

SCFB

news

SEDGWICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

June 2019



NOTES FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Jon Kerschen

As I write my newsletter article, we just surpassed 14 inches of rain for the month of May with more predicted to come through the last week of the month. Obviously the weather situation here and in many other parts of the United States as well is on most people's minds. Although much of our attention lately has been focused on the skies, Sedgwick County Farm Bureau has had opportunities to move forward with our mission to educate, advocate, and serve.

As the 2019 legislative session wrapped up, Farm Bureau focused attention on passing the member benefit healthcare legislation. Sedgwick County Farm Bureau answered the call in advocating for the passage of this legislation. Board members sent emails, made phone calls to legislators, traveled to Topeka, and testified in committee hearings to try to get this bill passed. Our executive director made several trips to Topeka and made sure board members were communicating with our legislators. The successful passage of this legislation creates an opportunity for Farm Bureau members to have another health care choice. We all know the importance of health care as well as the burden of the cost it poses to our operations. What a great service to have Kansas Farm Bureau push for a change that hopefully can benefit the members' bottom lines. It was truly a grassroots effort and a huge success. If you have questions about the new health care benefit that will be available this fall, please contact the office or go to the Kansas Farm Bureau website.

The spring has offered several opportunities for Sedgwick

SEDGWICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU HAS HAD OPPORTUNITIES TO MOVE FORWARD WITH OUR MISSION TO EDUCATE, ADVOCATE, AND SERVE.

County Farm Bureau to give back in service to members. The scholarship committee awarded six new scholarships to deserving seniors. We also once again spent the day buying food for the Ronald McDonald house. We've been trying to build the relationships between the insurance agents that offer the insurance policies to members of our organization. We met with agency managers to identify ways that we can work with the insurance agents to help promote our organization. Many people don't know that Sedgwick County Farm Bureau is not an insurance company but an advocacy group that promotes agriculture. We need help in showing what this organization does for its members.

You may also notice a new look to our newsletter. The board voted to adopt the logo that is used by Kansas Farm Bureau. The board agreed that the logo is more identifiable and well-known and ultimately will help unify us as a county and state organization as well as connect our board brand with one that is already established. However, we are going to continue to use our old logo on correspondence pieces until we run out of stock.

This summer, we want to continue to be visible and supportive of the county fair. We provide prizes for several of the livestock shows as well as purchasing some of the livestock, provided donuts and juice for the kids in the livestock barns, and we plan on being a part of the parade again this year. If you would like to participate in the activities at the fair, please let us know, or if you have ideas, we would love to hear them.

BONDS OF GENEROSITY *Anthony Seiler*

When we were kids growing up on a frequently drought afflicted farm, it was solemn rule that you could never complain about rain until water was running over the dike. The previous fall and spring have been testing that maxim, although in the last several weeks, the Big Arkansas has been threatening to overrun its banks near our farm and give us permission to complain. It's times like these though, of serious threat or disaster, that draw into sharp focus an aspect of rural life for which I am so grateful. When I was growing up on the farm and we fought flood waters or had a barn fire, I was overwhelmed and amazed by the sudden gathering of neighbors; their sacrifices of time and sweat and pain as they would help work to put things back to normal. I don't think that most people are so blessed to know that kind of support or have that kind of community.

One of the things I've appreciated most about joining Farm Bureau is seeing these bonds of generosity stretch beyond neighborhoods to farmers and ranchers across the state or across the country. In April, the Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Board of Directors voted to donate \$1,000 to the Nebraska Farm Bureau Disaster Relief Fund. Those funds will go directly to assisting farmers, ranchers, and rural communities affected by this spring's incredibly devastating floods.

While I hope that Mother Nature becomes more moderate and the river levels here decrease soon, I take comfort in knowing that if need be, there is a community of people that will band together to help each other through, both in our neighborhood and across the country.



Flood damage on Bill Luckey Farm in Columbus, Nebraska. USDA photo by Bill Luckey

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association's mission is to help members identify their needs and provide services and programs to meet those needs. SCFBAA will work for the success of the farm community which we serve. We will broaden our base by being proactive in community participation which enhances all phases of farm life.

LEGISLATIVE INVOLVEMENT AND CONNECTIONS *Mick Rausch*

Spring has finally arrived! With all the recent rains and flooding, everything is wet and soggy.

First with everything coming all at once, I want to remind everyone to be safe. We are all going to be operating on less sleep, so be careful!

