Structuring the soil magnifies the it’s ability to retain moisture.

The bad news is, fungi don’t normally do well in farm land; they do better in wooded areas, where trees constantly sequester sugars to feed them. So, how can we get fungi to thrive where we farm?

Here are some key points of how to do this.

- Remove toxins and salts that inhibit beneficial fungi.
- Bring nutrient balance to the soil.
- Empower the plant to sequester large amounts of sugars in order to feed mycorrhizal fungi.

MycorrPlus is a product designed to do all of these things, and more. It is a biostimulant that can:

- Help empower microbes to gobble up toxins.
- Help flush salts from the root zone.
- Help balance soil nutrients.

- Help maximize the amount of sugars sequestered by the plant.

In short, MycorrPlus (my-core-plus) can help create a friendly environment in the soil where mycorrhizal fungi and a host of other beneficial microbes can feel at home.

Sequester more carbon, retain more moisture

Aerobic microbes require oxygen and moisture to thrive. With the right help, they will build incredible structure into the soil, one where oxygen circulates freely and moisture is stored efficiently. Because this is the same environment needed by plants, plants love to form a partnership with mycorrhizae.

Can our microbes aerate the soil? Yes! As plants sequester sugars to feed the microbes, the microbes use the residues of these sugars as gums and glues to bind soil particles together, creating air compartments about 1/4” to 3/8” in size (see picture above).

As soil is highly structured, rain will soak deeply into the soil instead of just water logging the surface, making it possible for a farmer to more quickly get back into the field.

In the picture, in the soil on the left, can you see the small air pockets?

- ◇ The soil on the left is what soil can look like when it has been highly structured by MycorrPlus. It is aerated and crumbly.
- In the soil on the right, the dirt is tight and clumped together.



◇ In highly structured soil, when it rains, water soaks down into the air pockets and is stored until it is needed.

- In tight soil, the top 6” or so of the soil becomes water-logged and you will see water standing in the field. When the water evaporates, it leaves the soil dry and hard.

◇ In the highly structured soil, the microbes have created a moist, oxygen-rich environment where they feel right at home.

- In the soil on the right, aerobic microbes don’t have enough air to survive, and anaerobic bacteria dominate the soil.

Plants like to feed the aerobic bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi, because plants have a lot to gain from doing so. MycorrPlus is amazing. By helping switch on carbon sequestration which feeds mycorrhizal fungi and other microbes, the soil will act like a sponge, soaking in rain and irrigation water.

Call toll-free **888-588-3139** and request a free information packet!

Or go to www.AG-USA.net

MycorrPlus™

Like a center pivot for dryland farmers!

Reduces the need for LIME and other fertilizers

MycorrPlus is a liquid bio-stimulant that helps remove compaction by highly structuring the soil. It creates something like an aerobic net in the soil that retains nutrients and moisture. It contains concentrated sea minerals, 20 strains of aerobic bacteria, 4 strains mycorrhizal fungi, fish, kelp, humic acids and molasses. \$22.50 to \$45/acre.

For a wealth of information, visit: www.AG-USA.net, or call 888-588-3139 Mon. - Sat.

from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. MST and request a free information packet. Organic? Use MycorrPlus-O.

AG-USA, LLC, PO Box 73019, Newnan, GA 30271 info@ag-usa.net



The people of the Farm Bureau Federation

Meet the volunteer leader: Stetson Nield

County: Lincoln
Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Position:
● Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation President

Wyoming Agriculture:
Describe ranch background.

Nield: I grew up on my family ranch until my grandfather passed and we focused on farming and continue to farm the ground with a few cows.

Wyoming Agriculture:
Family, hobbies.

Nield: Besides farming I had my first child this last year. A beautiful little girl that my wife and I can't enjoy time with enough. I also enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, riding horses, and wood and metal working. I was born and raised in Star Valley and hope to continue to enjoy living here and raising my daughter here.

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

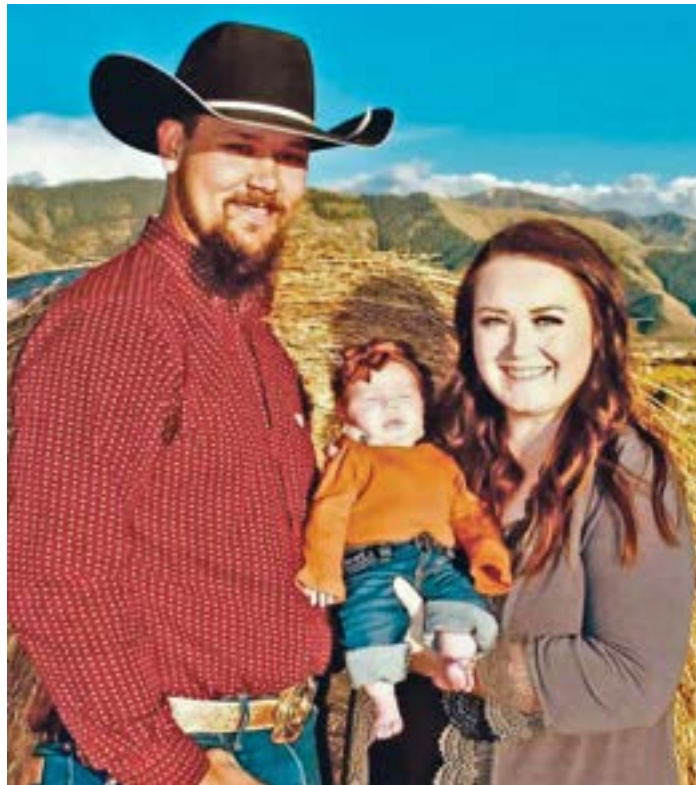
Nield: Between my wife and Nina bringing the federation up to me many times and explaining what it was, I was intrigued by the work the federation does and I agree with what they stand for.

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

Nield: I make the time to be involved because in the Valley farmers and ranchers are becoming more and more a thing of our past, and I want to protect what we do as much as possible.

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

Nield: The biggest issue we are facing in Lincoln County, that we have been trying to help with resolving, is the big increase in property tax that was rolled out this past year. It is making it a lot harder to keep farmers and ranchers going in this area.



Stetson and Natallie Nield with newborn daughter.



Stetson Nield, Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation President



Stetson Nield harvesting a deer during hunting season.

Wyoming Agriculture:
How important is each board member of your county Farm Bureau Federation?

Nield: Each and every board member we have is important. We all come from

different backgrounds and have different aspects that we utilize to become diverse and bounce ideas off each other to be able to help as many as we possibly can. ■



Receive a \$500 Exclusive Cash Reward*



Farm Bureau Members Receive \$500* toward an Eligible New F-150® Lightning®, Super Duty®, F-150, Ranger® or Maverick®



FORD F-150 LIGHTNING FORD F-150 FORD RANGER FORD MAVERICK

Visit FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau today for complete offer details!

JACKSON
JACKSON HOLE FORD
307-201-5499
jacksonholeford.com

SCOTTSBLUFF
TRANSWEST FORD
308-635-3701
twford.com

WHEATLAND
LARAMIE PEAK MOTORS
855-652-8941
laramiepeakmotors.com



Funding Beef Research

State checkoff dollars are funding research by University of Wyoming Meat Science Professor Cody Gifford, Ph.D.

Dr. Gifford is researching ways to improve the palatability of the beef round using alternative cooking methods.

If successful, this research will lead to increased carcass value.



Wyoming Beef Council
307.777.7396
gary.gwin1@wyo.gov

*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 AXZD-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.

*Cooking with the
Modern Ranch Wife*

Quick and Easy Bread

Recipe by Connie Werner

ADAPTED FROM WWW.ALLRECIPES.COM



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups warm water (not over 110 degrees)
- 2/3 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup oil, plus 2-3 tsp for coating dough
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 6 cups flour

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large bowl add the warm water, sugar, and yeast. Allow to rest for 5-10 minutes or until a foam appears on the surface.
2. Stir in oil and salt. Next, begin adding 5 cups of flour one at a time and stirring just until combined.
3. Scrape the dough out of the bowl onto a well floured surface. Knead for several minutes adding in the last cup of flour until the dough is smooth and elastic. You may not use all of the last cup.
4. Put 1-2 tsp oil in the bottom of a large bowl. Place dough and turn to coat. Add additional oil on the top of the dough if needed to coat.
5. Cover and let rise in a warm place for at least 1 hour or until doubled.
6. Spray two loaf pans generously with cooking spray. Punch down dough and knead for 1-2 minutes. Divide in half and shape into loaves. Place into the pans.
7. Let rise until dough is about 1 inch over the pan, approximately 30 minutes.
8. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees while the dough is rising. Bake the loaves for 30 minutes or until the tops are golden brown. Enjoy!

This recipe creates a sweet bread. If you want it less sweet reduce sugar to 1/3 of a cup. Also before putting it in the loaf pans, you can roll out one of the loaves and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Then roll up and tuck ends. This creates a sweet cinnamon swirl.

■ FOR MORE RECIPES VISIT: www.modernranchwife.com or visit the Instagram page

MULE TRUSTED TRIED AND TRUE

Built strong and built to last, for the jobsite or the trail, MULE™ side x sides get it all done with condence.

3 YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY

ASSEMBLED IN THE USA



Kawasaki
Let the good times roll®



Scan with camera to view videos, key features and more.


MULE PROFXT™ RANCH EDITION PLATINUM

WARN® VRX 45, the WARN logo and THE RED HOOK STRAP are registered trademarks of Warn Industries, Inc. Assembled in the U.S.A. badge does not apply to MULE PRO-MX™ models.

