

SCFB

MARCH 2024

news



Amber & Michael Speer of Clearwater were recognized as a KFB Farm Family of the Year in 2023. Pictured here with their children, Weston and Ellie, the Speers have dedicated valuable time and effort to SCFBAA and KFB and our mission through their volunteering, advocating, and serving. Congratulations to the Speer Family!



NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT Michael Speer

It has been an incredibly busy 60 days in the Farm Bureau world for me. For the last year, my wife, Amber, and I have had the pleasure of serving as the YF&R committee representatives for District 4. In December, I was elected chair of the committee and get to serve as the YF&R representative on the Kansas Farm Bureau board of directors. This has already proven to be an exciting opportunity, and I look forward to furthering my knowledge of all the things that Kansas Farm Bureau has to offer.

Bureau annual meeting at the beginning of December. At the annual meeting, we were honored to receive the 2023 County Showcase Platinum Award. This is the highest level of recognition a county can receive for their total body of work throughout the year. We also were awarded the 2023 County Innovation Award in Service for our party bus crop tour last summer.

As we entered 2024, SCFBAA hosted our annual legislative luncheon and also spent two days in Topeka for County Presidents Conference and Day at the State House. Then a couple of days later, we took a group of ten to the AFBF annual meeting in Salt Lake City, and finally rounded out a very busy season with a weekend in Manhattan, Kansas for the YF&R Leaders Conference. Ashton Schneider, SCFBAA women's chair, was awarded the Excellence in Agriculture award during this conference.

At all of these meetings we attend, I get the most enjoyment from the networking and the learning we get to partake in everywhere we are. We always return home reinvigorated to serve our members and hopefully have some

new ideas of things we can do at the county level to serve our members well. I believe in the last couple of years, we have come home with many great ideas and have already implemented some of



KFB CEO Terry Holdren & SCFBAA Women's Chair, Ashton Schneider

them such as our Book Barn Projects with local FFA chapters and our new voting member dinner we will be doing soon. I think we have several other new fresh ideas you will be seeing rolled out in the next year.

As always, it's an honor to get to be part of Sedgwick County Farm Bureau, and I hope to see all of you this year at one of our events.



KFB Pres. Joe Newland, SCFBAA President Michael Speer, and KFB District 4 Board Member Steve McCloud

Your county Farm Bureau board has been busy since the last newsletter came out. A delegation from Sedgwick County attended the Kansas Farm

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.

2023 YEAR in REVIEW

ADVOCACY

- 16** members represented Sedgwick County at KFB Annual Meeting
- 17** members participated in the policy development process at the district level
- 9** members traveled to Topeka for Day at the Statehouse, and met with or visited **all 33** legislators who represent SG County
- Hosted an Ag Tour for **Representative Ron Estes**
- Worked with local news stations to setup **6** interviews with members on ag related stories
- 15 members** attended the AFBF Convention in Puerto Rico
- Hosted a Legislator Ag Tour (April) at Carmichael Irrigation for **18 legislators** focused on water use and conservation practices by farmers
- 75 GUESTS INCLUDING** **20 LEGISLATORS & COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AT OUR KICKOFF LUNCHEON**

EDUCATION

- Awarded scholarships worth **\$10,000** to **4** graduating seniors pursuing careers in agriculture. Have awarded over **\$400,000** since the program started in 1988.
- Selected **two** high school senior Ag Ambassadors, eligible for \$1k scholarship
- 28** members attended the KFB YF&R Conference
- During National Ag Day (March) farmer members read at **three** schools to over **100** students
- Celebrated National Pizza Day during lunch at a local elementary school with over 350 students
- Visited with over **500** students, teachers, and parents at Old Cowtown County Fair
- Story Walk installed at **two** Sedgwick County pumpkin patches during October
- 17** teachers received Butter in a Jar kits for over 470 students