I wish to spend my time writing about the legislative session. Everyone by now should know the Farm Bureau Health Plan was passed by both houses of the Kansas legislature and was not vetoed by the governor. With that, Farm Bureau is working on writing the language and code and is

looking at starting to sign up members sometime this fall. The health plan is a chance for our members to save money on health care. I urge everyone to check it out. It will not be for everyone depending on your conditions, but it is definitely worth a look. The plan really is geared to our members who are self-employed and paying for their own health care or those who do not have a health care plan.

In April, the board hosted several legislators in touring the new Cargill building in downtown Wichita. The new building houses over 500

people who work there. Cargill is a world-wide player in protein and grains so to have them in Wichita is great. The building is state of the art as far as utilities and its carbon footprint are concerned. We also toured the trading floor where they buy and sell all by video monitors and computers; it was amazing!

In closing, I want everyone to be careful this spring and summer. We are trying to do more with less, and sometimes we forget to take care of ourselves. Nutrition and sleep are important; stress can overwhelm you, so be sure and be careful.



KFB CEO Terry Holdren testifying in March in front of Kansas House Insurance Committee for the need for more health care options (SB32).

NEW HEALTH CARE OPTION FOR KFB MEMBERS

Thanks to the hard work of Farm Bureau members of Kansas, the Kansas Farm Bureau Member Healthcare Benefit Plan officially became law April 19.

Plans are currently in development and Farm Bureau Financial Service agents will begin receiving training to offer the benefit. Plans will be available for purchase starting in October and go into effect Jan. 1, 2020.

A range of plans will be available including: Individual and family plans Medicare supplement plans Dental/vision coverage Short-term coverage

TOPEKA – After receiving overwhelming support in both the Kansas House and Senate, the Kansas Farm Bureau Member Healthcare Benefit Plan officially became law on April 19. This legislation will offer much needed competition and innovation to the health coverage marketplace, lowering the cost of healthcare for farmers and ranchers across the state.

“While Governor Kelly expressed concerns with House Bill 2209, we greatly appreciate she kept her door open throughout the entire process, and she listened to both sides,” KFB CEO Terry Holdren said. “She met with both KFB leadership and our members at multiple points throughout the session, and she always led with her desire to work together and find a solution.”

In the past five years, net farm income has declined by nearly 50 percent, while insurance costs increased by more than 200 percent. House Bill 2209 will help lower these unsustainable costs for qualifying Kansas farmers and ranchers who currently find themselves priced out of the market. From the very beginning of this debate, Kansas Farm Bureau emphasized the new member benefit plan was created to serve as a more affordable healthcare option specifically and solely for KFB members.

“The KFB plan is not intended to solve all problems facing the healthcare industry in Kansas, but no one understands the importance of neighbors working together to solve problems more than farmers and ranchers,” said KFB president Rich Felts. “There is work to do to comprehensively stabilize healthcare costs in Kansas, and KFB stands ready to help make that happen in 2019.”

KFB urged legislators – especially legislative leaders – to act decisively when the annual wrap up session begins May 1.

“Governor Kelly made a personally difficult choice in the spirit of compromise. By refusing to succumb to political obstructionism, she has paved the way for lawmakers to advance a comprehensive healthcare solution that will benefit our entire state. We thank the Governor and the legislature for supporting our efforts. The Governor's plan to help rural hospitals, create new jobs, and expand affordable healthcare to non-KFB members remains a critical piece of that puzzle,” KFB President Rich Felts said. “We encourage the Kansas legislature and Governor Kelly to continue to seek to provide a comprehensive solution to the health care needs of Kansas in 2019.”



Did You Know?

American farmers and ranchers produce two trillion, two hundred and seven billion, five hundred and four million, five hundred and eighty thousand pounds of products each year.

2,207,504,580,000



ADVOCATING, EDUCATING & SERVING Donna Wise

Summer is here! School is out, which drastically changes the daily routine for those with children or grandchildren nearby. The weather has not been particularly friendly this spring with the cool and wet lasting much too long, and now that temperatures are heating up, we find ourselves scrambling to get things done – or at least figure out what needs to be done first. With all of these things filling our days, it is easy to lose sight of the continuing importance of being our own advocates as farmers and keeping an eye on the consumer's perception of what we are doing.