EVANSTON
ADDICTED POWER SPORTS
307-789-7533
www.addictedpowersports.com

KAWASAKI CARES: Read Owner's Manual and all on-product warnings. Always wear protective gear appropriate for the use of this vehicle. Never operate under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Protect the environment. The Kawasaki MULE™ side x side is an off-highway vehicle only, and is not designed, equipped or manufactured for use on public streets, roads or highways. Obey the laws and regulations that control the use of your vehicle. © 2022 Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A.

Get big savings on baling hay.



Hay Tools Lineup Two-year standard limited warranty

Kubota Together we do more.®

Stop by for a great deal on BV Series balers today. They're built to meet any type and size operation, silage capable and backed by a standard two-year limited warranty.

\$0 DOWN 0% APR UP TO 48 MONTHS
PLUS
\$2,500 LOYALTY CASH REWARD*

VISIT US TODAY FOR THIS LIMITED-TIME OFFER

POWELL
HEART MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT
307-754-5169
www.heartmountainequipment.com


SHERIDAN
HEARTLAND KUBOTA LLC
307-672-8011
www.heartlandkubota.com

KubotaUSA.com

© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2024. \$0 Down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 48 months on purchases of new Kubota BV and DMC series equipment from participating dealers' in-stock inventory is available to qualified purchasers through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A.; subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Example: 48 monthly payments of \$20.83 per \$1,000 financed. *\$2500 Loyalty cash reward on each new BV purchased is available to retail customers who have purchased new Kubota serialized based units from 2013 or newer. Loyalty discount excludes National Accounts and cannot be combined with Competitive or High Profile discounts. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 06/30/24. Terms subject to change. This material is for descriptive purposes only. Kubota disclaims all representations and warranties, express or implied, or any liability from the use of this material. For complete warranty, safety and product information, consult your local Kubota dealer and the Owner's Warranty Information Guide for the Kubota limited warranty on all products. For the complete disclaimer, go to KubotaUSA.com/disclaimers and see the posted disclaimer.




DURABILITY REDEFINED.



DOUGLAS C-SALES
307-358-3891
www.c-sales.info

The Vermeer N-series balers bring heavy-duty components for strength and durability in the field when you need it most. Smart features like the available automatic pickup clutch and Auto Lube system help extend machine life. Plus, they're backed by the best distribution network in the industry.

Vermeer Corporation reserves the right to make changes in engineering, design and specifications; add improvements; or discontinue manufacturing or distribution at any time without notice or obligation. Equipment shown is for illustrative purposes only and may display optional accessories or components specific to their global region. Please contact your local Vermeer dealer for more information on machine specifications. Vermeer and the Vermeer logo are trademarks of Vermeer Manufacturing Company in the U.S. and/or other countries. © 2018 Vermeer Corporation. All Rights Reserved.



It's weather, not climate

BY KERIN CLARK

“We need less modeling and more observational science,” said Meteorologist Don Day at the 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Legislative Meeting on February 15. Day shared public data he encouraged citizens to utilize when communicating with policymakers about decisions made in the name of climate change.

A private meteorologist, Day has been forecasting weather for 30 plus years in the Rocky Mountain West. Day emphasized a track record for reliable information is crucial. “Your scientific integrity has to be non-negotiable,” Day said. “You can't base what you want to do in science based on something you perceive as a noble cause because then you have confirmation bias. This is a really big problem.”

“Most climatologists in the '60s, '70s, and '80s worked for state climate offices where they kept weather records,” Day said. “As we got into the '90s and the 2000s, climatology moved from studying climate and went into climate projections.”

Climate change has become the designation for every weather event. “In my 30 plus years of weather forecasting I've learned our weather is really driven by the Pacific Ocean, especially near the equator,” Day said. “What is blamed on climate change is normal Pacific cycles in terms of sea surface temperatures.”

Day said Pacific Ocean sea surface temperatures explain a lot of our climate cycles (wet, dry, hot, cold). “When you hear La Niña or El Niño what you're really

hearing about is what the Pacific is doing in terms of sea surface temperatures and how that impacts what the weather and climate will do over time.”

“Weather is not linear, it is cyclical,” Day said. “When you look at the well-established geologic records that date back to the 1850s you see weather cycles all the time.”

“It is scientifically lazy and easy for policymakers to make a soundbite that a flood or drought is climate change,” Day continued. “You hear climate doomerism that we are going to reach a tipping point. The truth is weather is cyclical; you go up, you go down, you go up, you go down. That is the rhythm of the Earth's climate systems.”

“Causation is not correlation,” he continued. “Policymakers, the media, and a lot of people are ignorant of this fact, and it leads to bad policy making.”

“Climate scientists have the ability to make recommendations, but they shouldn't be dictating policy when there are ramifications to those decisions,” he continued.

Day recognized the amazing job agriculture in this country does at producing food. “All the predictions made in the late '80s and early '90s are not happening,” Day said. “Our yields are not going down, they are going up.”

Day utilized public domain data from the United Nations (UN) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to show how important it is to ask questions about the models being used to make policy decisions.



Meteorologist Don Day. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.

“The UN IPCC's primary objective is to provide governments at all levels scientific information they can use to develop climate policies,” he explained. “The panel of scientists come out with a report about every five years which has some good science.”

“What ends up happening is instead of people reading the report by the scientists they read the executive summary that is written by UN politicians,” he continued. “The summary comes up with a theme and doesn't reference the science very much.”

When the IPCC formed they stated “the climate system is a coupled non-linear chaotic system.” “Coupled means the atmosphere

and the ocean are connected; they are working together and non-linear,” Day said.

Day referenced chapter 14 of the IPCC Working Group 1 report. “I'm using their own words - ‘The long-term prediction of future climate states is not possible,’” Day said. “But that's not what you are told every day.”

He shared many examples of claims that don't fit the science. “One example is a claim that it was the hottest year in 125,000 years,” Day said. “We do not have a long data set of temperature or precipitation to work with; there was no thermometer invented that far back.”

WEATHER NOT CLIMATE ... Page 11

Obituary



Janet Talbott

January 23, 1941-February 3, 2024

Janet Talbott was called to join her Lord on February 3, 2024 after 83 wonderful years of life in Wyoming. She was born to Robert and Bessie Gietz on January 23, 1941 on their ranch on the Little Laramie River. She was the youngest of four children. She attended school at Millbrook and Harmony country schools, as her family moved through the Big and Little Laramie River valleys. She attended high school in Laramie living with family friends and graduated in 1958.

She married the love of her life, best friend, and dance partner James F. Talbott on April 19, 1959. They began their lives together in Laramie with a brief stint in Colorado where Jim worked on several prominent sheep ranches while showing and fitting breeding sheep throughout the United States. They returned to the Talbott family ranch in 1964 where they raised their 5 children. They were dedicated to the raising of the Brae Arden Hereford cattle which they took over from her father Robert Gietz. They became some of the most progressive breeders of club calves and commercial cattle competing in, and winning some of the most prestigious cattle shows in the country. She enjoyed working side by side

with her husband fitting and showing club calves all across the United States.

They dedicated their lives to their family and community both being very active in community functions and supporting the youth of Albany County. They were recognized as outstanding 4-H leaders in 1985. She assisted her husband in coaching numerous nationally ranked 4-H livestock judging teams. Their love of family and others was evident to all who knew them. Many outside of the family considered her a mother, an aunt or an excellent friend and role model.

Her dedication to the cattle industry, agriculture and love of the Laramie Plains, was evident to all. Her passion and dedication earned her the Ranch Woman of the Year for Albany County in 2003. She was active in the Albany County Cattle Women and received the Charter Member Status demonstrating her dedication to the cattle industry. Until just prior to her passing she presented the “Thought for the Day” at the monthly Cattle Women meetings.

She was awarded the “Heart of Agriculture Award” in 2021 from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture at a ceremony at the Wyoming State Fair. She loved Wyoming, she loved

her cattle and agriculture, she loved to watch the newly branded crop of calves run into the spring pasture. She was all that Wyoming is, or ever will be. Her dedication to the breeding and showing of quality cattle was evident when she won her most coveted award, the “Jim Talbott Memorial Award” at the 2008 Wyoming State Fair. An award presented to the exhibitor of the champion club calf.

Her faith was evident every Sunday when she attended Trinity Lutheran Church, where her and the love of her life were united in holy matrimony. She attended services and bible study faithfully for 64 years.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her siblings and her husband of 45 years.

She is survived by her 5 children, Jay (Glenna) Talbott, Scott Talbott, Amy (Bill) Clay, Cody Talbott (Heather Bailey) and Betsy (Tad) DeBolt, her grandchildren Jaymes Talbott, Payden Talbott, Luke Talbott, Burk (Heather) DeBolt, Meg DeBolt (Cameron Weigle) and one great grandson Quincy, numerous nieces, nephews and extended family.

Memorial services were held February 10, 2024 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Laramie. Donations may be made to Trinity Lutheran Church, Albany County Cattle Women, and/or Hospice of Laramie.

Legislative Meeting Membership Awards

BY KERIN CLARK

County Farm Bureau Federation volunteers work year-round on membership acquisition and retention. Just like our policy development process, membership work begins at the grassroots level.

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Membership Committee sets annual quota goals and award incentives to recognize membership success at the local level. The Gold and Silver Quota awards, the Outstanding Membership Secretary awards and Ken Hamilton's Gold Club Membership award were presented at the WyFB Legislative Meeting February 15 in Cheyenne.

The Sweetwater County Farm Bureau Federation won the Gold Quota Award for the 2023 membership year. This award recognizes the county achieving the greatest percentage of quota for the 2023 membership year, including a new young Regular member. The county reached 124 percent of their 2023 total quota.

The Silver Quota Award recognizes the county having the greatest percentage of Regular member quota. The Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation won the award for reaching 141 percent of their 2023 Regular member quota.

