



Wyoming Agriculture

VOL. 41, NO. 5

FEBRUARY 2024

Published by Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation



Wyoming Legislature to convene February 12

Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Senator Cheri Steinmetz talks with WyAG

BY KERIN CLARK

The 67th Legislature of the State of Wyoming will convene for the 2024 Budget Session on February 12 in Cheyenne. In Wyoming, the Budget Session is held every other year and is a

20-day schedule compared to the 40-day schedule of a Regular Session. All bills, except the budget bill, require a two-thirds vote from the Senate or House to be introduced during a Budget Session.

With less than two percent of the population producing food and fiber for our nation it is essential to have a voice when it comes to the agriculture policies and laws that affect Wyoming farmers and

ranchers and thus consumers. Grassroots lobbying is a large part of how the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation serves as your voice for agriculture. WyFB lobbyists work straight from the policy book created by members beginning at the county level each year. While the budget session is a quick 20-days, it is a session legislators and lobbyists have been preparing for since the 2023 session adjourned.

Wyoming Agriculture reached out to the chairmen of the House and Senate Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee to get their views on the upcoming session. *Wyoming Agriculture* was unable to connect with Representative John Eklund who serves as chairmen of the House Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee.

LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW ... Page 9



LEGISLATIVE MEETING
February 15-16, 2024
Laramie County Community College
Center for Conferences and Institutes
CHEYENNE, WYOMING

www.wyfb.org

WyFB Legislative Meeting Feb. 15-16

The 2024 Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Legislative Meeting will be at the Laramie County Community College Center for Conferences and Institutes in Cheyenne on February 15-16.

The Legislative Meeting begins with registration at 11 a.m. and a noon luncheon to follow on Thursday, February 15. If their schedules permit, House Agriculture Committee Chair Representative John Eklund and Senate Agriculture Committee Chair Senator Cheri Steinmetz will address members during the noon luncheon.

LEGISLATIVE MEETING ... Page 11

'Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week' is February 19-24

BY KERIN CLARK

The importance of reading and agriculture are highlighted when we celebrate "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week." Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon has issued an official proclamation declaring the week of February 19-24, 2024 as "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week." While we recognize the value of reading and agriculture during this designated week it goes without saying that each of these are vital every day of the year.

Educating Wyoming elementary school children about agriculture and the role Wyoming farmers and ranchers play in keeping Wyoming strong is critical. The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Young Farmer and Rancher (YF&R) Committee started the "Ag Books for Kids" project in 2005 with a goal of building the collection of accurate agriculture reading materials in our state's elementary schools. The first "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week" Governor's proclamation was issued in 2008 and has since been issued continually.

LITERACY WEEK ... Page 4

American Farm Bureau Establishes 2024 Policies



The culmination of the grassroots policy development process – the American Farm Bureau Convention. Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation voting delegates Cole Coxbill and Todd Fornstrom at the 2024 AFBF Voting Delegate Session. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*

JANUARY 23, 2024

Farmer and rancher delegates to the American Farm Bureau Federation's 105th Convention adopted policies on January 23 to guide the organization's work in 2024. Key topics ranged from artificial intelligence, to labor, to crop insurance.

For the second year, delegates were polled at the beginning of the voting session regarding their farms. The results show 99% of those who cast votes operate family farms and nearly two-thirds represent small to mid-size farms as defined by USDA.

AFBF POLICIES ... Page 5

Exploring new frontiers at AFBF 2024 Convention

BY KERIN CLARK

"This is our moment," said American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Zippy Duvall. "Let's explore the new frontiers before us. Let's keep blazing the trail with leadership, perseverance, teamwork and faith."

Duvall reminded convention attendees that the task of charting new frontiers for Farm Bureau and agriculture is too big to tackle alone. "Whether this is your first convention or your 50th, you can make a difference," Duvall told members during the opening general session. "It doesn't matter your title, or how young or how old you are. You can help chart the path to new frontiers for Farm Bureau and for our communities."

The AFBF Convention featured motivational keynote addresses, educational workshops and presentations as well as award presentations. Workshops covered a variety of topics including policy topics, advocacy in the courts, food supply chain, ag innovation, member engagement and empowering individuals to engage in public service. The convention concluded with the important work of setting policy at the voting delegate session to guide the work of the organization.

AFBF CONVENTION ... Page 13



Wyoming members and staff at the 2024 American Farm Bureau Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah: Vance Broadbent, Uinta County; Kristi and Justin Ellis, Uinta County; Lanita and Jed Heap, Lincoln County; Cody Alps, Goshen County; Brent and Nancy Barker, Uinta County; Chevy Huffaker, Uinta County; Todd, Laura and Sydnie Fornstrom, Laramie County; Lex Geer, Campbell County; Abbi Havey, WyFB; Ken Hamilton, WyFB; Dee Brewer, WyFB; Brooke Roes, WyFB; Carlee and Cole Coxbill, Goshen County; and Kerin Clark, WyFB. Not pictured: Zack and Hannah Guild, Uinta County; and Scott and Stephanie Kossert, Natrona County.

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www.wyfb.org

CALENDAR
OF EVENTS

February 2024

- 12 Wyoming Legislature
Budget Session Convenes
- 15-16 WyFB Legislative
Meeting-LCCC Center for
Conferences and Institutes
in Cheyenne
- 17 Carbon County Ranch &
Farm Bureau Federation
Cabin Fever Cowboy Ball -
Saratoga
- 19-24 Wyoming Agricultural
Literacy Week

March 2024

- 1 WyFB Scholarship
application deadline
- 8-11 AFBF YF&R Conference-
Omaha, Neb.
- 29 "Ag Books for Kids" contests
county deadline

April 2024

- 12 "Ag Books for Kids" contests
district deadline

Visit wyfb.org
for calendar updates

Wyoming
Agriculture

Volume 41, Issue No. 5
February 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.

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Embracing new frontiers

Zippy Duvall

American Farm Bureau Federation President



We have just wrapped up our 105th American Farm Bureau Convention in Salt Lake City, and I am so grateful for the time we had as a Farm Bureau family to look to new frontiers in our organization and across agriculture. There's nothing like gathering, exploring innovative solutions, and tackling challenges together to energize us for the year ahead.

I felt that energy across our convention, from the trade show to our inspiring speakers to our robust policy discussions as we set priorities for the coming year. Farmers and ranchers are always looking to make each season better than the last, and the AFBF Convention helps us achieve that goal for our farms, our families and our communities.

Throughout the week, we hosted training opportunities and workshops to equip members and help them take their leadership and advocacy to the next level. We celebrated innovative and engaging programs from our county Farm Bureaus and recognized our outstanding Young Farmers and Ranchers through our competitive events.

One of my favorite parts of the convention is getting to walk the Trade Show floor and meet members from across our Farm Bureau family. The Trade Show is the place to be—and you could tell by the lines of folks just waiting for those doors to open each morning. It's also a place to give back,

a value we share across our organization. This year, the Utah Farm Bureau organized the Miracle of Ag service project where event attendees helped to fill over 5,000 boxes of food for families facing hunger.

We kicked off convention by reigniting our advocacy on the farm bill. Farm Bureau led the way in 2023 calling for action, from working with groups across food, agriculture, conservation and nutrition to rallying our grassroots advocates. And thanks to those efforts, we did see a temporary extension to protect farm programs for now. While we are grateful for that extension and understand that Congress needs to address the budget, we also know that we cannot afford further delays when it comes to the farm bill. We are inviting folks to send a resounding message to Congress to deliver a new farm bill for our farms and our country. The road to a new farm bill has become longer than any of us would have liked, but together we can see it through.

We were also honored to welcome Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack—a fellow Farm Bureau member—to our convention again this year. He met with all our state leaders to take our policy questions head on, and then he addressed all our attendees at our closing session. He is a humble leader and his commitment to agriculture shines through in his work. I am grateful for how our friendship has grown over the years.

The hallmark of our annual convention, however, is our voting delegate business session where our grassroots policy making process is in action. At Farm Bureau, our members establish our policies, which rise from the county level to our state conventions and on to the national stage. At our delegate meeting each year we ensure our policy continues to reflect the views of farmers and ranchers across the country. We also saw this year that our delegates remain overwhelmingly family farmers who operate the full range of farm sizes, with almost two-thirds operating small and mid-sized farms. I look forward to taking these priorities back to Washington. This is how we continue to work towards new frontiers in agriculture. I am thankful for the hard work and dedication of our members and delegates as they set our direction for 2024, engage in their communities, and provide the leadership to ensure a bright future for agriculture.