SERVICE

- 30** members attended YF&R Party Bus crop tour
- President Michael Speer serving as the Chair of the State YF&R Committee
- Members serving on the KFB Wheat Ag Advisory and Water Advisory Committees
- Delivered **4** dinners to area farmers for our Wheat Harvest Dinner giveaway, partnered with FBFS
- 100** Awarded Century Farm recognitions to Meghan Mueseler, Phil and Donna Wise, Orin McAdam
- 150** Awarded our first ever Sesquicentennial Farm (150 years in the same family) to the Martin and Armour Families
- \$16,000** donated to partner organizations including 4-H, local FFA chapters, Ronald McDonald House, Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture and Legal Foundation, local food banks, and ICT Food Rescue
- Michael and Amber Speer recognized as a KFB Farm Family of the Year

Finding Balance in Farm Life

Ashton Schneider

Living on a farm and ranch, you get into a routine of everyday chores and tasks. It is easy to get wrapped up in feeding the family and cleaning the house, as well as feeding the cattle and cleaning the barn. Finding time to take care of yourself is so important in order for you to be able to care for your family and your farm. Balance is not something that most farm moms and wives prioritize, yet it is very crucial.

Creating balance between farm, family, and self care has not always been routine for me as a farm mom, and I have recently come to realize that it was taking a toll. After attending Kansas Farm Bureau's Women's Leadership Committee Rooted in Resilience retreat, I came to know and feel the importance of self care. As women in agriculture, we are rooted to be just that: resilient. We often do not recognize that we personally need balance because we are simply surviving our everyday lives on the farm. Now knowing that self care is essential for my daily routine, incorporating it has created a healthier mindset and given my heart purpose again.

Whether it be at the beginning or end of your day, a few minutes in between chores, or one hour of your week-end, incorporating self care in your life doesn't have to take

a great amount of time. This self care may include a form of meditation, exercise, or the simple act of completing a stress cycle. These are few of many examples that can easily be part of your daily routine and allow for balance. We all know that farm and ranch life can come with a great amount of stress, and learning how to release that is important.

Resilience is very different than being numb. Resilience means you experience, you feel, you fail, you hurt. You fall. But, you keep going.

-Yasmin Mogahed



As farm moms and wives, we need more than the simple brush your hair and teeth and drink your cup of coffee routine for self care. Meditate on that scripture, get that massage, or complete that cardio workout. We need to love ourselves so that we can mentally and physically love our families and our farms just the same. Create and find balance in your own farm life.

Exploring the New Frontiers of Carbon Markets

Zach Simon

Falling in line with the AFBF Annual Convention theme of New Frontiers this year, breakout sessions included several lectures on carbon markets. Farmers have been hearing about carbon markets for some time now. For some, this may not be a new, but for many, this is a new frontier in agriculture. As large companies continue to set carbon neutral goals for the future, they are going to have to rely on some of the best carbon sinks and land stewards to ever exist—American farmers and their fields.

In the sessions I attended, speakers provided information on different ways farmers can increase the carbon sequestered on their farms. A lot of it has to do with production practices. All soils and situations are different, but to generalize, the less soil disturbance, the more carbon will be sequestered. Practices like minimum tillage, strip till, and no till keep the carbon in the soil. Farmers may see additional benefits in carbon scoring by split applying nitrogen fertilizer. Nitrogen fertilizer has a significant impact on the carbon score, especially when it is over applied.

Carbon markets aren't just for crop fields either. DFA has received a climate smart grant looking at assigning carbon credits to dairy cattle. There are groups working on beef cattle production as well.

So where should a farmer look to if you are interested in participating or learning more about carbon credits? There are many programs popping up, especially with the climate grants from USDA that were awarded to various commodity groups. My advice is to do your homework when determining if one of the carbon programs is right for you and your farm. Not all programs are the same. All require varying degrees of record keeping and data sharing. Some require your grain or commodity to be delivered to a certain market. Educate yourself on all the "strings attached" and make a determination. Not all of these opportunities are bad, but with any "new frontier," the unknown is both exciting and scary.