While the Gold Quota and Silver Quota recognize membership numbers, the Outstanding Membership Secretary awards recognize volunteers who work behind the scenes. Three membership secretaries are recognized each year at the Legislative



WyFB Membership Committee Chair Kevin Baars (right) presents Sweetwater County Farm Bureau Federation President James Ramsay with the Gold Quota Award at the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting.

KERIN CLARK PHOTO.

Meeting. The award selections are based on performance, quality of transmittals, neatness, accuracy, membership acquisition and an outstanding effort towards reaching membership quota. The recipients are awarded a \$100 cash prize. This year's "Outstanding Membership Secretaries" are Lynn Arnell, Uinta County;



Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation President Andy Edwards (2nd from left) accepts the award of Ken Hamilton's Gold Club Membership from Hamilton (left), WyFB Membership Committee Chair Kevin Baars and WyFB Membership Committee Vice Chair Matt Stroh. Sheridan County also won the Silver Quota award for having the greatest percentage of Regular member quota for the 2023 membership year.

Nina Nield, Lincoln County; and Mattie Mosteller, Crook County.

The final membership award presented recognizes the county with the greatest gain of Regular members over the 2023 membership year. The Sheridan County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation won this category and will receive the county's portion of

WyFB Executive Vice President Ken Hamilton's Gold Club membership for this year.

Congratulations to these award winners. We appreciate all the volunteers and county Farm Bureau Federations who unite as one voice to work together to keep agriculture strong through membership in the Federation. ■

NEIGHBOR VS. NEIGHBOR

Is it time to have a discussion?

MEDIATION CAN HELP.

- Fencing
- Livestock trespass
- Weed control
- Leases
- Shared roads
- Irrigation ditches
- Access & easements
- And more!

CALL THE
**WYOMING AGRICULTURE &
 NATURAL RESOURCES MEDIATION PROGRAM**
 FOR MORE INFORMATION
888-996-9278
 AGRICULTURE.WY.GOV/DIVISIONS/NRP/MEDIATION-PROGRAM

**RSC
 POWERSPORTS**

**HONDA
 Kawasaki**

**can-am
 LYNX
 ski-doo**

**POLARIS.
 SNOWMOBILES**

**POLARIS.
 OFF-ROAD VEHICLES**

RSCPOWERSPORTS.COM

2812 BIG HORN AVE
 CODY, WYOMING 82414
 307-587-6818

YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER FOR POWERSPORTS

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 or mail to WyFB, ATTN: Classifieds, P.O. Box 1348, Laramie, WY 82073.

LIVESTOCK

NORTHWEST WYOMING ANGUS ASSOCIATION 46TH ANNUAL SALE, Tuesday March 26, 2024, 1:00 P.M. Riverton Livestock Auction, Riverton WY, Consignors, Davidson Angus, Hogg's Angus, Obsidian Angus, WYO Angus, For Catalog or information contact Fred Thomas 307-868-2595

MINIATURE FAINTING GOATS available. Buckling (1), doeling (1), and wethers (2) available. All born April 2023. All dam raised. Burlington, WY. Please call for pricing. 307.762.3402

20 COMING 2-YEAR OLD LIMOUSIN AND LIM-FLEX BULLS. All are Black and Polled. Great dispositions

and balanced EPD's to compliment any program. Add vigor, growth and maternal traits to your cow herd. We market our bulls Private Treaty. We invite you to the ranch to take a look at our offering and have a cup of coffee with us. Please contact us at 307-856-4268 or 307-709-4200 to inquire directly, or find us on Facebook. Thank you for your interest in Stoll Limousin.

EQUIPMENT

2019 JD TRACTOR 5055 E, 2 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

\$31,000. Call for pictures. 308/641-2362. Located near Torrington, Wyo.

HAY

1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD CUT ALFALFA HAY available. 3 x 4 bales, approx 3700 bales available. Burlington, WY. Please call for pricing and details on each cut. 307.762.3402

OAT HAY FOR SALE. Small square bales 70 pounds each. 7 tons at \$5.00/bale. 28 bales per ton. Call Don phone only at 307-237-9373.

GRASS HAY FOR SALE. Certified weed free, small bales, high altitude grown, barn stored, no rain. Encampment Wyoming area. 307-340-0551 text or call.

New Members

ALBANY

Noreen Schirmer & Steven Morgan, Laramie; Jane Wade, Laramie; Ronakkumar Joshi, Laramie; Heather Alexander/ Dunmire Ranch Company (REG), Rock River; Beatrice Utke, Laramie; Dorothy Baker, Laramie; Drew Templeman, Laramie; Fredrick Lindzey, Laramie; Kelly Carpenter, Laramie

BIG HORN

Matt Piercy, Cowley; Calvin Michaels (REG), Burlington; Cliff Fink, Greybull; Aspen Thomas, Basin; Neda Herman, Basin; C. Harris Asay (REG), Lovell; Timothy Mills, Greybull; Deborah & John Craft (REG), Basin; Nancy Preis (REG), Emblem

CAMPBELL

Burton Reno (REG), Gillette; Blair Gauthier, Rozet; Kyle Elliott, Gillette; Cady & Guy Erb (REG), Rozet; Jay & Brandi Hudson (REG), Gillette; Dannielle & Robert Gonzales, Gillette; Patty & Brian Norstegaard (REG), Gillette; Jana & Kevin Collins, Gillette; Teresa & George Benton, Gillette; Cheryl Clements, Gillette

CARBON

Steve Schalk/Longfield, LLC (REG), Saratoga; Sandra & James McKinney, Encampment

CONVERSE

Wesley Dahl, Douglas; David Daniels, Glenrock; Charlie & Harlan Bradshaw (REG), Kaycee; Joy & Patrick McReynolds, Douglas

CROOK

Amanda Boswell/ Rolling Hills Mini Cattle Co. LLC, Hulett; Bytha & Allen Mills (REG), Sundance; Scott McLellan (REG), Sundance

FREMONT

Jaime & Joseph Lunbeck, Riverton; Holly & Martin Kenison (REG), Riverton; Elizabeth Martin, Riverton; Cynthia & Norman Young, Riverton; Scott Sears, Lander; Gary Martin (REG), Lander; Nicholas Brazil (REG), Pavillion; Dianne & John Phillips, Riverton; Jami & Ty Nicholls (REG), Kinneer; Alycia & Clinton Asmundson, Shoshoni

GOSHEN

Heather & Dennis Birdsall (REG), Torrington; El Rancho de Centennial LLC (REG), Fort Laramie; Sonia & Luis Loya, Torrington; Sharon & David Kelly (REG), Torrington; Thomas Eaton (REG), Veteran

HOT SPRINGS

Smith Cunningham, Thermopolis; Alton Ramsey, Thermopolis; Grace Georgius, Glenrock; Sara & Merrill Ready (REG), Thermopolis; Leigh & Travis Dobbins, Thermopolis; Patricia & Lee Lesmeister, Thermopolis; Jace Hook (REG), Thermopolis

JOHNSON

Greg Shavlik, Buffalo; Bryan Pickeral, Parkman; Dennis Zezas (REG), Buffalo; Henry Bauer, Buffalo; Jerry Gladson, Buffalo

LARAMIE

Melody & Don Smith, Cheyenne; James Muse, Pine Bluffs; Dana & Sean Bale, Cheyenne; Jean & Jon Shiverdecker, Granite Canyon; Daniel Debruyann, Pine Bluffs; Rachel & Zachary Meeker, Cheyenne; Tim Brightman, Cheyenne; Leslie & Donald Mickelson, Carpenter; Cathy Norris, Cheyenne; Toni Lopez, Cheyenne; Jordan Crouse, Cheyenne; Karen Smith, Pine Bluffs; Karston Muse, Pine Bluffs; Lula Krivy, Cheyenne; Red Baldy Ranch Inc (REG), Carpenter

LINCOLN

Jamie & Steve Walker, Kemmerer; Casey Lindegard, Bedford; Sarah Valley, Alpine; Kym Sheets, Kemmerer; Kirsten Merrill, Star Valley; Anita White, Kemmerer; Tracy & Jason Wolfley, Thayne; Christina Mayer, Etna; Jeffrey Edwards, Thayne; Kathleen Peters, Kemmerer; Michael MacDonald, Kemmerer; Tara Casey, Thayne

NATRONA

Sally & Harold Berg, Casper; Kelli Nolte, Casper; Donald Hayes, Casper; Winona Adams, Casper; Marilou Ficken, Casper; Tyler Smith, Evansville; Cathy & Randall Hickel, Casper

PARK

Nola & Ronald Aho, Cody; Shannon Brewer, Cody; Gwen & Jason Cousins, Powell; Yvette Calcote, Powell; Lydia & David McCracken (REG), Powell; Nicole Forsberg (REG), Powell; Samantha & Beau Fulton (REG), Powell; Bennett Creek Land Co (REG), New Ringgold, PA; Lynn Jackson, Powell; Crystal & Toby Allen, Powell; James Corbin, Cody; Kirk Nelson, Cody; Michael Moore, Powell; Courtney Horsley, Powell

PLATTE

Earl Call, Wheatland

SHERIDAN

Kurt Eisenach, Sheridan; Robert Everson, Banner; Troy Kane, Sheridan; Stanton Harper, Sheridan; Mike Arzy, Sheridan; Susan & Michael Bengtsson, Story; Judith & David Stallman, Sheridan; Susan & Mark Porden, Ranchester; Stephanie Ellis, Sheridan; Brent Wilen, Sheridan; Brittany & Alex Patterson, Sheridan; Michael Campbell, Sheridan; Scott Bliss/ Bliss Ranch LLC (REG), Sheridan; David Slover/ Gooseberry Creek Ranch (REG), Worland; Golden Willow Ranch Inc (REG), WYarno; Griffin Ordway, Sheridan; Judy Stuchell, Sheridan; Kiley Green, Sheridan; Lauri Kraft, Story; Logan Bishop, Sheridan; Patricia Praeuner, Ranchester; Shirley Marshall, Sheridan; Steve Small, Story; Susan Anderson (REG), Parkman; Kimberly & Zachary Davis (REG), Buffalo

SUBLETTE

BMG Investment Group LLC (REG), Alpine; Cody Rowan, Boulder

SWEETWATER

Koltin Legerski, Rock Springs; Tammy Mudd, Rock Springs; Tiffnie Tanner, Green River

TETON

Jonathan Robinson, Jackson; Caroline Haines, Jackson; Dawn Lane, Jackson; Samantha Keipert, Jackson; Louise Deland, Jackson

UINTA

Marvin Brady, Mountain View; Douglas Cornell (REG), Robertson; Cody Wight, Mountain View; Mariette & Tyler Boyles (REG), Lyman; L'nette Iorg (REG), Lyman; Brady Bevan, Mountain View

WASHAKIE

Sally & Steven Craft, Worland



WYOMING LIVESTOCK ROUNDUP

The Weekly News Source for Ranchers, Farmers and the AgriBusiness Community

Receive a 6-week complimentary subscription to the Wyoming Livestock Roundup!