Your Sedgwick County Farm Bureau has been keeping busy with our own farming as well as all of the board activities. In February, the staff and Women's Committee joined with other farm advocates in the KFB 4th District for an Ag. Education Workshop in El Dorado where we learned how to separate the DNA from strawberries. This is an activity that any of us can do to help people understand that genetic modification is not something to fear. We also learned how easy it is to churn butter and other ways we might engage consumers in issues that are important to us.

Also in February, we had our 4th District Issue Surfacing meeting to consider what issues have surfaced that we might want Kansas Farm Bureau or the American Farm Bureau Federation to create a policy. That's how Farm Bureau policies come into being. If you ever wondered what kinds of policies KFB has in place, go to <https://www.kfb.org/Advocacy> and click on the link titled "2019 KFB Policy." The link takes you to the 2019 resolutions being considered.

March was a busy month with our lunch hosting the County Commissioners on March 18. This is a great oppor-

tunity for us to hear from the County Commissioners what is going on in the county that affects us as well as a time for us to share our concerns. Two days later, we were joined by representatives from neighboring Farm Bureaus to purchase groceries for our local Ronald McDonald houses, a way we can be of service to families in need while sharing the importance of what farmers do in providing food for us all.

The following week was the We All Eat event at the Extension office where our executive director, county coordinator, and I had the opportunity to engage with consumers about our efforts to support pollinators AND how genetic engineering is another way to enhance our food supply.



One way that farming is changing in Sedgwick County is that we have opportunities to grow what are called "specialty crops," which are simply the crops that go directly to consumers through sales at farmers' markets or to restaurants. I have been involved with the ICT Food Policy committee which is working in several ways to help

consumers know how to use crops grown locally and how to make sure fresh food is available in areas that are far from grocery stores. In addition, I have been participating in Growing Growers workshops through Sedgwick County Extension which are attempting to help market growers in the area get started. Their farm product may be different, but we all need to find ways of supporting one another. The food policies that we create will affect us all.

If any of the activities we do sound interesting, please contact the office to see how you can help!

WHEAT: IT DOES A BODY GOOD

Kent Ott

As a typical farmer, I was recently watching the local morning news to catch the weather forecast. A story caught my attention about breast cancer. The headlines of the story indicated that a diet with less fat and more fruit, vegetables, and **grains** may cut the risk of dying of breast cancer.

Grains...I haven't heard that in a while as a positive to our diets!

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau has a history since 1918 of educating our membership and improving the lives of Kansans. I thought a bit about wheat, a foundation in my crop rotation schedule, and decided to do a little research on bread. According to Wikipedia, bread is the oldest man-made food. It was first made with cattails and ferns. By 10,000 B.C., grains were the mainstay of making bread.



Wheat builds the structure of our bread and baked goods. Whole wheat flour, which uses all three parts of the grain (bran, germ, and endosperm), is the healthiest flour. According to the Kansas Wheat Commission, whole grain diets have risen 16% from 2015 to 2018. What are some of the benefits of whole grain wheat flour diet? Some of the benefits

include improved digestive system due to the fiber; increased vitamins and minerals, which include manganese, phosphorous, Vitamin B and Vitamin E; and prevention of cell damage with antioxidants. Whole wheat flour can lower triglycerides, improve insulin control, and slow buildup of arterial plaque.

So, enjoy that next whole wheat sandwich on Kansas farmers...to our health!

STAY OUT OF THE SLOP

Byron Wells

Recently, we sent our daughter Breanna out to clean her show steer's water trough. Obviously it has been wet with all the rain, and when she dumped the trough and tried to bring it back upright, some of the mud and manure from the lot found its way into the trough. This caused Breanna a great deal of stress. She told us that she did not know what to do next. Being the loving farm father that I am, I told her to figure it out on her own, and most of all, "Stay out of the slop!"

I got to thinking about that phrase, "Stay out of the slop!" Easier said than done in this day and age. No matter how we try to tell our story or defend it, we always seem to end up bogged down in the mud: the mud of politics, public opinion, and just plain old misconceptions. If you are waiting for me to give

you some kind of great advice, I will tell you the same as I told my daughter--some things you simply just have to figure out on your own. But the one thing I do know, always take the high road, and "stay out of the slop!" We can only get more bogged down if we reduce ourselves to the level of those who oppose us.