I also want to take a moment to say a genuine thank you for the honor of being re-elected as your American Farm Bureau President. It is a true privilege, and I look forward to continuing to serve you. As I mentioned in my keynote address, I see such a bright future for 2024 and I am excited to take on new frontiers together. ■

The real driving factor for
refugees? It's not climate change

Ken Hamilton

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President



For some of our readers, you've probably heard me raise the issue that federal land managers can and do use "climate change" as the excuse du jour whenever something bad happens on those lands. This is particularly true with the increase in wildfires in the past decade or so. Fuel load buildups caused by numerous environmental group lawsuits and the resultant conflagrations are routinely blamed on climate changes. Examples of wildfire reductions in areas which utilized management programs are ignored and testimony from forestry officials are discounted in order to advance the climate change narrative.

However, this isn't the only area where our politicians and bureaucrats seek to divert blame away from the real issues and blame everything on climate change.

Recently the media was full of stories from Dubai, the location of the UN's climate change gathering. Of course, politicians from all over the world including King Charles to our Secretary of Interior were there to tout how the world's citizens must do more to reduce their fossil fuel consumption. U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry of course was in attendance. When he is not dodging House of Representative

questions about his special department, he is busy sounding alarms about how climate change is already forcing thousands of refugees to flee their home countries in an effort to avoid climate impacts. But is that really what is happening?

I would postulate that people are fleeing their current countries because of tyrannical leaders who wreck their economy and then use the power of the gun to dissuade any who would question their failed policies.

One such example would be Venezuela. Remember when a socialist was elected president of that country in 1999? Many of our home-grown socialists, led by former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, immediately traveled to Venezuela to tout what a wonderful thing Hugo Chavez's election was. Venezuela, which at one time had one of the better economies in South America, went downhill – fast! This led poverty ridden Venezuelans to exit the country however they could, which included making the trek north to the United States. These refugees joined the flood of refugees from Central American countries whose politicians had mismanaged their own economies to cross into Mexico on their way to our border.

Indeed, since our border is so porous, we hear of Chinese traveling to Mexico and then

trying to make it across to the U.S. It seems odd that people living in a country with the second largest economy would be trying to get into the U.S., oh wait, China is a dictatorship – maybe that could be a reason.

Meanwhile climate activists rush around raising alarms that the refugee crisis is a result of climate change not political mismanagement. Of course, many of these folks have a vested interest in trying to divert attention from problems caused by socialism or some other totalitarianism government in many of these regions since many of them feel that capitalism is the main culprit for our climate woes. When one looks worldwide, we see similar examples of poor economic management of a country by its leaders who then precipitate devastating economic conditions which lead to migrations and internal strife.

So, the next time you hear a climate activist announce that climate change is the driving factor behind the migrations, ask yourself if that might be the problem, or if as happened in Venezuela, poor government policies are the problem. To try and divert attention from these problems by announcing they are caused by climate does a disservice to all of us and diverts resources away from trying to address the real issue(s). ■

National News Update

BY KELLY CARPENTER

Corporate Transparency Act Reporting Requirements

As a part of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2021, the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) was passed into law. Per the Department of Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN), the CTA creates a beneficial ownership information reporting requirement as a part of the US government's efforts to make it harder for bad actors to bene-

fit from their ill-gotten gains through shell companies or other opaque ownership structures. Beginning Jan 1, 2024, many companies in the US will have to report information about their beneficial owners, i.e. those who own or control the company. Many agricultural businesses that are LLCs, LPs, or other companies registered with their secretaries of state will have to comply with the reporting requirements by Jan. 1, 2025 under penalty of a felony. WFB has engaged in informational sessions (webinars) to educate members.

SEC - Natural Asset Companies

During the fall of 2023, the Securities and Exchange Commission released a proposed rule to essentially be able to list Natural Asset Companies on the New York Stock Exchange. The Intrinsic Exchange Group (IEG) in partnership with the NYSE, are "pioneering a new asset class based on natural assets and the mechanism to convert them to financial capital... They include biological systems that provide clean air, water, foods, medicines, a stable climate, human health and societal potential" per their website. IEG estimates the potential

of "nature's economy" as a \$4 quadrillion market. AFBF and others believe that this could have wide reaching implications with taking productive lands out of agriculture due to the potentially large amount of capital being infused into the efforts. The WyFB submitted comments to the SEC using language provided by AFBF that requested clarification on the proposed rule to protect private property rights and related important tenants of our agriculture members. The proposal was withdrawn on January 17, 2024 after the SEC received thousands of comments in opposition. ■

WyFB statement: Securities and Exchange Commission withdraws NAC rule

JANUARY 18, 2024

On January 17, 2024, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) withdrew their proposed rule to list Natural Asset Companies (NAC) on the New York Stock Exchange. "We were very pleased to see the proposal withdrawn," said Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President Ken Hamilton.

During the fall of 2023, the Securities and Exchange Commission released the proposed rule which would have potentially infused a large amount of capital into the efforts to create a natural asset class. "The potential of Wall Street levels of money influencing productive land being taken out of agriculture was very concerning," Hamilton continued.

The NAC rule was just one of many proposals being brought forth by the Administration to promote non-use practices on public lands and expand federal ownership of lands. "Given the tremendous implication it would have had on farms and ranches nationwide, we were heartened to see this rule withdrawn," Hamilton continued.

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation, along with the American Farm Bureau Federation, submitted comments to the SEC. "Protecting private property rights is critical," Hamilton said. "Food production is essential to our nation's security."

"We will continue to oppose government overreach that encroaches on property rights, controls land use and threatens the livelihood of Americans," Hamilton concluded. ■

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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.

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LITERACY WEEK... From Page 1

WyFB President Todd Fornstrom said that as a farmer it gives him pride to have the Governor spotlight the work of farmers and ranchers through this proclamation. "It is reinforcement that our jobs as Wyoming farmers and ranchers are not only appreciated, but they are center stage for our Wyoming leaders," Fornstrom said.

The proclamation reads in part: "Wyoming is rich in agricultural history, and farming and ranching are an important part of Wyoming's economy, contributing nearly two billion dollars annually; and many aspects of our daily lives, including the food we eat, clothes we wear, and medicine we depend on, are made possible because of agriculture; and literacy is a top priority for school children and non-fiction

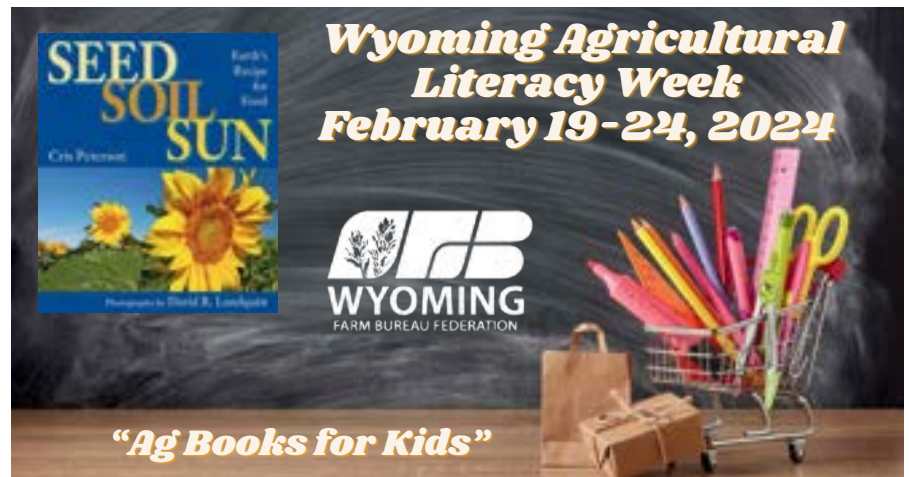
books are an important tool in teaching children about the world around them."

The grassroots strength of the Farm Bureau Federation enables the "Ag Books for Kids" project to reach across the great state of Wyoming. This year the county Farm Bureau Federations purchased 710 books to donate to Wyoming elementary schools.

"Our book donations provide accurate information about agriculture that otherwise may not be readily available," Fornstrom said.