To receive your 6-week complimentary subscription, contact Andrea at 307.234.2700 or andrea@wylr.net.*

52 great issues per year plus all of our Special Editions!

1 year - \$60 • 2 years - \$90 (\$30 savings) • 3 years - \$130 (\$50 savings)

Online Subscriptions: 1 year - \$30

For your agriculture news on-the-go!

www.wylr.net • 800.967.1647 • 307.234.2700
P.O. Box 850 • Casper, WY 82602

*For new subscribers

UW Collegiate Farm Bureau

University of Wyoming (UW) Collegiate Farm Bureau members participated in the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting. Following the meeting, they went on a Capitol tour led by WyFB Director of Public and Governmental Affairs Brett Moline. To round out the event, they participated in the Governor's formal proclamation signing for "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week" in February. During the ceremony, each of the Collegiate members had the opportunity to share with the Governor

why they are involved in agriculture leadership and why they believe agriculture literacy is important.

If you are a UW student or know someone attending UW, the Collegiate Farm Bureau is a great opportunity to get involved with a campus organization and grow your leadership and agriculture portfolio. They meet twice a month on Tuesdays. Follow along with their activities on Instagram @uwyo_cfb and Facebook @University of Wyoming Collegiate Farm Bureau. ■



UW Collegiate Farm Bureau members at the Wyoming Capitol. (l to r): Aspen Nesvik, Marie Lawson, Hailey Rasmussen, Mattie Wakefield, Jennifer Parker, Aida Hester, and Jordan Anderson. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.

WEATHER NOT CLIMATE... From Page 8

Day encouraged attendees to ask policymakers about the IPCC attribution report. "Can the scientists attribute climate change to changes in the weather," he explained.

"The IPCC report says for hydrological drought there is limited evidence and thus low confidence in assessing these trends," he read. "For meteorological drought, it says attribution shows low confidence for a human contribution to meteorological droughts."

"There is nothing in this report that says climate crisis, but that's not what you hear in the news," he continued.

Day continued reading the report, "Hurricanes, low confidence. What do you hear in the news every time there's a hurricane? They say it's climate change," he said.

"We have a divergence in the actual science and what's being reported," Day continued.

"Ninety-five percent of climate studies come from an IPCC computer model called RCP8.5," he explained. "RCP is the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere."

"The numerical values of the RCPs have four different ranges (8.5 to 2.6) and refer to the concentrations predicted in the year 2100," he continued.

"The RCP8.5 model came out in 2011 and unfortunately is what the IPCC called the 'business as usual' model which means if we don't make changes, this is how the weather is going to react over time."

"Ninety-nine percent of our policy is based on the worst case scenario of things that are not going to happen," Day said. "The three other options (RCP2.6, RCP4.5, RCP6.0) don't make the headlines because they are not the most shocking scenario."

Day encouraged folks to reference the CMIP5 and CMIP6 models that show projections of future temperature change don't match the observed (actual measurements) temperatures.

"Modeling is not matching reality, but we're basing policies on modeling," Day continued. "If you're going to base policy on a projection you have to counterbalance it with the observed data, but that is not happening so we get one-sided policy making stemming from the worst case scenario model."

"Science unquestioned isn't science. Science unquestioned is propaganda. If you can't question science, it might as well be propaganda," Day concluded. "You have to push back and ask the questions to make sure the most informed decisions are made for policy." ■



Covolo
Auto - Farm
Service
80 Rees Rd,
Mountain View, WY
307-786-2277

It's your future. Let's protect it.®

Together we'll create a plan to protect what matters most to you.



Nick Smith*
Agent, Financial Advisor
Buffalo
307-684-1300



Jason Bell*
Agent, Financial Advisor
Cheyenne
307-632-9008



Justin Hatfield
Agent
Douglas
307-358-3606



Becky Pearson*
Agent
Gillette
307-682-4454



Justin Hatfield
Agent
Glenrock
307-436-8402



Ellary Kelly*
Agent
Greybull
307-765-4621



Lauren Stelting*
Agent, Financial Advisor
Jackson
307-733-3813



Tamey Peternal*
Agent
Kemmerer
307-877-5582



Jake Huhnke*
Agent
Lander
307-332-3295



Justin Jeffers*
Agent
Laramie
307-742-4847



Zack Jacobsen*
Agent
Laramie
307-742-4847



Jak Tanner
Agent
Pinedale
307-367-2141



Sammi Hegwer*
Agent, Financial Advisor
Riverton
307-856-9091



Andrea Robinson*
Agent
Sundance
307-283-3582



Grant Curry*
Agent
Torrington
307-532-3610



Kris Mull*
Agent, Financial Advisor
Worland
307-347-3583



Auto | Home | Life | Business | Farm & Ranch | Annuities | fbfs.com

*Registered Representative/Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC, 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904, Member SIPC. Advisory services offered through FBL Wealth Management, LLC. Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company/Laramie, WY. Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company**/West Des Moines, IA. Individual must be a registered representative of FBL Marketing Services, LLC to discuss securities products. Individual must be an investment adviser representative with FBL Wealth Management, LLC to discuss advisory services. Individual must be licensed with issuing company to offer insurance products. *Affiliates. **Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services. M199 (1-24)

Obituaries



Bobbi Barrasso

July 20, 1953 – January 24, 2024

Bobette Kay (Bobbi) Brown Barrasso died on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, following a heroic two-year battle with a Glioblastoma brain tumor.

She remained optimistic and courageous to the very end. She left the earth looking forward to being with her parents and God in heaven.

She leaves behind her daughter Hadley, her husband John and faithful friends far and wide.

Bobbi was born in Thermopolis, Wyoming on July 20, 1953 to Robert and Jeralyn Brown. She was raised with a love of God, family and country. Her father was the Thermopolis Postmaster and her mother's family owned and operated the Wigwam Bakery.

Bobbi was a success in everything she attempted due to hard work and a positive attitude. At Hot Springs County High School, she won the Youth Citizenship Award given by the Soroptimist Club. The scholarship is based on "service, dependability, leadership, goals and good citizenship in the home, school and community." That defines Bobbi's life.

She learned to make her own clothing and was a talented seamstress. Her homemade wardrobe won her statewide acclaim being named "Miss make it yourself with wool" by the Wyoming Woolgrowers Association.

At the University of Wyoming, Bobbi was a joiner and a doer. She was a member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority where she served as the Vice-President for Moral Advancement and later as Sorority President. She was crowned University Homecoming Queen her senior year and graduated with a degree in speech pathology.

After college it was off to Washington D.C. for five years as a member of the Wallop Senate team.

Bobbi returned to Wyoming and managed the successful campaign by Thermopolis's Stan

Smith for Wyoming State Treasurer. She then moved to Jackson where she made ends meet by working one job at the Jackson Chamber of Commerce and another selling ads for the Jackson Hole Guide.

Bobbi loved policy, politics and public service. As a result, she moved to Casper as the Assistant Director of the Wyoming Heritage Society and Foundation. From there it was back to Laramie to attend and graduate from the University of Wyoming School of Law. She worked her way through law school by serving as house mother of her beloved Pi Beta Phi sorority.

Bobbi's commitment and service to Wyoming continued when she began working for Congressman and then Senator Craig Thomas. She served as his state director until the time of his death in 2007.

The high point in Bobbi's life was the birth of her daughter Hadley Brown Bryans. From that day forward, Hadley was the apple of her mother's eye and the center of her universe. Bobbi was always there for school performances and sports activities. Whenever a parent volunteer was needed, Bobbi was first to raise her hand.

Bobbi lived the life described in Isaiah 6:8. In the verse the Lord asks, Whom shall I send. Bobbi was always first to respond "Here I am, send me"

Bobbi's commitment to her faith, her family, and her community never wavered. She always saw herself as a caregiver. She was also a doer and a goer. She chaired the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra board and organized concerts on the top of Casper Mountain.

She was active in PEO and was an early participant in Leadership Wyoming.

In 2003 Bobbi was diagnosed with breast cancer. Following surgery, radiation, chemo and complete recovery, she intensified her promotion of early detection and early treatment. Bobbi played an instrumental role

in the Angels program in Casper for cancer patients. She went on to become a founding member of the Wyoming Breast Cancer Initiative.

On January 1, 2008, Bobbi married John Barrasso in Thermopolis, Wyoming. They became a family of five with Hadley, Peter and Emma. As Senator and Mrs. Barrasso, John and Bobbi crisscrossed Wyoming and places beyond, sharing the beauty and philosophy of the Cowboy State.

