

SCFB

news

SPRING 2025



SCFBAA recently participated in Clearwater High School FFA's 1st Annual Earth Rangers: A Nature Adventure Day. Elementary students, Kindergarten-5th grade, visited Hammer's Prairie Park & Nature Center to learn about various areas of environmental education. SCFBAA shared about soil health and the efforts farmers take in order to protect our soil while providing our crops with the best environment for growth. Dave Dejmal, SCFBAA board member, walks kids through an activity where they take "soil samples" from candy bars.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT Michael Speer

As the calendar has turned to spring, we have finally passed the rat race of meetings, conferences, and travels that is the Farm Bureau world. Your county Farm Bureau has been busy the last couple months; we have attended the Kansas Farm Bureau annual meeting, hosted our annual legislative luncheon, attended the state YF&R convention, traveled to Topeka for Day at the Statehouse, and wrapped up things at the American Farm Bureau convention.

The annual meeting was good as usual. New policies that went into the policy book surrounded hot topic issues in energy and water. These new adoptions to the policy book allowed us to have very good conversations with our state legislators during our time at the state Capitol during KFB's Day at the Statehouse. Sedgwick County is heavily represented in congressional leadership with Chase Blasi as Senate Majority Leader and Ty Masterson as Senate President, as well

as Dan Hawkins serving as speaker of the House. Participants at Day at the Statehouse had great conversations with all of these folks, and our voice is respected and heard by them in large part due to many great years of work by your county Farm Bureau.

The state YF&R Leaders Con-

ference was a fun for me because it was the first one I got to attend after chairing the State YF&R committee for the past year and serving for the past two. As a county, we took 26 people to the conference, and our Ag Education Specialist, Emily Kerschen, also represented our county sharing the great work we are doing in the education space and leading an ag education workshop while there.



SCFBAA members at AFBF Convention in San Antonio, TX

The AFBF Convention was in San Antonio this year. We spent the Saturday together

as a county board and toured several farming operations in the San Antonio area. Highlights of this were learning how pecans are grown and also learning about the water issues farmers in the area are dealing with due to massive population growth and housing developments. (Does that sound familiar to Sedgwick County right now?) The real fun was had when we helped hand harvest cabbage for the San Antonio Food Bank; the crops are grown on an old Spanish mission inside the city limits and all crops go to the food bank.

A first for me at the AFBF Convention was when animal rights activists got up and started yelling through President Zippy Duvall's opening address. President Duvall handled the interruption like a true pro and led a loud round of applause a couple different times to drown out their voices.

Lastly, I want to thank you all your continued support of Sedgwick County Farm Bureau and hope you all come out to see us at any of the events we do throughout the year.



Pictured left to right: Rep. Emil Bergquist, Anthony Seiler, Max and Anne Tjaden, Kent Ott, Joy and Bill Carp, Joseph Neville, Michael Speer, and Rep. Patrick Penn at Day at the Statehouse in January.

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.

HELP IS ON THE WAY

Jason Jelinek

On a typical fall day in October, I was busy with chores, feeding cattle in the morning and then preparing to cut double-crop soybeans in the afternoon. Little did I know that my afternoon would be very active. With the dry weather and soybean dust, we always worry about machinery fires, which is why we have a fire extinguisher in all of our combines and tractors. On this day, the combine started to smoke, and we quickly put out the small fire with the fire extinguisher (or so we thought). We continued to cut soybeans and keep our eyes on the hot machine.

Unfortunately, later in the afternoon, the fire started back up, and we quickly realized that this time we needed help. Our community has a volunteer fire department who quickly showed up to help us, but by the time they arrived, the combine was engulfed in flames. Thankfully no one was injured.

I think that all too often these volunteer men and women who give of their time to help our communities often go overlooked. We take for granted that during our worst moments, they are willing to drop everything and risk their own lives to make a bad situation better no matter what time of the day we call them. So the next time you see a member of your local fire or EMS department, take a minute to say thanks, or better yet, donate some water or Gatorade to their station. Here at SCFBAA, each year we say thank you by donating a pizza dinner to our volunteer fire departments across the county. You hope you'll never need their service, but you'll sure be glad when they show up to help.