"Accurate teaching materials are the foundation of education," he continued. "Without these books our youth may have an inaccurate understanding of where our food comes from and how it is produced."

Weston County Rancher Tucker Hamilton is the WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher



Committee State Chair. Hamilton sees great value in educating Wyoming's youth about agriculture through this program.

"Students in public education rarely learn about where their food comes from," Hamilton said. "The Ag Books for Kids program is an excellent opportunity to fix this by directly educating and providing resources for these kids to learn about agriculture."

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 to encourage use of the book and provide application opportunities for what is learned. The 2024 contests are: Coloring Contest for kindergarten and first graders; Poster Contest for second and third graders; and a Marketing Ad Contest for fourth and fifth graders. Contest rules/details are available at wyfb.org. The county contest deadline is March 29, 2024.

Farmer and rancher volunteer members often conduct classroom book read-

ings and activities to give students an opportunity to meet an actual farmer or rancher and learn directly from them about the food they grow. "It is super important that we take the time to go into classrooms at least once a year to support this program," Hamilton said. "The Ag Books for Kids is such a great program."

"We have taught kids about farming, where popcorn comes from, and about some of the products made from soybeans," Hamilton concluded. "These are exciting topics for them as they eat food every day and now every time they eat popcorn they will tell their parents about how it is grown and remember the time a Farm Bureau member came to their class and read that one book to them, or the picture that they colored."

Just as our policy development process begins at the grassroots level, so does the strength of the "Ag Books for Kids" program. Thank you to all the county Farm Bureau Federation volunteer members who give of their time to share agriculture with Wyoming students. ■

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County Farm Bureau Federation Scholarships

Below is general (UNOFFICIAL) information on county Farm Bureau Federation scholarships. Please refer to the scholarship applications for complete rules and details. County Farm Bureau Federation contacts are available at www.wyfb.org at the "Get Involved" tab.

Albany (Deadline March 31, 2024)

Up to four scholarships (\$1,500, \$1,000, \$500, \$500) open to high school seniors and students at any post-secondary facility in the state of Wyoming. Must be an Albany County High School or Home School graduate. Application available online at wyfb.org or at county Farm Bureau office, county Extension office and Rock River and Laramie High Schools. Farm Bureau Federation member children preferred but not a requirement.

Big Horn (Deadline March 30, 2024)

Up to four \$400 scholarships; available to high school seniors or any continuing students working for a degree in an Ag-related area; available at all county High Schools or by contacting Farm Bureau office in Greybull.

Campbell (Deadline March 1, 2024)

Two \$2,500 scholarships; available at FB offices, schools and wyfb.org.

Carbon (Deadline April 15, 2024)

Two or more scholarships to members of a value of \$750 or more and no less than two \$500 cash scholarships to members/non-members. Available for graduating seniors or continuing education in college or trade school. Preference to members or children of members and individuals pursuing agriculture-related fields. Applications are available at the local schools and at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Carbon County page.

Converse (Deadline March 1, 2024)

Three \$1,000 scholarships; open to members' children for graduating seniors and college students. Available at either county Farm Bureau office; at Douglas and Glenrock High School Guidance offices; and at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Converse County page.

Crook (Deadline March 18, 2024)

Two merit-based scholarships of \$2000 and \$1500 for first and second place respectively. Applicants must be either a graduating senior from an accredited Crook County High School, Home School, Virtual School, or have a certificate of high school graduation/diploma OR a current college student. Applicant or applicant's parents/guardians must be current Crook County Farm Bureau Federation members, paid by March 1. Scholarship applications may be picked up at the Farm Bureau office at 109 N 3rd St, Sundance, Wyoming 82729 and also from the high school counselors or at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Crook County page.

Fremont (Deadline June 1, 2024)

Fremont County Farm Bureau Federation offers scholarships. In order to be eligible, the student must be a Fremont County High School senior whose parents are current paid Regular Farm Bureau Federation members. It is preferred that applicants are entering an Agriculture field. This can be used for those entering college or a vocational institute. Applications will be reviewed by the Fremont County Farm Bureau Federation Board and a recipient will be chosen. Please submit a letter of application about yourself and your future plans to Fremont County Farm Bureau Federation-115 North 5th Street East., Riverton, WY 82501. Questions call 544-2296.

Goshen (Deadline April 1, 2024)

At least one \$500 Goshen County FBF scholarship open to 1) high school seniors who are continuing their education through a college or a trade school; and 2) continuing college students. Must meet the requirements which include a Farm Bureau Federation regular membership by family or individual; preference given to applicants pursuing Ag-related degrees. The Chuck Curry Memorial Scholarship in the amount of \$500 to be awarded to a continuing college student having completed one or more years who meets the requirements which includes Farm Bureau Federation regular membership by family or individual and demonstrate an agriculture focused career path. Applications available at county FB office and online at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Goshen County page.

Hot Springs (Deadline April 7, 2024)

One \$1,500 scholarship; may be divided into multiple scholarships at discretion of board; available to students pursuing ag-related course; preference to Farm Bureau Federation families; available at Hot Springs County Farm Bureau office, at the HSCHS Counselors' office and from the HSCHS Ag Instructor.

Johnson (Deadline April 1, 2024)

A minimum of two \$500 scholarships; open to children of Farm Bureau Federation members (graduating seniors or college students); scholarships for students continuing education (2+ years in school) in the amount of \$750 (students age 24 and above must have their own active membership); available at county FB offices and schools and at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Johnson County page.

Laramie (Deadline May 1, 2024)

Offering 3 scholarships in the amounts of \$1,500; \$1,000; and \$500. Open to graduating seniors whose parents are regular Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation members. The applications are due to the county Farm Bureau Federation by May 1. Applications available at wyfb.org (Tabs: Get Involved/County Farm Bureau Federations) on the Laramie County page. Additionally, offering continuing education scholarships of \$500 throughout the year.

Lincoln (Deadline March 25, 2024)

Three \$500 scholarships; children of Farm Bureau Federation members in college or graduating seniors with seniors receiving first pick; available at Farm Bureau Insurance and School Counselor Offices.

Niobrara (Deadline April 1, 2024)

Two \$500 scholarships; available to children of Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation members; graduating seniors and college students are eligible; available at the county FB office.

Park (Deadline April 1, 2024)

Two \$750 scholarships. Must attend a Wyoming College or University; preference will be given to Northwest College. Renewable if grades are kept above 2.5 semester average. Open to any Park County

Farm Bureau Federation Member or children of members. Application available at all Park County high schools and the Cody and Powell Farm Bureau offices.

Platte (Deadline April 1, 2024)

Amount varies; available at schools; open to children of Platte County Farm Bureau Federation members who are first year students or continuing education students.

Sheridan (Deadline April 1, 2024)

2-3 \$2,000 scholarships depending upon number of applications; must be a Sheridan County graduate and parents must hold a federation membership; available at county FB offices and schools.

Sublette (Deadline March 1, 2024)

Two \$500 scholarships for seniors; one for each high school (Big Piney and Pinedale). Given to children of FB members; preference is given to those seeking agriculture major. Applications available at high schools.

Sweetwater (Deadline March 15, 2024)

T S Taliaferro Scholarship. One \$500 scholarship; open to children of Farm Bureau Federation regular members; available at schools and county Farm Bureau offices.

Uinta (Deadline April 15, 2024)

Return to either county FB office; One \$500 scholarship; available at county FB offices, schools or contact Kristi Ellis at 307.782.7659.

Washakie (Deadline April 1, 2024)

Amount varies, generally three \$500 scholarships; FBF member children preferred but not a requirement; Ag majors preferred, but not a requirement. Applications available at the high school and the County Farm Bureau office.

Weston (Deadline May 1, 2024)

Three \$750 scholarships; applicant parents or applicant must be current members of Weston County Farm Bureau Federation. Applicant must have graduated in Weston County, hold a High School or equivalent degree, or be in a graduating class at the time of application, or be a resident (6 months or more) of Weston County. ■

AFBF POLICIES... From Page 1

"Delegates demonstrated their readiness to seize the opportunities and take on the challenges facing agriculture," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "It's crucial that Congress pass a new farm bill and address the labor shortage in 2024. The policy set forth by Farm Bureaus in all 50 states and Puerto Rico will guide AFBF in its efforts through the process. We look forward to making our members' unified voice heard as they work to ensure a strong food supply for America's families."