Bobbi made lifelong friends wherever she went. She was active in Washington D.C. with the Senate spouses, helped organize the First Lady's lunch, and loved her time as President of the International Neighbors Club One.

In spite of being friends with Presidents and world leaders, she was most happy at home in Wyoming. She loved every corner of the state and all of the land and people in between.

Bobbi Barrasso will be forever remembered for being vibrant, attractive, and brilliant. She fought her cancer with Wyoming tenacity, grit and grace.

She is survived by her younger brother Mike, and many loving cousins.

The family is forever grateful to the remarkable friends and compassionate caregivers who surrounded Bobbi in her final months. Special thanks to Mel Kraft and her entire dedicated care team at Mel's Helping Hands. We are eternally grateful for the enduring friendship of Rebecca Sedar, Susan Anderson, Linda Nix, Mitzi Knapp, Vicki Berger, Trudi Holthouse, Laurie Heath and Judy Murray. Finally, Bobbi was blessed to benefit from the care, comfort, and compassion provided by Central Wyoming Hospice.

Services were held Saturday, February 3, 2024, at Highland Park Community Church, Casper, WY.

Donations may be made to the Wyoming Breast Cancer Initiative, and Central Wyoming Hospice and Transitions. ■



John James Hines

March 3, 1936 – January 26, 2024

Funeral service for John Hines was February 2, 2024 at Family Life Church with Pastor Marty Crump officiating. Interment followed at Mt. Pisgah Cemetery with Military Honors provided by American Legion Post #42 Honor Guard. John Hines 87, of Gillette, WY passed away Friday, January 26, 2024 at Primrose Retirement Community. John James Hines was born in 1936 to John Dwight and Annie Mary (McKenzie) Hines; he grew up and went to school among the red shale hills around Oriva. When John was

16 his father died and he became involved with helping his mother on the ranch. John graduated from CCHS in 1954 and after a few semesters at UW he joined the US Army, spending three years as a meat inspector in Kansas City, Missouri. He returned to the ranch in 1960 where he lived unto his death. After serving on several county boards, he was elected to the legislature in 1985. He served in the House until 2002. He was elected to the Senate in 2003 serving until 2015. He was elected Senate President in 2009 and 2010.

John enjoyed travel, spent time on all the continents. A fan of UW John went to all of the home and bowl football games. His years in public service led to many friendships around the state and he enjoyed visiting with them as years went by. John is survived by his sister and brother-in-law, Dorothy Jean and Richard Davis; his brother and sister-in-law, Bill and Judy Hines; along with cherished nephews and nieces. John's family request that memorials be made to benefit Campbell County Rockpile Museum in John's name. Memorials and condolences may be sent in care of Gillette Memorial Chapel 210 West 5th Street, Gillette, WY 82716. Condolences may also be expressed at www.gillettememorialchapel.com ■



UW



Getting Started in Ag: Looking to the Future with Ag Legacy

Legacy, transition, and estate planning can be difficult subjects to address, especially in agriculture. If you are new to agriculture or just getting started, this topic is probably the last thing on your mind. Our recommendation is: Do not neglect it, however difficult it may be to address.

Farming and ranching are dangerous businesses and the last thing you want to do is leave your family scrambling should the unthinkable happen. Owning a farm or ranch is often a lifetime proposition; passing it on to the next generation takes effective planning and forethought. The statistics on the subject are not encouraging.

Only 33 percent of family-owned small businesses successfully transition to the second generation, less than 30 percent to the third generation, and only 10 percent survive to the fourth. The businesses that survive are often the ones that pull-together a comprehensive succession plan involving not only legacy planning but management succession as well.

We suggest thinking about it from a risk management perspective: Could your family farm or ranch continue if you were unexpectedly unavailable tomorrow? Have you imparted the essential values, skills, and management abilities to your next generation? Too often the answer to these questions is no. If the goal is to build a legacy that includes a successful transition to the next generation, it is time to start the process of communicating with your potential successors.

Comprehensive Resources from AgLegacy.org

The Ag Legacy Program, developed by academic professionals from the University of Wyoming and RightRisk.org, is a comprehensive resource designed to help family farms and ranches create their own legacy and embrace the concept of management succession.

Communication is key to successfully developing an estate and management succession plan. Often families need outside resources that form a catalyst to launch better communication within the family; the Ag Legacy program is meant to be a starting point for the process. Available at AgLegacy.org, Ag Legacy is an educational resource for producers looking to plan for the next generation. The site offers instructional materials, online courses and modules, bulletins, and newsletters covering topics including estate planning, management and succession planning, and how to improve communication between generations.

Program Modules

The Ag Legacy program offers many modules, each of which include links to a newsletter article introducing each topic and

a presentation. There are six modules in total, designed to help encourage better communication at various stages of the process.

Building a complete legacy is about much more than making decisions about inheritance and estate planning. The successive Ag Legacy modules emphasize the importance of communication in building a comprehensive plan. This includes building relationships with the next generation and constructing a plan for management succession.

Management of the business is often the most difficult and nearly always the last thing for farm and ranch business owners to hand over. Oftentimes the out-going generation has built the business with countless hours of labor and hard-earned capital, and they are not accustomed to including others in their decision-making process. Communication and building bridges are key components for succeeding in this process.

The Lasting Legacy Course

Included in the Ag Legacy site are the Lasting Legacy courses. This free two-part series is designed to help individuals build their true legacy for passing on the farm to the next generation. A person's legacy entails so much more than the disbursement of material possessions in the event of a loss. The Lasting Legacy courses define a legacy as a lifetime of achievement and the context in which it will be remembered. A successful legacy plan has four main parts: values and life lessons, personal possessions of emotional value, instructions and wishes to be fulfilled, and financial assets/real estate.

The first course covers inter-generational relationship building, including where to start and a process to catalog values and life lessons for the family. The second course discusses how to ensure instructions and wishes are fulfilled, and how to transfer financial assets and real estate. Each course includes real-world examples and workbooks to help participants navigate the process.

The Management Succession Course

This three-part Management Succession course is designed to help farm and ranch families prepare the next generation to assume management, leadership, and ownership of the business. The course presents a process for working through how the transfer should take place according to the family's wishes.

As with the other Ag Legacy course materials, communication is emphasized. Part one of the series—Where Are We?—deals with many of the interpersonal and business issues that can arise in succession planning, outlining techniques and skills that can help overcome gener-



Ag Legacy Self-Paced Learning Modules

- 1) Why Don't Family Businesses Plan for Succession?
- 2) Why Grow Relationships with the Next Generation?
- 3) What Is Your Management Succession Plan?
- 4) How Are You Communicating with The Next Generation?
- 5) How Are You Mentoring the Next Generation?
- 6) What is an Ag Legacy?



ational differences and conflicts. The second part of the series—Where Do We Want to Go?—demonstrates how to establish goals and objectives for management succession planning, including a discussion of the family unit and how it fits in the succession process.

The final component of the course—How Do We Get There?—is where families learn how to move into the implementation phase of their succession plan. This section includes a planning workbook outlining the succession plan in depth. It also provides guidance on how families can update and modify their plans as needed when circumstances change, as they undoubtedly will. Numerous producer profiles and examples are included in the Management Succession courses, and in the companion workbook.

News and Updates

Ag Legacy's quarterly newsletter covers a wide variety of legacy topics, including estate planning, communication, and guides for navigating the process. Links to beneficial how-to guides are provided as well; these materials cover a variety of important topics ranging from dealing with anxiety in the process and engaging in difficult conversations to mentoring and improving relationships with the next generation.

The External Links tab on AgLegacy.org includes links to numerous other online resources on taxes, mediation, estate planning, transitions, family business planning, and more.

Ag Legacy Reference Materials

Just some of the available references at AgLegacy.org, including:

- Management Succession workbook: Designed to accompany the Management Succession course series
- The Western Farm and Ranch Transition Strategies workbooks
- Lasting Legacy Workbook: Designed to accompany the Lasting Legacy courses
- Passing It On: An Estate Planning Guide for Wyoming's Farmers and Ranchers
- The "Planning Ahead, Difficult Decisions" Series: Eight publications from the University of Wyoming dealing with transition and estate planning

For More Information

Start working on your own Ag Legacy today by visiting AgLegacy.org. View the various course workbooks and publications under the site's Materials tab. Sign up to receive the Ag Legacy newsletter to stay informed on a broad variety of issues, news, and resources related to building your ag legacy. ■

TRUCKING ASSOCIATION... From Page 5

Wyoming is certainly not the only state dealing with wind closure issues and many other state agencies are trying to figure out a way to define light weight and high profile.

“WYDOT has been innovative and we are supportive. The University of Wyoming recently did a study on wind speeds and type of equipment and took that information to create different protocols based on wind speed and type of equipment.”

While this is a step in the right direction, there are still some issues to be worked out. Foertsch pointed out the limited characters allowed on signs can be confusing and there are risks associated with this confusion.

“Basically, if you’re blown over, they’re going to find out what your weight was. And if it was under that weight, then you violated the road closure signs. It’s an after-the-fact enforcement because WYDOT doesn’t have the manpower to pull over and weigh every truck.”

Wyoming is one of the few states where drivers are required to get out and physically show their credentials at ports of entry, with the exception of a few participating in electronic bypass programs.

“It’s a matter of getting the message out through the variable message signs, including those about wind. They are putting the blow over protocols in the entry ports and getting these messages out. We think it has the ability to make our roads safer and keep roads open through the winter season.”

At the federal level, Wyoming Trucking Association and other state associations are working to appeal the federal excise tax. The industry has been hesitant to endorse this appeal for fear of a new, larger tax replacing it.