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SCFBAA Members Recognized at KFB Annual Meeting

DAN KERSCHEN

distinguished service award

KFB presented its Distinguished Service Award for exemplary contributors to agriculture in our state. Dan Kerschen has spent 50 years in the agriculture industry and has been active off the farm as a leader for the industry. He served as a Kansas Representative and then a Kansas Senator from 2009-2024. He's also served on KLA, Cattlemen's Beef Board, Dairy Farmers of America, and more. Congratulations, Dan!



HEIDI & BYRON WELLS

farm family of the year

Heidi and Byron Wells and family were recognized at the KFB 2024 Annual Meeting as a 2024 KFB Farm Family of the Year. The Wells own Lucky W Dairy near Cheney and grow wheat, corn, and sorghum for silage. Heidi and Byron have both served on the SCFB board and have been active at the state level through KFB's dairy advisory committee. Their oldest daughter, Breanna, is also an agriculture ambassador for SCFB. Congratulations to the Wells Family!



YF&R LEADERS CONFERENCE

Sathena Scarborough

We just wrapped up with another year of the Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference in Manhattan. Even though Manhattan had just gotten over a foot of snow a week prior, there were roughly 500 attendees! If you or your spouse are 18-35, I would highly recommend you attend!

Attending the Young Farmers and Ranchers Leaders Conference in Manhattan is a great way to start the year. YF&R offers something for everyone: peer networking, engaging workshops, innovative tours, and dynamic speakers. Workshops included relevant topics for those attending to take back to their farming operations or their county boards.

The highlight was this year's closing speaker, Jordy Nelson, a former NFL wide receiver and Kansas State University graduate. In his talk, he discussed that his farming background helped him in the NFL due to the strong work ethic it instilled in him. From a young age, he was accustomed to the responsibility and long hours of working on the farm. He mentioned the importance of community and connections for him while he was away from his family. Once he returned home, he became involved in his local community. Jordy's talk was a great way to wrap up the week-end after spending time with new and old friends.

Farming, to me, is the foundation for how I've been able to be successful. It set me up with discipline, hard work, and unselfishness.

Jordy Nelson, Riley County Farmer, NFL Superbowl Champion, YF&R Leaders Conference Keynote Speaker

YF&R leaves me feeling invigorated for the year ahead and excited to return home with new ideas to our local Farm Bureau and communities.

Meet our new Field Service Manager for District 4!

Stephanie Eckroat has recently joined the District 4 team as Field Service Manager. She has been working with Kansas Farm Bureau as a County Coordinator for nine years in the Hays area. Stephanie and her husband Mike are looking forward to settling in the area soon.



BRINGING THE FARM TO SCHOOL

Heidi Wells

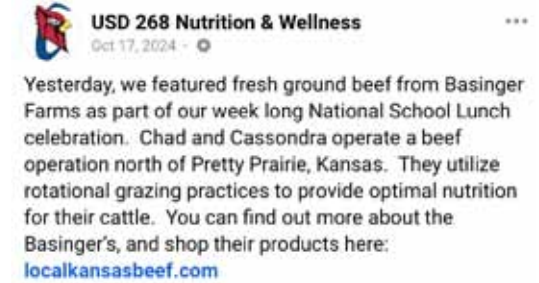
Have you ever wanted to get your foot in the door at your local school district? Well, the wait is over.

This past spring, schools across the nation were eligible to apply for the Local Food for Schools grant provided by USDA Agricultural Marketing Services. This grant provided financial assistance to schools experiencing supply chain disruptions to purchase domestic, unprocessed or minimally processed meats locally for use within their National School Lunch program and/or School Breakfast program. USDA defined "local" as within 400 miles of the school district, or within the state of Kansas. Local meats must be sourced either directly from farmers & ranchers (farmer direct sales), or from a KDA/USDA inspected processing facility who is able to provide the name of the farmer or rancher. Schools had until December 6, 2024 to spend the funds.