Delegates to the American Farm Bureau business meeting voted to create new policy to address the growth of artificial intelligence in agriculture. AI has the potential to enhance farming practices and conserve resources, but privacy rights must be respected.

Recognizing the challenges of maintaining a strong agriculture workforce, delegates voted to stabilize wage rates for guest workers and revise H-2A and H-2B programs to better meet the needs of America's farms.

They reaffirmed their support for increasing reference prices in the farm bill and maintaining a strong crop insurance program, including an expansion of eligibility to ensure more commodities are covered.

On foreign investment, delegates added policy in support of additional funding to improve data collection on the foreign ownership of agricultural land. Delegates also voted to support the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. reviewing foreign investments in U.S. agribusinesses, natural resources and real estate.

Delegates called for changes to the contract poultry pay system

to ensure long-term economic sustainability for farmers, and to require more transparency from chicken companies.

On trade, delegates added policy to recommend Congress investigate fertilizer supply chain outages and tariffs placed on imports.

Beyond policy changes, AFBF President Zippy Duvall and Vice President Scott VanderWal were unanimously re-elected for another two-year term.

AFBF appreciates the more than 80 speakers and more than 4,500 registered attendees who helped make the 2024 Convention such a success.

Planning for the American Farm Bureau's 2025 Convention has already begun. Mark your calendar to meet us Jan. 24-29, 2025, in San Antonio, Texas. ■

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship opportunities

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship deadline is March 1, 2024.

Nine scholarships totaling \$5,500 are offered each year. Scholarships are available for high school graduates and continuing education students enrolled in qualifying college or trade programs. Applications are available on our website (www.wyfb.org/GetInvolved/Education) or at county Farm Bureau offices. For questions, contact Diane "Dee" Brewer at 307.721.7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org. ■

The people of the Farm Bureau Federation

Meet the volunteer leader: Laura Fornstrom

County: Laramie
Farm Bureau Federation Leadership Position(s):

- Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation President

Past Positions:

- County FBF vice president and WyFB YF&R Committee State Vice Chair

Wyoming Agriculture: Describe farm background.

Fornstrom: When I was three my family moved to a farm where we raised cattle, pigs, chickens and also had a horse. My father farmed for another family but also had his own family dryland farm. We continued to live on a farm until I was a junior in high school. My two sisters and I helped out on the farm by pulling rye, feeding the animals and moving equipment. When I was 11 my parents bought the local Feed & Grain, where I helped during harvest by collecting samples and testing them. In high school I was active in our FFA chapter by showing a horse, being an officer and judging horses. Once I married Todd, I have been involved with his ag operation in multiple ways from running a combine, helping manage 100 ewes, driving trucks, to helping out with office work and a vast variety of other jobs. Around 2008 we partnered in a feed store in Cheyenne and I assisted in hauling feed, and working in the store.

Wyoming Agriculture: Family, education, hobbies, other background.

Fornstrom: My husband is Todd Fornstrom and together we have four children, Taylen Mollett (Shawn), Wyatt Fornstrom (Alex), Sydnie Fornstrom and Maddie Fornstrom. I'm also blessed with some extended family, Ishmael, Alexis and Brian DePaulitte. I went to NJC in Sterling, Colo. for one year before I decided to be a stay-at-home mom/wife. Once the children were in school, I was accepted into Wyoming LEAD's class X which was a wonderful and challenging opportunity that taught me more about agriculture in Wyoming and leadership. Another adventure for me was coaching high school girls basketball and junior high track. For the past eleven years I have been at Pine Bluffs High School as a job coach/paraprofessional. In my spare time I enjoy paddleboarding, kayaking and drawing.

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

Fornstrom: In our first year of marriage Todd and I went to the state convention and since then we have been involved in some way. My leadership started with being county vice president. So, for the past 26 years we have been part of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation family.

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

Fornstrom: Having open spaces, reliable food sources and family traditions are important. In order to keep our way of living around we must stand up for it and the only way to do so is by getting involved.

Wyoming Agriculture: Share an example of a policy that has had a positive impact on your farm.

Fornstrom: Most currently the right to repair policy, which allows owners of equipment to purchase the specialized tooling to work on the equipment. Being a good distance away from major shops is inconvenient and if we were to have that as the only option this would take away productive days in the field.



Advocating for agriculture as a family. Maddie, Sydnie, Laura and Todd Fornstrom and Shawn and Taylen Mollett.



Farming time with Laura and her dog Kenai.



Laura and Todd Fornstrom with their children at Wyatt's wedding. L to r: Shawn and Taylen Mollett; Maddie; Alex and Wyatt; Laura and Todd; and Sydnie.



A young Fornstrom family at the 2004 WyFB Annual Meeting where Todd and Laura Fornstrom were named the 2004 WyFB YF&R Achievement Award winners. Todd and Laura are holding twins Sydnie and Maddie with Wyatt and Taylen standing.



Family and Farm Bureau. Todd (left) and Laura (right) pose for a photo with United States Senator John Barrasso (center) and daughter Sydnie (second from left) and extended family member Alexis DePaulitte (second from right).

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

Fornstrom: Be active, whether it's in your county meetings, your county fair, or attending the state convention. There are so many different ways to make a difference. Just a little bit of time can make an enormous difference.

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

Fornstrom: CO2 sequestration project in Laramie county has brought up questions on eminent domain and private property rights through these explorations.

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

Fornstrom: Each and every member is extremely important. We all have different ideas and thoughts and to have them all come together makes our grassroots organization what it is. ■

*Cooking with the
Modern Ranch Wife*

Salisbury Steaks

Recipe by Connie Werner

FOR MORE RECIPES VISIT: WWW.MODERNRANCHWIFE.COM



This is a great recipe to feed a crowd. It doubles easily and freezes well.

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| FOR PATTIES | GRAVY |
| 2 lbs. ground beef | 1/4 cup reserved grease |
| 1 egg | 1/2 cup flour |
| 3/4 tsp salt | 4 cups water |
| 1/4 tsp pepper | 2 tsp Watkins Beef Gravy and Soup Base |
| 1/4 cup Watkins Beef Gravy and Soup Base | 1 tsp Watkins Onion Gravy and Soup Base |
| 1/4 cup Watkins Onion Gravy and Soup Base | 1 tsp Watkins Beef Gravy and Soup Base |
| 1/2 cup water | 1/4 cup Ketchup |
| 1/2 cup Progresso Italian Style Breadcrumbs | 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce | 1/4 tsp salt |
| oil | 1/4 tsp pepper |

PREPARATION:

1. In a large bowl, mix together all the beef patty ingredients
2. Heat 1/4 inch oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Shape meat into patties and cook until brown on both sides. Transfer to a dish covered with paper towel to catch grease.
3. Drain remaining grease from pan into a bowl. Measure 1/3 cup of grease and put it back into the skillet. Combine the water and soup bases.
4. Add 1/2 cup of flour and stir until all of the grease is combined. Add the water and soup base mixture. Stir with a whisk until all lumps are removed. Turn heat to low and add the rest of the gravy ingredients. Add more water if too thick. Adjust salt and pepper to your liking.
5. In a 13x9 inch dish layer the patties. Pour gravy over the patties and make sure all are coated with gravy. Put into a 300° oven for 45 minutes. Serve with mashed potatoes and your favorite vegetable. Enjoy!

■ FOR MORE RECIPES VISIT: www.modernranchwife.com

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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



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



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





Membership appreciation

Recognizing 25 years of membership. The Albany County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation shared their appreciation to First Interstate Bank of Laramie for supporting agriculture with their 25 years of membership in the county organization. County board members Todd and Colette Christensen and Sharleen Castle joined the bank employees at a morning meeting in January. The board had homemade cinnamon rolls, hot chocolate and a WyFB snow scraper for each employee. Shown here is First Interstate Bank of Laramie President Randi Downham and Sharleen Castle, Albany County Ranch & Farm Bureau Federation board member.