“This is a 12 percent tax and the largest excise tax on anything right now at the federal level. Something needs to be done if the government is promoting motor carriers to purchase newer equipment that has better emission standards, then you need to give us a break on that federal excise tax.”

“It adds probably about \$25,000 to the cost of a new commercial vehicle, new tractor. So we’re working on that. There were a couple of efforts last year and there’s even a bigger effort this year to get rid of that federal excise tax.”

“Although we may not all be facing the exact same issues, we are all in the same boat when it comes to federal and state regulations,” Foertsch concluded. ■



THE CAN-AM DEFENDER LINEUP IS GROWING

NEW HD7 LOW HP PACKAGES NOW AVAILABLE



EVANSTON

ADDICTED POWER SPORTS

307-789-7533

www.addictedpowersports.com

©2023 Bombardier Recreational Products Inc. (BRP). All rights reserved. ® TM and the BRP logo are trademarks of BRP or its affiliates. In the USA, products are distributed by BRP US Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. BRP reserves the right to discontinue or change specifications, prices, designs, features, models or equipment without incurring obligation. Some models shown may include optional equipment. Product performance may vary depending on external factors. BRP recommends that all SxS drivers take a training course. See your dealer. SxSs can be hazardous to operate. Never exceed the SxS's passenger capacity. All SxS models are meant to be used by drivers of age 16 and older. Read the operator's guide. Follow all instructional and safety material and observe applicable laws and regulations. SxSs are for off-road use only; never ride on paved surfaces or public roads. For your safety, the operator and passenger(s) must wear a helmet, eye protection and applicable protective clothing. Always remember that riding, alcohol and drugs don't mix. Never engage in stunt driving. Avoid excessive speed and be particularly careful on difficult terrain. Always ride responsibly and safely. See your authorized BRP dealer for details and visit www.can-am.brp.com. Printed in the USA.



Join us
every
Thursday
through
March 14th
for the
WyFB
Legislative
Radio
Report on
Northern
Ag Network

www.wyfb.org/News/Radio-Programs

WHAT MAKES A CHAMPION? CHAMPION CHAMPION CHAMPION

PREPARATION.

From life insurance that will **protect your family** to investments that can **build your future**, talk to your Farm Bureau agent about how we can build a **winning game plan**.



Life Insurance | Investments | Annuities | Financial Planning | fbfs.com

Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC, * 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904, Member SIPC. Advisory services offered through FBL Wealth Management, LLC. * Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company ** West Des Moines, IA. Individual must be a registered representative of FBL Marketing Services, LLC to discuss securities products. Individual must be an investment adviser representative with FBL Wealth Management, LLC to discuss advisory services. Individual must be licensed with issuing company to offer insurance products. *Affiliates. **Company provider of Farm Bureau Financial Services. LI207 (2-24)

DISCUSSION MEET... From Page 1

“It is an excellent opportunity to see college students discuss current events and possible solutions or directions that can be taken,” said Tucker Hamilton, WyFB YF&R Committee State Chair. “It is the epitome of the grassroots process that Farm Bureau uses to mold policy and impact legislation through our lobbyists.”

Nutting described the competition as unforgettable. “Not only did I gain a large amount of knowledge, but it also broadened my insights in what happens in different parts of our state,” Nutting said. “Not one producer will do something exactly like a neighbor, yet bringing forth new ideas to all will always be beneficial.”

According to Nutting, the knowledge gained from conversations with her peers was eye-opening. “I learned how agriculture resources should be managed, how we can sustain agriculture over the coming years and everything in between,” Nutting said.

“I think the biggest take-away from the competition was the need to be willing to help those around us to make all of us more successful,” she continued.

As a dual major at Sheridan College, Nutting feels the competition is a great preparation for her educational endeavors. “Being able to be a part of competitions like this makes me confident in the path I am taking at college,” she said. “I believe we all learn from our peers so having this knowledge to prepare me for the next two years and beyond is extremely rewarding.”

Brand Terrell, a Sheridan College student, was named the runner-up and was awarded a \$150 cash prize. From Gillette, Terrell is majoring in agriculture business.



The “Final Four” finalists in the 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmer & Rancher Collegiate Discussion Meet held February 1 in Laramie. From left to right: Hannah Guild, WyFB YF&R Committee; Cannon Cook, Eastern Wyoming College; Brand Terrell, Sheridan College; Becka Nutting, Sheridan College; Cooper Larkin, Sheridan College; and Quade Palm, WyFB YF&R Committee. Sheridan College’s Becka Nutting won the competition. *KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY/KADRA CLARK PHOTO.*

Rounding out the “Final Four” finalists were Cooper Larkin, Sheridan College student, and Cannon Cook, Eastern Wyoming College student. From Torrington, Larkin is studying ag business. From Greybull, Cook is studying precision agriculture.

Contestants are given pre-determined topics. They are judged on their knowledge, speaking ability, ability to participate in a committee meeting and listen to others and air all points of view. All contestants competed in two rounds of

competition. The top four advanced to the “Final Four” round.

The “Final Four” discussion topic was: “Agriculture uses water for everything from growing crops, raising livestock and moving products to and from farms and ranches. Water issues are often hotly debated, are unique to each region and can pose significant challenges to growers. How can Farm Bureau help address water management challenges and seek long term solutions for farmers and ranchers?”

Sheridan College Agriculture Business Instructor Angel Sparkman says the competition is a great co-curricular event that complements an all-around educational experience. “The opportunity to put into practice all of the knowledge they are gaining in the classroom into a direct application in the ag world is invaluable,” Sparkman said.

“The meet and preparation helps the student fulfill our three core abilities at Sheridan College: critical thinking, acquire and apply knowledge, and communicate effectively. This discussion meet is the trifecta for accomplishing these objectives,” Sparkman continued. “As an educator, I measure how well I do my job on how prepared my students are in their next step: rancher, farmer, college student, citizen, employee.”

“Having an opportunity to participate in this meet is a great simulation of life and an opportunity for all of us to have great discussion on the topics that affect our agricultural world today and tomorrow,” Sparkman concluded.

Nutting will represent the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation in the American Farm Bureau Federation Collegiate Discussion Meet March 8-11, 2024 in Omaha, Neb. From Billings, Montana, she is a first-year student at Sheridan College pursuing degrees in agriculture business and animal science.

Nutting is looking forward to the national competition. “I am extremely excited to meet all kinds of new people from across the United States, to learn their insights on agriculture from different regions, and how it can help me make the greatest impact on agriculture in the future,” Nutting concluded. ■

Ranching in the West 2024 Seminar Series

**RANCHING IN THE WEST SEMINAR SERIES
OFFERS REAL-WORLD EDUCATION,
PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING,
& INDUSTRY NETWORKING**

LEARN MORE & REGISTER
UWYO.EDU/UWAG/RMAL



2024 Seminar Topics
In-person and online options

Ranching Collaboratively: Mastering Public Land Partnerships
Monday, February 12, 2024
Casper College

Energy Innovations: Exploring the Influence of Energy Innovations
Monday, March 18, 2024
Gillette College

Leading the Field: Family-Run Businesses, Industry, and Community Leadership
Monday, April 1, 2024
Northwest College

Navigating Western Waters: Addressing Water Challenges in the Western Region
Monday, April 22, 2024



Wyoming property taxes and you

BY KERIN CLARK

“Taxes are how we citizens pool our money to pay for infrastructure and services that we couldn't afford on our own,” Wyoming Department of Revenue Director Brenda Henson said at the WyFB Legislative Meeting February 16 in Cheyenne.

Henson emphasized the goal for those administering taxes is to ensure taxpayers are paying their fair share of the property tax burden; no more, no less.

“For people like me that administer taxes, county assessors, Department of Revenue, county board of equalization, the state board of equalization, the key for us is to make sure we're administering those laws as the green books (Wyoming Statutes) say,” Henson explained.

While those who administer tax laws are responsible to ensure taxpayers are paying their fair share, it is the Wyoming Legislature that determines the property tax burden.

“It's incumbent on legislators to be speaking to the citizens,” Henson said. “You need to be telling them these are the services we want but this is how we would like to pay for them. That is the bottom line of what taxes are.”

Property tax history

- 1889: First property tax levy in Wyoming
- 1890: Statehood and creation of constitutional amendment providing uniform assessment for taxation
- 1903: Assessors created and counties became the chief taxing authority
- 1988: Amended constitution to provide for a 3-tier system and fair market value
- 1989: Legislature funded statewide mass appraisal system in all 23 counties
- 2005: New Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal System (C.A.M.A.)

Wyoming tax structure

A 1987 Wyoming Supreme Court ruling determined the state can't treat taxpayers differently. “Prior to our Constitution being amended for uniformity of assessment, industries were being valued using different methodologies and levels of assessment,” Henson said.

Henson explained in 1989 Article 15, Section 11 of the Wyoming Constitution was amended to create three tiers in Wyoming's tax structure: 1) minerals, 2) industrial taxation, and 3) all other property. “The Constitution says you can't create subclasses thus providing some protections,” Henson said. “The Constitution provides the legislature the ability to determine what level of assessment each of those tiers are going to be assessed at.”

“Minerals are taxed when they are severed from the ground so there are different methodologies used for taxation,” she explained. “Minerals are so important to Wyoming and our tax structure and why we as citizens, in the big scheme of things compared to other states, don't pay as much as we would if we weren't a mineral-rich state.”

Agricultural land is in the all other property category. “Agricultural landowners are not only paying taxes on their ag land, you also pay property taxes on the residential value for your home and the commercial value for your outbuildings,” she said.

Who pays property tax

“If you own property, you're going to pay property tax unless the legislature has specifically exempted you,” Henson stated.