One of the best ways to stay out of the slop is to do something productive or positive, so make sure to come support our 4-H youth at the Sedgwick County Fair in Cheney in July. There are many projects on display as well as several livestock shows. There is also a livestock BBQ and sale on Saturday evening of the fair where all are welcome, and the proceeds support 4-H livestock youth. This year the fair is from July 10th through the 13th. Hope you all have a safe and prosperous summer!





Joseph Neville

This past January, Manhattan held the Young Farmer's and Rancher's conference; we had a great representation from Sedgwick County. Several young Sedgwick County Farm Bureau members, including students with the Maize FFA chapter, were in attendance.

This conference is a great learning opportunity for many different aspects of agriculture. We attended workshops including cattle health and nutrition, trade, taxes, land values, and weed management, just to name a few. Along with classes, some volunteered to pack lunches, attend tours of local ag businesses and research facilities, and connect with and meet Farm Bureau staff as well as other young farmers throughout the state. Prize winning competitions were held for collegiate and non-collegiate participants.

I am very grateful for Farm Bureau's support for the next generation of farmers. Be on the lookout for a social with other young farmers and ranchers later this fall!

MAKE THE TIME Max Tjaden

Come this August, I will have served on the board of directors for Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association for seven years and four months. My first 15 months, I was solely a director, and then I spent one year as vice president. For the next four years, I was the county president before going back to solely a director, and now, because of term limits, this is my last year on the board. Consequently, this may be my last newsletter article.

I have been asked more than once how I found time to "do all that Farm Bureau stuff." Well, I actually never found time; I decided that I was going to make time.

Ever since I became a FB member, I have had the understanding that FB always had my interests as an ag producer in mind, "had my back," and served as an advocate for my business and its future. However, once on our county Farm Bureau board, I quickly began to see how so much in the way of policy and legislation is directed and determined by those who "show up" that there are actually folks locally and on the state and national levels that really do want to know what you and I think about issues that affect our industry.

I used to think that there was nothing much I could do to change or influence things, but together with hundreds or thousands of like-minded people locally, statewide, and nationally, things can happen.

Personally, the most rewarding aspect of my board tenure has been the interesting people I have had the privilege to meet and listen to, from the mayors, cabinet secretaries, U.S. senators and congressmen, governors, Kansas legislators, lots of county officials, and even the President of the United States. But the individuals I have gotten to know in the FB network here in Sedgwick County and the 4th District have been the ones I have enjoyed the most, from the 20+ current and previous board members I have served with, to our county events where I have

been privileged to meet many other members.

It has been a continuous educational process for me to be involved with the workings



Max Tjaden with County Commissioner Chairman David Dennis.

of such organizations as Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association, Kansas Farm Bureau, and American Farm Bureau Federation. I have not regretted a minute and have been honored to serve Sedgwick County. I am glad I decided to make the time.

ANNUAL MEETING | AUGUST 13

The annual meeting for Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Association will be held on August 13. We have two board members who will be termed out serving on the board. If you would like to run for a position or know of someone, please contact the office or one of the nominating committee members: Max Tjaden, Todd Kissinger, or Jon Kerschen. Save the date for the annual meeting, and thank you for your support of this organization as we try to be the voice of agriculture for you in Sedgwick County

UPCOMING FSA ENROLLMENTS

DAIRY MARGIN COVERAGE PROGRAM

June 17

2019 & 2020 ARC/PLC

Early September

GENERAL CRP SIGNUP

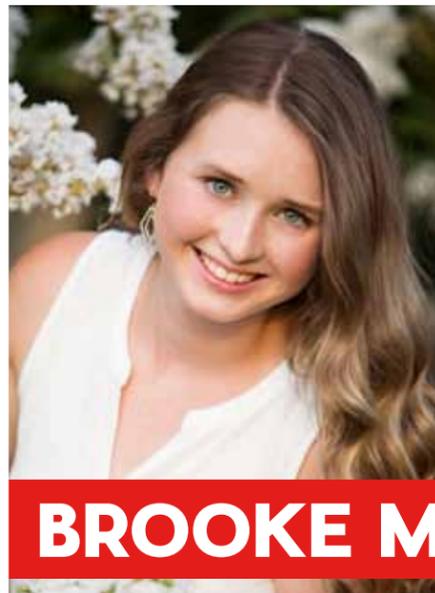
December 1

SCFBAA 2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Congratulations to the 2019 recipients of the SCFBAA Scholarship! We wish you the best as you continue your education in the fall.