Whether you are a farmer, rancher or a consumer of food, membership is a good investment to secure stability of agriculture here in Wyoming. Membership works to keep agriculture strong in Wyoming and agriculture works to keep Wyoming strong. Learn more at wyfb.org. ■



Big Horn County FBF donates welding helmets to Lovell FFA

SUBMITTED BY TIM BECK, BIG HORN COUNTY FBF

The Big Horn County Farm Bureau Federation proudly supports youth in agriculture. Last fall they donated 24 new welding helmets to the Lovell FFA Chapter. Shown in this picture at left is Lovell FFA Advisor Nick Edelman and Farm Bureau members John and Margaret Adams with Lovell FFA students. TIM BECK PHOTO. ■



Membership growth recognized by AFBF

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) exceeded the 2023 membership goal of 10,002 members. Thank you to all of our members across the state for your support in the work we do for agriculture and rural Wyoming. In celebration of membership growth and success, the American Farm Bureau Federation presents state Farm Bureaus with a commemorative membership growth pin that is American made, 24K gold-plated with a precious ruby stone.

WyFB President Todd Fornstrom received the pin on behalf of WyFB from AFBF Vice President Scott VanderWal last December in Washington, D.C. At the December resolutions meeting in D.C., Fornstrom attended meetings with colleagues from across the nation to review proposed policies submitted from all fifty states and Puerto Rico for the 2024 AFBF Annual Convention that took place in January. AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION PHOTO. ■



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LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW... From Page 1

State Senator Cheri Steinmetz serves as Chairman of the Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee, Chairman of the Select Water Committee, and Vice Chairman of the Education Committee. Senator Steinmetz emphasized the protection of individual rights is of utmost importance in every issue considered by Wyoming lawmakers.

“As lawmakers we must protect the individual rights of our constituents to life, liberty and the use of their property,” Senator Steinmetz said. “We must answer the plea to keep more of their hard-earned money in their pockets rather than use it to participate in the global green Ponzi scheme and other ill-conceived government notations running rampant under the Biden administration.”

Senator Steinmetz said federal land use plans, eminent domain and wildlife damage are top issues for the Agriculture, State and Public Lands and Water Resources Committee for the 2024 session.

“The Rock Springs Resource Management Plan proposed by the Bureau of Land Management has clearly taken center stage during the interim work of the Agriculture, State and Public Lands & Water Resources Committee,” Senator Steinmetz said. “The result of committee work to address the Rock Springs RMP, and other issues with the Federal Government, is SF13 Federal land use plans-legal actions authorized. This legislation appropriates \$50 million dollars to a legislative legal action account in order to hire outside counsel to bring legal action against the Federal Government to protect the State of Wyoming from erroneous applications of Federal laws, land use plans and halt Federal land purchases

within the State. The Senate File also reasserts state sovereignty by citing the enacting clause which admits Wyoming into the union on equal footing.”

Eminent domain continues to be a concern for landowners leading to two committee sponsored bills. “As we see millions of dollars available for alternative unreliable energy sources, we must protect private property rights as we navigate ways to push back on the Biden AOC “Green New Deal” designed to create scarcity where there actually is none,” Senator Steinmetz explained. “In the last legislative session Governor Gordon vetoed a bill that would have placed a moratorium on the use of eminent domain for wind energy collector lines. This action by the executive branch has led to SF10 Eminent domain energy collector systems and SF11 Eminent domain energy collector systems-amendments.”

According to Senator Steinmetz, SF11 is a prohibition on private for-profit companies using eminent domain. “Under SF11, only public utilities would still have the ability to use eminent domain,” she explained.

“SF10 requires negotiations and finalized compensation agreements with 85 percent of landowners and surface area to be in place before eminent domain can be employed,” she continued.

Wyoming landowners provide habitat for Wyoming’s wildlife. Herd objectives in many areas of the state far exceed the state’s objective numbers thus impacting forage, fence lines and animal health. The damage from increased elk populations across the state precipitated a committee bill, HB60, to address damages.

“HB60, Excess wildlife population damage, extends compensation to range land that is damaged by excess wildlife populations,” Senator Steinmetz said.

Regarding the budget, Senator Steinmetz stated funding for the State Board of Control needs to move back to the State Engineer’s Office budget.

“In order for funding to meet the year after year needs of Irrigation and Municipal use of the Wyoming Water Development Program it is extremely important that the budget for the Board of Control of \$14 million per biennium be paid for through the budget of the State Engineer’s office rather than continue to be taken out of project monies designated to help local communities,” she explained. “This was a change made during a time when funds were short, now that is no longer the case so we should return to normal operations of the WWDC program rather than fund a Constitutional office of the State with project funds.”

According to Steinmetz, foreign ownership of land and energy resources remain two key issues that must be addressed.

“We must take a proactive approach to the foreign ownership of land by countries who are known sponsors of terrorism,” Senator Steinmetz said. “Unfortunately, we are unable to rely on the Federal government to execute its Constitutional duty to provide for the common defense and secure the border, therefore our enemies are among us.”

“This requires the State of Wyoming to be diligent in protecting citizens, critical infrastructure, and military bases,” she continued. “We need to understand the threats we face, take them seriously and defeat them.”

Regarding energy resources, Senator Steinmetz affirmed America needs to get back to energy independence and with Wyoming’s clean and abundant energy resources Wyoming should lead the nation in affordable and reliable energy.

“Outside pressures should not dictate Wyoming energy policy, rather, the free market principles of a willing seller and buyer,” Senator Steinmetz said. “Afterall, who doesn’t want reliable power, heat and water especially when it is 30 degrees below zero.”

“We must base public policy in truth. CO2 is not a pollutant; it is plant food and a basic building block of all life,” she continued. “So called “green” energy is not green, the carbon footprint to produce the components and keep them functioning as well as the impacts to landfills in the future are anything but environmentally friendly.”

“As China builds a coal fired power plant every 40 days, we enrich them, our enemies, by buying Chinese parts for solar panels and wind turbines while we weaken ourselves,” Senator Steinmetz explained. “Energy policies that hurt Wyoming industry, agriculture and citizens and weaken our ability to provide for ourselves must be stopped, not adopted.”

“We must continue to chart our own course, hold on to our convictions, stay true to our values and have the fortitude to resist well-funded self-destruction,” Senator Steinmetz concluded.

Wyoming Agriculture readers can keep up with legislative happenings and read specific bills at www.wyoleg.gov. Make sure to also tune your radios to the weekly WyFB legislative radio show on Northern Ag Network each Thursday during the session. If you miss the show on the radio, you can find the recording at wyfb.org (“News/Radio Programs” tab). ■



Senator Cheri Steinmetz



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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.

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Jennifer & Quinn Larson (REG), Gillette; Robert Innes/Innes Ranch LLC (REG), Gillette; Jody Ewing, Gillette; Don Hamm (REG), Rozet; Roken Sorenson, Gillette

CARBON

Karlie & David Boomgarden, Elk Mountain; Andrew Kuster, Saratoga; Seth Eacret, Saratoga; Kristen & Brad Dirck, Rawlins

CONVERSE

Edward Carter, Douglas; Tim Feeback, Glenrock; Shirley Strock, Douglas

CROOK

Daniel Odegard/ HT Land LLC (REG), Hulett; Joseph Harvell, Sundance; Marvin Nielsen/Nielsen Harvesting (REG), Alva

FREMONT

Jade Barrett, Riverton; Stanley McDowell, Lander; Carly Crain (REG), Lander; Esther Jarvis (REG), Kinnear; Linda & Douglas Hill, Riverton; Janet Morgan, Riverton

GOSHEN

Martin Winchell (REG), Torrington; Steve Beitz (REG), Veteran

JOHNSON

Terry Cochran, Buffalo; Lois & Doug Collins, Buffalo; Bonnie Klasinski, Buffalo

LARAMIE

Catherine Darnell, Cheyenne; Rene & Charles Dahlin, Cheyenne; Peter Seekell, Cheyenne; Joshua Stoltenberg, Cheyenne; Sal Bologna (REG), Cheyenne; Alexander Botero, Cheyenne; Clay Wickham, Cheyenne; Elizabeth Wolf, Cheyenne; Cayetano Sayao, Cheyenne; Leetta McMillan, Cheyenne; Troy Salsgiver, Cheyenne; Lindsay & Craig Mergelman, Cheyenne; Andrea Stokes, Cheyenne; Austin Sussex, Cheyenne; Rob Sanders, Cheyenne; Laura Phipps, Cheyenne

LINCOLN

Rachelle Beckman, Kemmerer; David Trachimowicz, Alpine; Kristy & Henry Brazure, Kemmerer; Maryann Pittman (REG), Etna; KayLynn & Joseph Nield (REG), Afton; WYRR LLC (REG), Evanston