Henson described the two types of property. “Real property is land and structures attached to that land,” she explained. “Personal property is anything you can touch that has a physical presence.”

She explained intangible personal property, such as franchise agreements and money, are exempt from property taxes.



Wyoming Department of Revenue Director Brenda Henson speaking at the WyFB Legislative Meeting. *ABBI HAVEY PHOTO.*

Statewide assessed value

Henson outlined in 2023 mineral production companies total assessed value was over \$17 billion accounting for 50.75% of statewide property taxes. Residential property taxes were 28.89% of total assessed value.

“There's only one taxing authority that levies mills statewide and that is the school foundation 12 mills,” Henson explained. “All taxing authorities and counties are not created alike. When we talk about that \$17 billion in assessed value, 78% of that \$17 billion is in four counties; Campbell, Converse, Sublette and Sweetwater. The rest of the counties are not getting property taxes from a significant amount of minerals.”

“Just because as a state we see a lot of value in minerals it doesn't mean that those entities that are providing services to the citizens are reaping those dollars,” she continued.

Historical assessed value

“Assessed values in Wyoming fluctuate,” Henson said. “We just hit a record in 2023 at \$34 billion in assessed value.”

According to Henson, the historical assessed value shows we do not have a stable statewide tax structure. “In 2021, we were at 19.6 billion and in 2009 we were at \$29 billion. That's a big difference.”

Henson compared the total assessed value to the mineral assessed value. “From 2014 to 2015 we went up 10.67% in minerals and then cratered in 2016 decreasing almost 34%,” she said. “In 2005, 71% of taxes were minerals compared to 50.75% today even though we're at our highest assessed value of \$34 billion. We're seeing a change in economy.”

Agricultural land

“You have to qualify for the agricultural land classification,” Henson said. “It is a different approach to value; it is not an exemption.”

There are four qualifications that must be met:

- The land must be used and employed for an agricultural purpose.
- The land can't be part of a platted subdivision, unless each parcel is 35 acres or more.
- The owner/producer must have derived \$500 from the marketing of agricultural products. Lessee must derive \$1,000 from the marketing of agricultural products.
- The land is being used to its capability to produce.

Henson explained property in the all other category is valued and then the assessment of 9.5% is applied. “Every year the Legislature has the opportunity to change that percentage, but they haven't since we went to fair market value and the productivity value,” Henson said.

She explained residential and commercial properties also fall within parcels that include agricultural land. “Habitable

residential structures and land that's not in production are valued as residential,” Henson said. “Commercial structures could be if someone opened up a repair shop for example. The equipment used by agricultural producers is taxed as well.”

Ag land valuation

The Department of Revenue meets annually for the agricultural land valuation study. “Farm Bureau has always been at the table in those discussions,” Henson said. “You will see value is not dependent on an individual producer's income or the crop they are farming; we have a uniform methodology for valuing ag land just like we have uniform methodology for valuing houses.”

Rangeland, dry crop farmland and irrigated farmland are the three classifications of agricultural land.

“Irrigated crop land valuation is based on tons of all hay per acre for the productivity measurement,” she explained. “Dry crop land is based on bushels of all wheat per acre and range land is based on Animal Unit Months (AUMs) as the productivity measurement.”

“When we value agricultural land we use an income approach to value. This is accomplished by considering net operating income and then apply a capitalization rate,” Henson said.

According to Henson, there are three components assessors use when valuing land: soils, land resource areas and land use.

“For soil productivity, the NRCS is a partner,” Henson said. “Most of the rangeland data comes from the 1988 Wyoming Land Technical Guide.”

“Land resource areas are based on NRCS major resource area data,” she continued. “They're large sweeping zones and that's how we incorporate rainfall, length of growing season, and the basic common topography.”

Henson encouraged farmers and ranchers to participate in ag statistics surveys. “We get commodity prices from USDA ag statistics and interest rates from Farm Credit Services of America,” she said.

According to Henson, after reviewing the components to value ag land the next step is to determine a minimum and maximum value. “County assessors then determine what per acre value they're going to choose for that tax year within their county,” Henson continued.

Structure valuation

Structures are valued using uniform methodology with every county assessor using the Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal system (C.A.M.A.) The three valuation components for structures are: current replacement cost, apply depreciation and uniformly adjust for sales. “We use Marshall & Swift, which is the premier costing program utilized for replacement cost,” Henson explained.

Franklin provides technical services update

BY CALLIE HANSON

For Wyoming Agriculture

At the recent Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Legislative Meeting, Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) Technical Services Manager Slade Franklin gave an update on the happenings of the department. Franklin covered pesticide applicator training, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updates pertaining to the endangered species act (ESA) and Wyoming Weed and Pest.

The technical services division of WDA has a wide swath of responsibilities including the grain warehouse, pesticide program, nursery stock, seed lab, hemp certification, predator control as well as a number of inspections including apiary inspections, livestock scale and gas pumps. The division oversees eight major programs and 14 different laws.

"We have somewhere around 14 different laws we administer through our division alone," Franklin noted. "We also coordinate with a lot of different groups around the state such as the Weed and Pest Council and the Wyoming Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey. We have a big basket with a lot of different eggs that we're dealing with on a daily basis."

The pesticide program specifically oversees commercial applicator licensing, private, applicator licensing, recertification process, reciprocity of state licenses and enforcement of state statutes. In addition, the division deals with reciprocity from other states.

"For example, if someone from Colorado wanted to be licensed in Wyoming, we would make sure they take the necessary steps to get that license. We have an enforcement program where two inspectors will go around and ensure people are following the labels of the product they're using."

Franklin notes one of the major issues Wyoming is facing right now is the process of updating their certification training plan with the EPA.

"We have not done this since 1975. In short, EPA through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) has the ability to work with states on how they implement their own training certificate programs. This ensures EPA doesn't have to deal with individual states and gives the authority to the states."

He continued, "However, in order for us to maintain that authority, we have to go through a planning process within that and the EPA has to approve."

Franklin noted this process was started back in 2017 and suffered delays due to COVID. The process is nearing the final stages of the certification and training program.

"Producers will definitely see some trickle down effects of these changes in the coming years, but one thing I want to make very clear is the state of Wyoming does not have enforcement primacy. Enforcement primacy comes from the EPA. What this means is we do not do enforcement of FIFRA laws for EPA on our applicators."

"We enforce our state law. We are the only state in the union that does not have enforcement primacy so our state of Wyoming inspectors do not come to do inspections with an EPA identification,"

Franklin noted some major changes applicators can expect in the coming years include major updates to the fumigation category.

"EPA is requiring us under our certification planning to have a fumigation category not just for commercial applicators but for private applicators as well," he continued.



Wyoming Department of Agriculture Technical Services Manager Slade Franklin spoke to WyFB members at the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting. *ABBI HAVEY PHOTO.*

Some other changes include competency standards for private applicators. This change is meant to ensure private applicators are meeting federal standards for licensing applicators. For those who use aluminum phosphide, fumitoxin for prairie dog management, that can no longer be done under a private applicator license but will also need the private applicator fumigation category.

"Those two products, you're going to have to have the fumigation license category, whether you're private or whether you're commercial. That's just a requirement that's coming from the federal standards that we have to follow with our certification and training."

Another major change coming down the pipe is a separate category for cooling towers.

"There are a lot of these micro bio-sides that are being used on cooling towers, on buildings. And commercial applicators are doing those applications, so we did have to add an additional category for cooling towers."

With all these changes entering the phase where they become law, Franklin assured those who receive pesticide licensing in the meantime will still have valid licenses.

"If you get a license in say January 2025, we are not going to say it's no good because there are new regulations. If it's a private applicator license, you'll have five years from the start of that process. or from when your license was issued, and so the new rules won't affect your license until you renew."

When it comes to pesticides, endangered species are a major factor in approval from the EPA. Franklin

notes the EPA was sued 13 years ago by NGOs claiming they were not following the endangered species section 7 consultation process when they approved pesticides.

"EPA has always taken the mindset that it's their responsibility to approve pesticides. It doesn't matter what any other agency says, that's their role, and I applaud them for that," Franklin said. "I don't agree with all the decisions they made on approving pesticides, but they pushed back for years on having to do section 7 consultations on endangered species with the US Fish and Wildlife Service."

Section 7 consultation involves working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to determine whether what you're doing will have significant or no impacts on endangered species. These consultations don't resemble a cost-benefit analysis that EPA typically uses when approving pesticide active ingredients.

On the Weed and Pest front, one of the biggest issues the state is facing is absentee landowners. Although there are laws in place enforcing pest management, the fines are minimal and most districts "won't touch it with a ten-foot pole."

"We try and have weed and pest districts explain cost-share programs for chemical sprays and offer to help these landowners with these programs," Franklin says. "Not taking care of weeds or pests like prairie dogs can have an effect on neighbors."

Franklin notes while these programs have good intentions, they can also magnify neighbor conflicts and be complex at best to enforce.

As laws and regulations continue to adapt and change, it's critical for landowners to stay up-to-date. ■

PROPERTY TAXES... From Page 17

Henson noted accuracy and communication with the property owner are key. "As the property owner, if you believe your assessment is high, go communicate your concerns to the county assessor," she said.

Equipment valuation

"Agricultural operators, just like any retail store owner, are required to send a list to the county assessor no later than March 1st of all equipment used on your operation," Henson explained. "The list must include when you acquired it, for what value and what type of equipment it is."

Henson shared an example of a tractor purchased in 2013 for \$14,369 with a 10-year life expectancy to explain the trended cost approach that determines the tax.

- \$14,369 x 1.4232 (Trending Factor) = \$20,450
- \$20,450 x 21% (Depreciation Factor) = \$4,295
- \$4,295 x 9.5% = \$408 (assessed value)
- \$408 x .068147 (average mill levy) = \$27.81 tax dollars

"For property tax purposes, as long as you're using it, the value stays in place with a depreciation floor of 20%," she continued.