"How does this affect me?" you might ask. Well, if you produce beef, pork, chicken, or turkey and have been looking to get your product sold at a local school, now's your chance! Reach out to the foodservice director at your local school and begin the conversation about pricing,

amounts needed, and timelines. If you don't have a particular school in mind, you might visit with your local meat locker to see if they have any connections. Another great resource to learn more about farm to plate/farm to school is through the KSDE Child Nutrition and Wellness department. There is a Farm to Plate page with LOTS of great information about all things farm to school. One of their latest resources, Kansas Farm to Plate Q&A for Producers, can also be found there. Want quick access to these items? Check out my resource links at the end of this article.

School food service departments and farmers have a mutual goal: provide a wholesome, nutritious, and safe product for consumption. It only makes sense for these two entities to come together to accomplish this goal, and NOW is that time.



Bassinger beef was featured in our popular walking tacos and our middle and high school students have been enjoying the Bassinger beef sticks as a nutritional snack from our ala carte store.

#fuelingskids
#localfoods
#NationalSchoolLunchWeek



RESOURCES

Kansas Department of Education Child Nutrition and Wellness website: cnw.ksde.org
Kansas Farm to Plate Q&A for producers: https://cnw.ksde.org/docs/default-source/f2p/guidance/kansas_farm_to_plate_qa_final.pdf?sfvrsn=c170fd37_9

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Legislative Lunch

Vin Kissick

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau held our annual legislative lunch at the beginning of January. This event continues to be an excellent opportunity to discuss issues with our legislators and local leadership. While the winter weather conditions reduced attendance, the meeting was highly successful.

I had the opportunity to sit with Senator Steve Owens, three Sedgwick County Commissioners, Halstead Farmers CO-OP manager Jack Queen, Groundwater Management District 2 Manager Tim Boese, and Sedgwick County Farm Bureau members Joy and Bill Carp. At our table, we had excellent conversation on our backgrounds and more specific discussions on property taxes and local assessments.

In the future, I would encourage you to attend this luncheon; it's a rare opportunity to meet our leaders in a relaxed atmosphere.



Joseph Neville, District 4 YF&R, visits with District 93 Rep. Brian Bergkamp at the SCFB Legislative Luncheon



Providing Kansans the resources they need to help cope with ag-related stress.

KansasAgStress.org



Because your own health is important and should not be overlooked.

Providing resources for

- Men in Agriculture
- Women in Agriculture
- Teens & Young Adults
- Farmer Veterans
- Farm Families
- Aging Adults



KansasAgStress.org

If you are a farmer in crisis, or know of someone in need of immediate assistance, contact your local Kansas Community Mental Health Center or call the National Suicide Prevention Line at 988.

DAY at the STATEHOUSE

Erika Weise

Along with some of the members of my FFA chapter, I had the opportunity to attend Day at the Statehouse on January 21-22. When we arrived on Tuesday evening, we attended breakout sessions about water, taxes, and government programs helping rural communities. Later that evening, we attended the Voice of Agriculture celebration dinner where we listened to guest speakers from the Kansas Legislature. The following morning, we started the day with a networking breakfast, which featured additional guest speakers. After breakfast, we headed to the Kansas State Capitol, where we explored the historic building through a scavenger hunt-style tour. We then had the privilege of meeting with Representative Brian Bergkamp, followed by attending a General House Session. We also had the opportunity to meet with Senator Chase Blasi before enjoying lunch at the Capitol.



Back row: Kristyn McAndrew, Berkley McKinley, SCFBAA Ambassador Erika Weise, and Sen. Chase Blasi
Middle row: Cheney HS FFA Advisor Samantha Dungan
Front row: Cash Young and Levi Self

FFA HAPPENINGS

A PEEK INSIDE CHENEY FFA

Breanna Wells

February has been a very busy month for the Cheney High School FFA Chapter. As the chapter president, I can attest to the dedication of Mrs. Dungan, our advisor, and the entire officer team who have devoted significant time and effort to planning events, preparing for contests, and managing daily chapter activities this year.