NATRONA

Krista Joy, Casper; Frank Moore, Evansville; Kay & Douglas Shaver, Casper; Virginia Jondal, Casper; Renee Root, Casper

PARK

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PLATTE

Anthony Testolin/ Thirty One Bar Ranch Co, Castle Rock, CO; Mark Shanz, Wheatland

SHERIDAN

Jean Drog, Sheridan; Patricia & Travis Taylor, Sheridan; E Mill Iron Ranch LLC (REG), Sheridan; Camielle & Chad Turley (REG), Sheridan; Matthew Flicek, Sheridan; Jolene Olson, Sheridan; Sean Weaver (REG), Alva, FL; Dan Dowdy, Dayton; Mandy Phillips, Sheridan; William Doenz (REG), Sheridan; Carson Tanner, Sheridan; Parker Filius, Sheridan; Sarah Compton, Cheyenne

SUBLETTE

Jennifer & Michael Klaren (REG), Pinedale

SWEETWATER

Jon Douglas Jensen, Cheyenne; Kirt Christensen, Rock Springs; Kim Kikuts & Vicki Martin, Rock Springs; Tyler Hofstad, Casper; Loni Buller, Rock Springs; Bradly McCollum (REG), Green River; Jose Iturrio, Rock Springs

TETON

William Conley, Bondurant; Erika Stevens, Wilson; John Turner, Moose; Diane Peterson, Jackson; Amy & Shawn Asbell, Jackson; David Yoder, Teton Village

UINTA

David Rand, Lyman; Michael Collins, Mountain View

WASHAKIE

Minerva Martinez, Worland; Mary Nutter & Louis Falgoust, Thermopolis; Sunshine McDonald, Worland; Yolanda Campos, Worland; Calvin Little, Worland

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March 1, 2024
Deadline

LEGISLATIVE MEETING... From Page 1

Thursday afternoon activities include remarks from WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and state legislative briefings from WyFB Staff Brett Moline and Ken Hamilton. Membership awards will also be presented to county Farm Bureau Federations.

"The meeting provides a great opportunity for members to connect with legislative happenings as well as listen to speakers on a variety of topics impacting agriculture," Ken Hamilton, WyFB Executive Vice President, said.

"Many Wyomingites are familiar with Meteorologist Don Day's in-depth podcast which provides viewers with the background about why he thinks the weather will do what it does," Hamilton continued. Day will speak at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 15 with his presentation "It's Weather, Not Climate."

Thursday evening provides one-on-one visits with legislators and elected officials during a Legislative Mixer produced by the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation and the Wyoming Rural Electric Association. This event will be held at the Cheyenne Frontier Days Event Center at Frontier Park.

A speaker's forum on Friday morning, February 16, begins at 8:00 a.m. with Wyoming Department of Revenue Director Brenda Henson. "With the focus on Wyoming's tax issues, Brenda will provide background on what the Department of Revenue does as well as how people's tax bill is developed," Hamilton explained.

The next speaker at 9:00 a.m. will be Slade Franklin, Technical Services Division Manager with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA). "With a court decision ordering the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to develop new pesticide labeling requirements to protect endangered species, Slade will discuss how the WDA is trying to ensure some commonsense rules will protect Wyoming farmers and ranchers from unrealistic proposals by the EPA," Hamilton explained.

The third speaker at 10:30 a.m. will be Sheila Foertsch, Wyoming Trucking Association Executive Director. "Since just about everything we purchase in Wyoming, as well as everything we produce in agriculture, moves by truck, hearing from Sheila will give members insight into issues affecting the trucking industry and what those impacts are to our state," Hamilton said.

The meeting will adjourn at 11:30 a.m. The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation's "Ag Books for Kids" program works through our county Farm Bureau Federations with school districts all over the state of Wyoming to bring accurate agriculture books to Wyoming students. Following the meeting, WyFB members are invited to participate in the "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy" Proclamation Signing at 2 p.m. with Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon to help kick-off recognition of this effort.

Kerin Clark, WyFB YF&R Coordinator, said that we are excited to have the Governor once again recognize the importance of agriculture literacy in Wyoming. "This year marks the 17th year that Wyoming Governors have issued a proclamation dedicated to celebrating agricultural literacy and the "Ag Books for Kids" program," Clark said. For 2024, the WyFB YF&R Committee selected "Seed Soil Sun" by Cris Peterson as the book of the year.

Check below and www.wyfb.org (Events tab) for a meeting agenda.

"We look forward to members from around the state traveling to Wyoming's capital city in February," Hamilton concluded.

Pre-Registration: Please email registrations by February 2 to Brooke Roes at broes@wyfb.org. The pre-registration form is available at wyfb.org with the agenda.

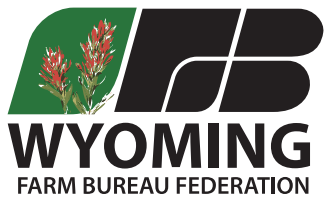
Hotel Reservations: The room block has closed. ■

Check below and www.wyfb.org (Events tab) for a meeting agenda.

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Hotel Reservations: The room block has closed. ■



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

LEGISLATIVE MEETING AGENDA

February 15 & 16, 2024 • Laramie County Community College Center for Conferences and Institutes (1400 E. College Drive, Cheyenne WY)

Thursday, February 15

- 11:00 a.m.** – Registration
- 12:00 p.m.** – Opening luncheon with remarks from Senator Cheri Steinmetz and Representative John Eklund, Senate and House Ag Committee Chairs - luncheon sponsored by Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company
- 1:15 p.m.** – Opening comments by WyFB President Todd Fornstrom
- 1:30 p.m.** – Don Day, Meteorologist - "It's Weather, Not Climate"

- 2:15 p.m.** – Legislative update by Brett Moline & Ken Hamilton
 - 3:00 p.m.** – Membership Awards presented by WyFB State Membership Chairman Kevin Baars
 - 6:30 p.m.** – Legislative Mixer - co-hosted with Wyoming Rural Electric Association (Cheyenne Frontier Days Event Center, 1230 W. 8th Ave.)
- Friday, February 16**
- 8:00 a.m.** – Brenda Henson, Director, Wyoming Department of Revenue

- 9:00 a.m.** – Slade Franklin, Technical Services Division Manager, Wyoming Department of Agriculture
- 10:00 a.m.** – Break
- 10:30 a.m.** – Sheila Foertsch, Executive Director, Wyoming Trucking Association
- 11:30 a.m.** – Adjourn
- 2:00 p.m.** – "Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week" Proclamation signing with Governor Mark Gordon (Wyoming Capitol Building) ~ WyFB members are invited to participate ~

WBC teamed up with the Wyoming Hunger Initiative, 307 Meat Co. and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association to provide beef sticks to children with food insecurity.

The Beef for Backpacks program is now in 20 Wyoming counties and is projected to provide over 200,000 beef sticks this school year.

If you are interested in donating beef, please contact Olivia Sanchez at the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, (307) 638-3942 or Trista Ostrom at the Wyoming Hunger Initiative, (307) 777-7398.



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AFBF CONVENTION... From Page 1

Wyoming had 24 attendees at this year's convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. Networking, inspiration, knowledge and Farm Bureau family were common themes mentioned for convention takeaways.

"One of my favorite things about convention was the title, "New Frontiers," said Zack Guild. "I really liked the focus on the future and embracing new technologies with optimism."

A first time AFBF Convention attendee, Guild is a Uinta County rancher who serves on the WyFB YF&R Committee. "Every day you hear about ways to implement technology in agriculture," Guild continued. "It is really important to look forward and embrace technology with positivity. It is important for the survival of agriculture."

Guild used an example from his family's ranch with the implementation of a center pivot for irrigation. "This change from flood irrigation was very beneficial for our ranch and possibly even critical as it produces 1/3 of the hay we use," he said.

Guild's wife Hannah stated while everyone has different experiences in life there is something for everyone at the convention. "You feel really unified because we are all here to help improve American agriculture," Hannah Guild said. "All of us will get something different from the sessions to take back to our farm or ranch. Together we can contribute to American agriculture."

Uinta County cattle and sheep rancher Vance Broadbent enjoyed his first national convention. "It was very well done and a good experience," Broadbent stated. "I was pleased to see that Farm Bureau is aware of our issues we face in Western Wyoming."