MADDISON FARRIS

Maddison plans to attend Butler Community College in the fall.

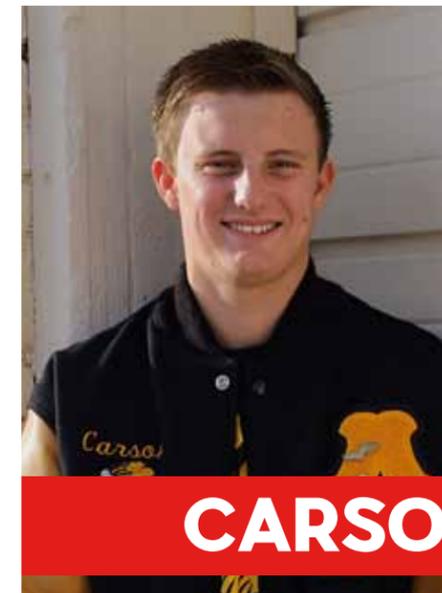
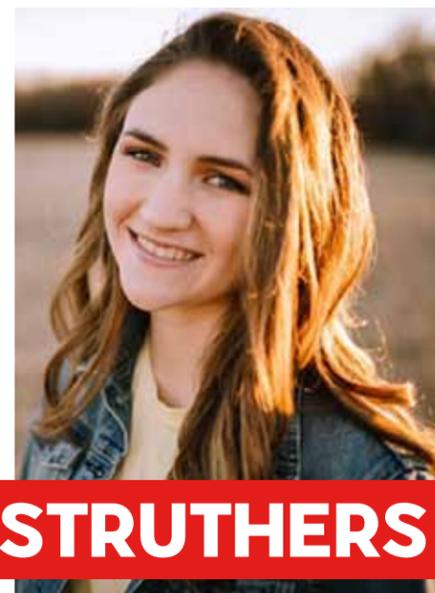


BROOKE MARTIN

I am graduating from Bishop Carroll this spring. I have been involved in cheerleading and the school newspaper. I plan on studying at Kansas State University and majoring in Elementary Education.

I grew up on a ranch just outside of Clearwater Kansas. In the fall, I will be attending Newman University where I will study nursing and compete on the triathlon team.

HOPE STRUTHERS



CARSON LANE

I am a senior at Andale High school, and I have been a part of track and field for three years and CYM for four years. I am an outdoors enthusiast; from hunting and fishing to working, I enjoy time spent outdoors. After high school, I plan on attending Hutchinson Community College to continue my education in accounting. I would then like to settle down into a good job in accounting and find a nice home to live in the country.



CLAIRE WINTER

I live on my family's farm outside of Andale and attend Bishop Carroll Catholic High School. I am a member of both the cross country and track team. I have also enjoyed my time as Sedgwick County Farm Bureau's 2018-19 Ag Ambassador. I plan to attend Kansas State University next fall and am excited to be majoring in Biochemistry.

I graduated from Sedgwick High School. I enjoy hunting, snow skiing, and working on our farm. I plan to attend Kansas State University in the Fall and majoring in Agri-Business. My career goal is to be able to come back home to manage and operate McGinn Farms.

KADE MCGINN



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SOIL STORIES

Catherine Johnson

"The soil is the great connector of our lives, the source and destination of all."

-Wendell Berry, *The Unsettling of America*, 1977

Sedgwick County Soil Stories is a Conservation District project celebrating soil in Sedgwick County. Soil experiences connect residents of this county; we all have experiences with soil whether we live in a rural or urban setting, whether we are young or old, whether we farm or garden or play softball or soccer or make mud pies. The purpose of the project is to bring together people from all over Sedgwick County to share their stories of soil. The soil samples and stories will be displayed at various locations during 2020, which happens to be the year we celebrate the 75th year of the Sedgwick County Conservation District. The culminating event will take place in the fall of 2020 and will be a multi-sensory, interactive display of soil samples and the stories of their contributors.

WHO IS INVITED TO CONTRIBUTE?

Everyone! Soil samples will be collected from residents in urban, rural, and suburban settings. People of all ages are invited to be a part of this project.

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?

If you are interested in contributing to this project, please complete and submit the online form at <https://www.sedgwickcdks.org/soil-stories-project.html>.

For more information, please contact Catherine Johnson, Sedgwick County Conservation District Manager by email at sedgwickcountycd@gmail.com or by phone at (316)-721-6127 ext. 7970.