Henson stated equipment such as tractors used for personal use (not used in an income producing manner) are exempt from taxes.

Appeal options

Henson noted property owners have a 30-day window from the mail date on the assessment schedule to contact the county assessor. "Most times it's just a matter of communicating and the questions are resolved," she said.

If the questions aren't resolved, Wyoming law gives taxpayers the ability to appeal tax issues to the County Board of Equalization the State Board of Equalization, District Court and ultimately the Supreme Court. The County Board of Equalization is comprised of the county commissioners who are required to present their written findings no later than October 1.

The State Board of Equalization is comprised of three members appointed by the Governor for six-year terms. "If the property owner or the county assessor disagree with the County Board of Equalization decision, they can appeal to the state board for review," she said.

Tax calculation

Henson explained the assessed value is calculated taking the fair market value

or production value times the level of assessment. "This assessed value is then multiplied by the mill levy to determine the tax amount," Henson said. "The mill levy is different depending on where your property is located."

In 2023, there were 612 tax authorities in Wyoming. "We have 99 cities and towns, 8 community colleges, hospital, fire protection, improvement and service, conservation districts and more for taxing districts," Henson said.

"We as citizens created and voted for these tax authorities because we wanted services," Henson said. "This is our right to tax ourselves."

"Each district has an elected board," Henson concluded. "They are required to hold budget hearings every year and people need to attend. As taxpayers, we need to attend these meetings." ■

EMERGING LEADERS... From Page 1

Back to those “Ag Research Conversations” at the University of Wyoming (UW) Laramie Research & Extension Center (LREC), Stewart is the UW Extension Sheep Specialist. He spoke about re-defining the definition of value added for wool. As he shared UW sheep research projects, he also challenged attendees to have tough conversations and challenge ideas. “Innovation sometimes ruffles feathers, but we don’t have to just do as it has always been done,” Stewart stated. “We can add value by challenging paradigms and asking tough questions.”

Dr. J. Derek Scasta, UW Rangeland Extension Specialist, also emphasized how important it is for emerging young leaders to participate in events like this conference. Scasta shared research information on rangeland soil health and livestock grazing.

Rounding out the research conversations was Hannah Cunningham-Hollinger, UW Assistant Professor Animal Genetics, who discussed beef cattle research. She spoke about feed efficiency and the UW High Altitude Bull Test. Cunningham-Hollinger then led a tour of the livestock feed efficiency barn and showcased the tools used to measure feed intake.

Attendees enjoyed a shredded lamb meal catered by the UW Food Science Club following the tour at the UW LREC. Earlier in the day, a tour of the UW Meat Lab was offered for attendees to learn about meat processing at the lab.

Following lunch, the conference moved to the Farm Bureau Center. Keynote speaker Sarah J. Bohnenkamp inspired the audience to be anti-average in their leadership. “If you want to be a leader, you have to shift too because shift happens,” Bohnenkamp said.

Bohnenkamp challenged the saying that passion is enough. “Passion is not enough,” she exclaimed. “We all have passion; that is common and common fades into the background.”

She described anti-average leaders as those who have a strong trust of self and can articulate their strengths. According to Bohnenkamp, the ABC’s of leadership are Articulating your strengths, knowing your leadership Brand and Communicating who you are. She closed by challenging attendees to capture key words for their leadership brand and be ready to communicate and share that brand with others.

Speaking of anti-average leadership, back in 1948 Wyoming farmers and ranchers saw a need for agriculture to have good insurance. They traveled the state, raised capital and formed what is now known as Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company (MWFBMIC). The affiliation between the Federation and MWFBMIC began 75 years ago. Both companies are housed in what is called the Farm Bureau Center in Laramie.

MWFBMIC employees Bryan Martin and Casey Lowham treated attendees to an informational tour of the Farm Bureau Center. The tours were followed by a “Popcorn Bar” break where folks could network visiting with new and old friends.

The first day of the conference concluded with a prime rib dinner catered by the UW Food Science Club. Plank Stewardship Initiative Executive Director Milward Simpson shared the mission of the Plank Stewardship Initiative and talked about their vision of providing resources to enhance the capabilities and livelihoods of those who



Hands-on learning as UW Extension Specialist Dr. Scott Lake (far right) demonstrated Pap Tests at the UW Laramie Research & Extension Center. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.



The WyFB YF&R Committee at the “Cultivating Emerging Leaders” Conference with AFBF YF&R Committee Member Joel Currier. Back row (l to r): Hannah and Zack Guild, Uinta County; Seth Allen, Niobrara County; Quade Palm, Carbon County; Spencer Axtell, Hot Springs County; and Tucker Hamilton, Weston County. Front row (l to r): Cody Alps, Goshen County; Joel Currier, AFBF YF&R Committee; and Laura Dockery, Fremont County. KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY/KADRA CLARK PHOTO.



Several members of the UW Collegiate Farm Bureau attended the “Cultivating Emerging Leaders” WyFB YF&R Conference in Laramie. In this photo, they are visiting at the conference with UW College of Agriculture, Life and Natural Resources Acting Dean Kelly Crane. KERIN CLARK PHOTO.

manage and care for land and water in Wyoming. Simpson stated the organization was proud to support the 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference as the PSI mission and vision of the WyFB YF&R Conference match well. Funding for the 2024 YF&R Conference was funded through a grant provided by the Plank Stewardship Initiative.

The start of the second day of the conference was fueled with UW Food Science Club breakfast burritos.

The first speaker was Thomas Foulke, a Senior Research Scientist and Community Economic Development Specialist at the UW Agricultural & Applied Economics Department. Foulke shared his innovative work to create a market for Wyoming first-

grains through applied supply-chain research and economic development. The Neolithic Brand project is an effort by Foulke to enhance income in Wyoming’s agricultural sector by building out the supply chain for wholesale emmer wheat and spelt.

Foulke emphasized the goal was met to “introduce these crops to the region, see how best to grow them and start building a market for them.” According to Foulke, going forward there is a lot more work to be completed. Learn more at neolithic-brand.com.

Speaking of profit, the next session “The 3 Secrets for Increasing Profit” was presented by McFadden Ranchers Shanon and Melinda Sims/



A glimpse at some of the artwork created during fellowship time at the paint party to close the 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference.

Sims Cattle Company, LLC. “To become a great business, you need to act like a great business,” said Shanon Sims.

The two-hour intensive session offered a look at the ranching for profit economic model providing the three secrets to increasing profit. Succession and key issues that need discussed for a succession plan to thrive were also covered.

More intentional networking time was enjoyed at a brisket lunch catered by the UW Food Science Club. One of the key comments we hear about the productivity of attending this conference is the ability to network and visit with other young agriculturalists.

Next up WyFB Policy Staff discussed top issues impacting rural Wyoming and America. WyFB Director of Public and Governmental Affairs Brett Moline and WyFB National Affairs Associate Kelly Carpenter reviewed how Farm Bureau Federation policy is developed from the grassroots beginning at the county level. They also covered issues impacting Wyoming agriculture on the state and national levels.

The closing keynote speaker talked about “Finding Your Farm Bureau Why.” American Farm Bureau Federation YF&R Committee Member and Colorado Rancher Joel Currier shared his experiences with getting involved in the organization and how they have shaped his leadership opportunities in agriculture. According to Currier, leadership development, networking and a platform to tell agriculture’s story are the top three reasons why he makes time to be involved in the Farm Bureau.

Hands-on learning is always beneficial. The final presentation found attendees back at the UW LREC for a Pap Test demonstration and discussion by Dr. Scott Lake, Director of UW LREC and a UW Extension Beef Specialist. Dr. Lake explained the research behind the Pap Test and the importance of the test for a high-altitude state like Wyoming. The Pap Test checks for pulmonary hypertension which is also known as high-altitude or brisket disease. Dr. Lake completed a PAP test on multiple bulls enabling attendees to see how the test works and ask questions.

The conference concluded Saturday evening with a dinner and paint party in Downtown Laramie. You’ve seen the word “networking” over and over again. Well, along with the knowledge gleaned at the conference, networking is truly one of the greatest benefits attendees listed for attending the conference.

The 2024 WyFB YF&R Conference was produced by the WyFB YF&R Committee with funding provided by the Plank Stewardship Initiative. Make plans now to fill your cup at the 2025 WyFB YF&R Conference. Dates and location will be announced later this year. Be on the lookout and don’t miss out in 2025 as we continue the work of the WyFB YF&R program to “Cultivate Emerging Leaders” for the strength of agriculture in Wyoming. ■

WyFB Legislative Meeting 2024



WyFB Director of Public and Governmental Affairs Brett Moline provided a Capitol Tour after the Legislative Meeting. He also shared about the work WyFB does on behalf of members during the legislative session. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Agricultural conversations at the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting Feb. 15-16 in Cheyenne. Park County farmer Corey Forman visits with Platte County Farm Bureau Federation President Pat Cullen. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon visits with Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation President Todd Fornstrom at the Wyoming Capitol during the "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week" proclamation signing that followed the Legislative Meeting. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Sweetwater County Farm Bureau Federation President James Ramsay visits with Slade Franklin, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, at the 2024 WyFB Legislative Meeting. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



TRUE BLUE NUTRITION FOR ANY CONDITION.

Healthy newborn calves and improved conception rates start with cow herd nutrition. Vitalix tubs are the ideal delivery system to provide essential nutrition for calving. Vitalix uses technologies that are proven to improve colostrum quality, calf health and immunity, all while supporting the mother cow now, and more offspring to come.

Learn more from your local sales manager today!
Ralph Hinton • 970-966-4904 • rhinton@vitalix.com