"Farm Bureau Family" is a term you hear a lot of people use when explaining their experience. With nearly 4,500 people at the 2024 Convention, you could hear a pin drop in the room when attendees joined together to pray and say the Pledge of Allegiance in the opening general session. The same goes for the voting delegate session room filled with nearly 500 people praying together and reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in unison to start the business session.

Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation President Laura Fornstrom expressed the importance of the Farm Bureau family. "It is important to make those connections not just locally but across the nation," Fornstrom said. "You never know when you are going to need those connections but also just to know you aren't alone in what you do in agriculture and life."

"Attending these conventions is rejuvenating and exciting," Fornstrom continued. "The support and the family behind you to get the work completed for our family and our agriculture businesses is incredible."

WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill echoed the importance of networking. "It is great to see those friendships you've developed and when you come back each year to convention you rekindle those friendships and it is like you are talking to your neighbor," Coxbill explained. "The camaraderie and opportunity the Farm Bureau family brings is inspiring."

As a former AFBF YF&R National Chair, Coxbill says it is rewarding to see new leaders experiencing the leadership development opportunities afforded by Farm Bureau.

According to Coxbill, serving as a volunteer leader is an incredible honor and very humbling. "Attending these confer-



WyFB Executive Vice President Ken Hamilton interviews with Northern Ag Network's Andy Schwab to share agriculture's story and discuss new frontiers at the 2024 AFBF Convention. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



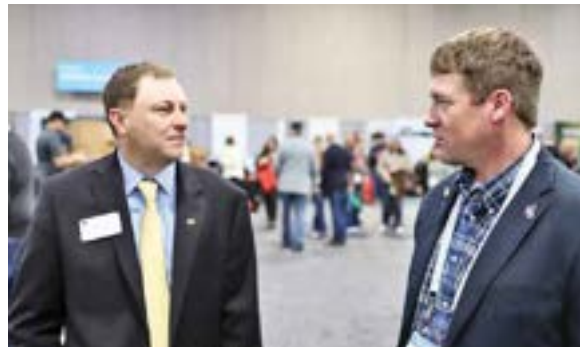
American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall and wife Jennifer with WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and wife Laura at the 2024 AFBF Convention. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



WyFB President Todd Fornstrom interviews with Western Ag Network's Russell Nemetz at the 2024 AFBF Convention. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Giving back through the Utah Farm Bureau's Miracle of Agriculture Foundation project. Many hands make light work...the hands of Farm Bureau members and staff from across the nation worked together to pack 5,000 boxes of food for those facing hunger. The original goal to fill two semi-loads with food boxes was surpassed when four semi-loads were filled during the 2024 AFBF Convention. Wyoming members and staff joined in the effort. Shown here are WyFB Office Manager Dee Brewer; WyFB YF&R Committee Vice Chair Cody Alps; a fellow Farm Bureau member; and Brooke Roes, WyFB Membership Coordinator. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



Conversations with the Farm Bureau family are common at the trade show and throughout the AFBF Convention. Shown here is Joel Currier, AFBF YF&R Committee Member, visiting with WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill. Coxbill and his wife, Sammie, are former AFBF YF&R Committee members with Cole serving as the AFBF YF&R National Chair in 2016. *KERIN CLARK PHOTO.*



WyFB President Todd Fornstrom (left) was recognized during AFBF Annual Convention general session for his four years of service on the AFBF Board of Directors. AFBF President Zippy Duvall thanked Fornstrom for serving from January 2019-January 2023. *AFBF PHOTO.*

ences, I always come back more energized and ready to tackle projects and challenges," he said. "The opportunities to grow and learn as a leader and a farmer are invaluable. The presentations are intriguing and the opportunity to represent Wyoming as a voting delegate is humbling and exciting."

Uinta County's Justin and Kristi Ellis valued reconnecting with the Farm Bureau national family. As former AFBF YF&R Committee members, they value the leadership development opportunities provided through Farm Bureau. "Serving on the national YF&R Committee made me feel great investment in finding ways to continue agriculture and to recognize that networking is one of the key components to adding value for the individual leaders and their commitment to agriculture," Kristi Ellis said.

Justin Ellis added the connections made opened up opportunities to continue learning. "I know ranching but not farming," Ellis

explained. "Through my YF&R connections I was able to call our Farm Bureau family and ask farming questions and they knew exactly what I needed to do."

Networking assists with finding new ideas and motivation. "I get excited about what we can take back to our counties and how we can help bolster agriculture in our counties," said Kristi Ellis. "Finding new ways to get people involved in the organization are great conversations as well."

According to WyFB YF&R Committee Vice Chair Cody Alps, of Goshen County, the opportunities to better oneself and those around you are evident at the convention. "Being able to share and connect with people and help build each other up as well as ourselves is invaluable," said Alps.

One of Alps' key takeaways came from a keynote speaker who talked about becoming an expert on yourself and holding yourself accountable. "He challenged us to control

our own controllables and use that to inspire ourselves and thus others," Alps concluded.

Inspirational is how Campbell County Rancher Lex Geer described his first AFBF Convention. "It inspired me to tell my story on where I am with Farm Bureau and where I want to be," Geer said. "I was inspired to keep trudging forward in agriculture and working to keep agriculture alive in our states and in the world."

WyFB President Todd Fornstrom emphasized the significance of the American Farm Bureau to keep agriculture strong. "The importance of the American Farm Bureau is putting us on the national stage," Fornstrom said. "We are the center for a lot of issues that people may not realize. Whether it be water, endangered species, federal lands, labor or any other agriculture issues, we are working the front lines for America's farmers and ranchers."

"It was great having many of our Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation family members at convention this year," Fornstrom said. "National convention is a great place to connect, learn more about issues and industry trends, and get energized for the year ahead as we work for the good of agriculture."

"The convention is the culmination of the work that starts in our counties each year to guide the work of the organization," Fornstrom concluded. "It is an honor to represent our members policy voice in this final step of the grassroots policy development process." ■



Getting started in ag: Applied Risk Analytics Series from RightRisk.org

For those just starting out in production agriculture, dealing with the unexpected can be a big challenge. Unexpected challenges come in all shapes and sizes: Machinery breaks down, weather doesn't cooperate, livestock get sick, employees have issues and countless other unexpected events occur.

Dealing with unexpected challenges or risks that may arise, in whatever form they take, can be much easier with a risk management plan in place. As a new or beginning farmer or rancher, a comprehensive risk management plan should be one of the first things you develop for your operation. This can be a daunting task, however, because risk takes many forms across many different areas of production.

RightRisk.org was developed by academic professionals from UW and several other land-grant institutions as a risk management resource for producers, especially new and beginning operators. The primary goal is to help managers explore various risk management strategies and provide tools to evaluate those decisions.

RightRisk Analytics is a compilation of various risk management tools designed to help evaluate the effects of risk management decisions. The site includes several free analytics tools covering budgeting (from partial and enterprise to long-term whole-farm budgeting), forage leasing, risk strategy analysis and more. All these tools include an in-depth user guide with examples.

Many of the budgeting tools allow users to evaluate the effects of risk in the form of variables in each situation, like changing input costs or yield levels. Often, when producers develop budgets or use them to make decisions, assumptions are made about val-

ues such as the prices for commodities or inputs—or any other value associated with the budget.

The problem becomes when the best guess is wrong, which throws the projected results into question. The RightRisk analytics tools offer the ability to show and model the effects of risk by varying these values and generating associated probabilities.

Applied Risk Analytics

Building on the foundation of the risk analytics tools is the Applied Risk Analytics (ARA) section of RightRisk.org. The case studies listed under this tab showcase the various risk analytics available from RightRisk with producer profiles.