The reason February is particularly hectic is that it coincides with some of the most important events for FFA chapters across the country. One of these key events is FFA Week, which takes place annually, beginning on George Washington's birthday (President's Day) and continuing until the following Sunday. While most chapters follow a similar schedule, Cheney High School also holds a Valentine's dance in February. Therefore, we had to adjust our FFA Week activities to ensure participation and avoid conflicts with the winter dance. This year, we decided to hold our FFA Week activities from February 10th to 14th, the week before National FFA Week. Our main goal was to engage the community, our school, and FFA members equally. To achieve this, we delivered donuts to local businesses on our day off, organized several member appreciation events, and held our monthly chapter meeting during this week. Additionally, we conducted a raffle to support local businesses, and our chapter secretary, Erika Weise, created special drink flavors for FFA Week at our local tea

shop. I am thrilled to witness how these events will affect our members and community, and I hope they leave a positive impact.

Aside from FFA Week, February is also a very important month for members who wish to earn their State FFA Degree or submit a Proficiency Application for their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). These applications are quite lengthy and require members to put all of their recordkeeping, documenting, and writing skills to the test. However, with a supportive advisor and good time-management skills, members can be successful in submitting a complete, detailed, and worthy application. These are due before Selection Day, which takes place at the end of February. During Selection Day, FFA advisors and other qualified adults review the applications at the district level and score them with other FFA members in the South Central District. If a member's application is approved at the district level, it is eligible to move on to state review. Therefore, Selection Day is another stressful thing for members to worry about in February. Cheney has quite a few members who plan to submit proficiency applications and state degrees.

In conclusion, the transition to early spring can be hard in the FFA world, but Cheney FFA is conquering the challenges to the best of its ability.

Here are five ways to know that it's time to recheck your coverage and get a policy review so you can be prepared for your future.

1 You've Hired New Employees

Make sure your new employees are added to your Workers' Compensation Coverage if you have it, to protect both you and them.

2 You've Made a Major Purchase

Make sure you add any new equipment or major purchases to your insurance policy as soon as you can to ensure you're covered if something goes wrong.

3 You've Made Improvements

Whether you're adding a new section to an existing building or putting up a new outbuilding, make sure these changes are reflected on your policy.

4 You've Made Your Operation Safer

When you install new fire alarms, sprinklers, security systems or even get a new roof, you might be earning a discount on your farm insurance.

5 Your Renewal Is Coming Up

When you get your renewal packet, think back over the year and make sure you didn't have any changes like the ones listed above.

Josh Axline
Goddard
316.794.2285

Gordon Ritthaler
Haysville
316.239.7800

Doug Adams
Valley Center
316.755.2717



Registered Representative/Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC, 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860.2904, Member SIPC. Advisory services offered through FBL Wealth Management, LLC, Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company, Western Agricultural Insurance Company, Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, West Des Moines, IA. Individual must be a registered representative of FBL Marketing Services, LLC to discuss securities products. Individual must be an investment adviser representative with FBL Wealth Management, LLC to discuss advisory services. Individual must be licensed with issuing company to offer insurance products. *Affiliates. **Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services.

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AG IN THE CLASSROOM

Emily Kerschen

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau continues to strive to share meaningful lessons, activities, and programs with classroom teachers and schools across our county that not only promote and build ag literacy, but also strengthen students' connection to agriculture and the farmers that grow our food. This year, SCFB has launched an exciting new opportunity to share Ag in the Classroom in Sedgwick County schools. Through monthly kits, teachers are able to implement simple, fun, hands-on activities in their classrooms that teach students about the role of agriculture in our lives. Teachers receive all the materials needed and are able to complete the lesson at their convenience. So far this school year, we have supplied lessons and materials for over 5,000 students!

As we look ahead to the 2025-2026 school year, SCFB is working to expanding this program and sharing kits with more teachers and classrooms in our county!

BUTTER IN A JAR



PUMPKIN PIE IN A BAG



KANSAS DAY