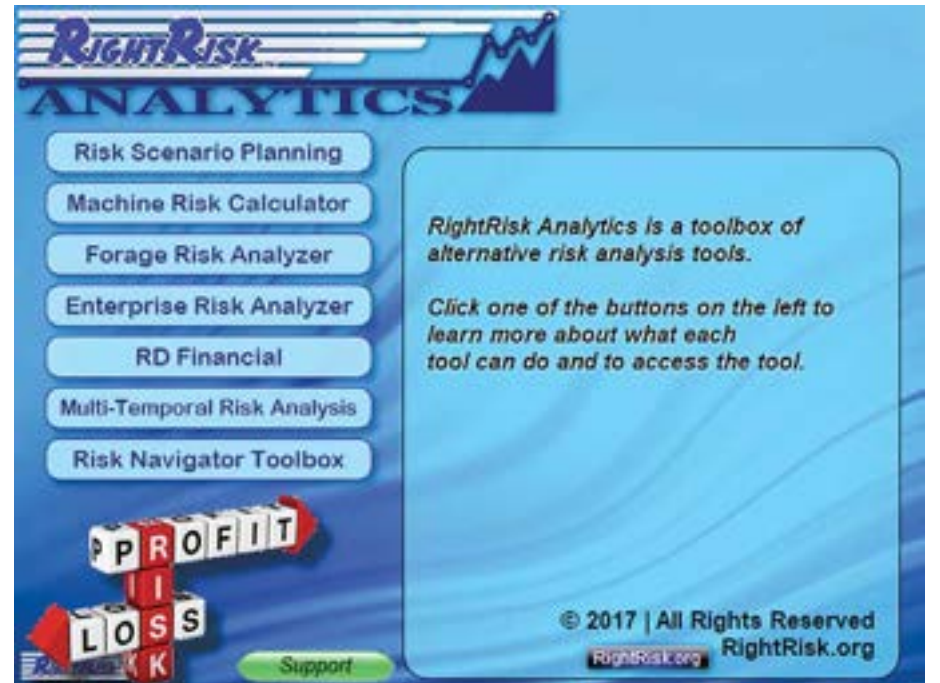
These realistic production examples demonstrate how the risk analytics can be used to examine risk management decision-making and chart the best management course going forward.

A wide range of production scenarios provides insights into different examples of Wyoming-based crop and livestock operations, from comparing crop insurance and leasing options to machinery purchases and comparisons, fertilizer application levels, and long-range risk evaluation.

Insurance Decision-making Case Studies

For most Wyoming farmers and ranchers, crop insurance has become an important part of risk management. Often it becomes necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of coverage, compare different coverage levels, or examine potential indemnities and other aspects of coverage.

RIGHT RISK ... Page 15

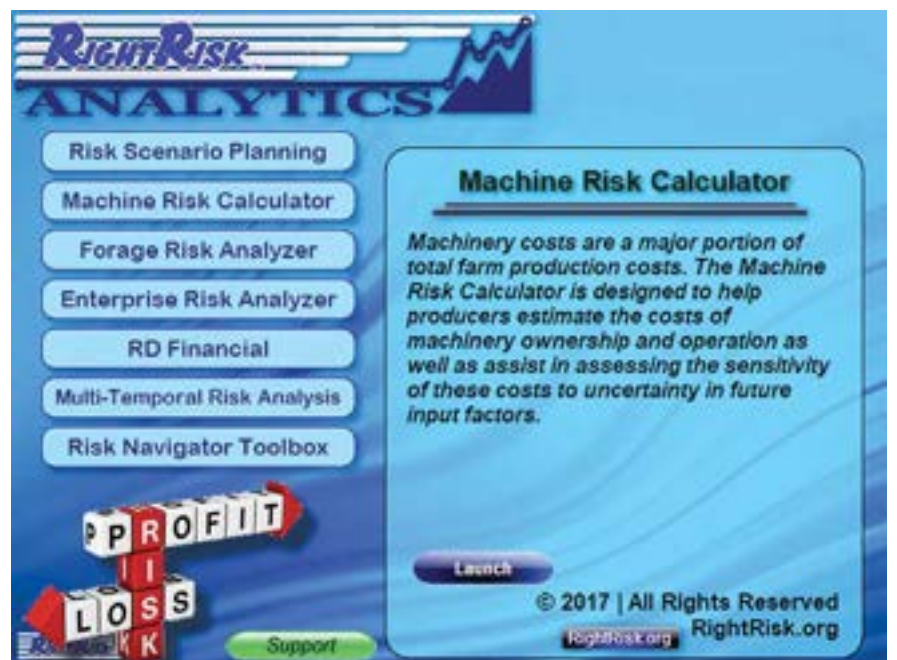


RIGHTRISK ANALYTICS

Visit RightRisk.org to download the RightRisk Analytics Toolbox and start using several useful tools for budgeting and quantifying risk in your operation.



The Multi-temporal risk analyzer (MTRA) was developed to examine management decisions over a long-term framework. MTRA provides probability analysis, accounting for the variables entered in the budgeting scenario. MTRA can be used to measure the effects of variability for a large number of factors for up to 20 years.



The Machine Risk Calculator (MRC) quantifies machinery and equipment costs. Once data is entered, the MRC can also estimate the risk sensitivity of these costs to future changes in input factors. This feature is especially useful because operating cost estimates often do not take uncertainty into account.



The Risk Scenario Planning (RSP) tool is designed to evaluate the inherent risk involved in the partial budgeting process. Instead of choosing one value, RSP allows users to examine a range of values (maximum, minimum and most likely) to determine the effects on the bottom line.

RIGHT RISK... From Page 14

Two ARA bulletins focus examples utilizing Pasture Range and Forage Rainfall Index (RI-PRF) insurance. These case studies use RightRisk tools to determine the effectiveness of the coverage, as well as evaluating the likelihood of indemnities over time using historical data.

In addition, the Multi-Temporal Risk Analyzer (MTRA) tool is used to assess the long-term effectiveness of implementing Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance, as well as managing price risk in a fed cattle operation.

Machinery Cost-focused Case Studies

Several ARA bulletins focus on production decisions related to machinery. Machinery is often one of the largest, if not the largest, expense for Wyoming farmers and ranchers. It is important to have a firm grasp of the risk implications of any potential change or decision involving machinery.

These bulletins focus on examples using the Machine Risk Calculator (MRC) tool and the Multi-Temporal Risk Analyzer (MTRA) tool. The MRC tool is designed to help estimate machinery and field operations costs, as well as estimate the risk sensitivity of those costs to changes in various factors. The MTRA tool helps users consider the long-term effects of machinery purchases and other management decisions by projecting results over a period of up to 20 years.

For example, one case study uses analytics to compare tillage systems and their potential risk management implications. The operating costs of each system are outlined, as well as the potential effects of switching over the long term. Another bulletin compares a round-bale versus square-bale haying system using

the MRC tool, which evaluates operating costs in addition to the purchase costs and associated benefits. A third case study walks the reader through a scenario considering the upgrade of an existing windrower and the potential increase in profitability.

Lease Arrangements and Fertilizer Decision Case Studies

The Forage Risk Analyzer (FRA) tool helps evaluate potential forage leases, helping all parties involved to understand the full value of all aspects of the arrangement. The FRA tool is highlighted in one ARA bulletin, which details the use of the tool for a potential forage lease. The FRA tool allows for up to a six-party lease, can be used for six different classes of land (irrigated, pasture, etc.), and includes a risk sensitivity analysis to account for potential variability of selected factors.

Another ARA case study evaluates fertilizer application decisions.

The fertilizer application tools from RightRisk.org are used to assess the optimum rate of fertilizer application and to address the risk implications of the decisions using the Risk-Scenario Planning (RSP) tool. This partial budgeting tool helps evaluate the risk sensitivity of up to two variables in a decision framework.

For More information

To view the Applied Risk Analytics bulletin series, navigate to the Resources tab on RightRisk.org and select Applied Risk Analytics. This will allow you to download and use any of the site's risk analytics tools.

James Sedman is a consultant to the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in the University of Wyoming College of Agriculture, Life Sciences and Natural Resources, and John Hewlett is a farm and ranch management specialist in the department. Hewlett may be reached at (307) 766-2166 or hewlett@uwyo.edu. ■



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WyFB recognized by AFBF for outstanding member programs and achievement

JANUARY 22, 2024

The American Farm Bureau Federation presented awards to state Farm Bureau's at the organization's 105th Convention January 20-23, 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah. The awards recognize excellence in implementation of outstanding member programs and membership achievement in 2023. The awards of Excellence recognize state Farm Bureaus that demonstrated outstanding achievements in four program areas: Advocacy, Coalitions & Partnerships, Engagement & Outreach, and Leadership & Business Development. The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation was recognized with all four Awards of Excellence. ■



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WyFB Legislative Radio Report on Northern Ag Network


Every Thursday (February 8th-March 14th) during the 2024 Legislative Session

www.wyfb.org/News/Radio-Programs

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