SCFBAA AG AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

KYLEE SIMON

As one of the 2023-2024 Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Ag Ambassadors, I keep myself very involved in anything agriculture related. One thing I enjoy being involved in that helps me keep up with agriculture and learn everything it has to offer is FFA. I am currently serving at Andale High School as our Chapter Vice President along with being the 2023-2024 Kansas South Central District Secretary. I have been involved in FFA all four years of high school and have done everything I can to be active. Some might say I am never at school and am always at an FFA event! In reality though, FFA has taught me things that I would never learn at school ranging from leadership skills to interview skills.

Being involved with FFA has made me feel like I fit in as never before. I can say that my FFA chapter is my family. My chapter has helped me overcome some of my worst fears (public speaking), and they have watched me strive. My life would not be the same if I did not say yes my freshman year to participating in the land and homesite evaluation contest. I have learned so much over the last four years and can't even believe that I am part of a national team during my senior year. When you are trying to decide what clubs you want to join in high school, stop and take a look at FFA. FFA is not only for students interested in farming—it is for everyone.



Left: 2023 State Homesite Champions from Andale High School; Kylee pictured third from left. Below: Kylee preparing for an FFA contest



Above: Award ceremony at the American Royal Complex; picture left to right, Stephanie Witberler, Tanner Himmertzheim, Brady Hoffman, Brooke Gaines, Aaron Morales, Callan Smith, and Chesney Effling. Right: At Omaha Beef's plant after the practice contest; pictured left to right, Kealie Bryant, Callan, Tanner, Brady, Aaron, and Brooke.

BRADY HOFFMAN

Last year I was on the National Championship winning meat evaluation team with another Sedgwick county 4-Her and past ambassador, Tanner Himmertzheim. We both were on the final team of four at nationals and competed against over 70 kids from across the nation and from 37 different states. We beat Texas to keep our Kansas streak going for another year, and I personally finished in second losing only by one point to someone who is already judging in college. I also tied the record of past Sedgwick



County 4-Her, Blake Foraker, and his score from 10 years ago. Blake is now the coach at Washington State University. My score of 734 means I only dropped 16 points and am tied for the 4th highest score since at least 2000.

Ask Your Local Agents About these Insurance Discounts

These days, many people are looking for ways to save money.

At Farm Bureau Financial Services, there are many ways you may be able to lower your insurance costs and make a bit more room in your budget. Here are a few discounts to ask us about.

Auto Insurance Discounts

There are several auto insurance discounts that may be available to you. Drivers of all ages in your home may be able to earn good driver discounts. With Driveology®, the safer you drive, the more you save. Immediately upon enrolling, you will earn a 10 percent discount and can earn as much as 50 percent for your safe driving.¹

Our Young Driver Safety Program gives your young driver the chance to build skill and confidence behind the wheel and the potential to lower your car insurance payment. Those who complete our Young Driver Safety program and are under the age of 25 are eligible to earn our Safe Young Driver discount as well.²

Additionally, your smart student can help you save. For your full-time students who maintain a good grade point average, we have a discount for that. Our Good Student Discount rewards your child for prioritizing school. For safe drivers who also do well in school, the savings can add up. Did you know that where you live and how you drive goes into determining your insurance rate? Even with these factors, there are ways you can lower your costs. Whether you're buying a new vehicle, adding a new driver to your policy or simply wondering how to get discounts on car insurance, your local Farm Bureau agent can provide you with a quote based on vehicle type.

The type of car you drive matters. Consider purchas-

ing a car that is less expensive to insure which can indicate a safer vehicle.

Homeowners Insurance Discounts

There are safety tips for your home that can help keep you protected. Did you know also that there are homeowners insurance discounts for keeping your home up-to-date in safety features? Keeping your home safe may mean having a protective security system or installing a new roof that is more fire and weather resistant. In addition to our protective device discount and our new roof discount, here are a few ways to make safe upgrades to your home that may help save you from a disaster.

- Use a Home Security System: A home security system is one way to deter burglars and keep your home and family safe. Smart home devices can help secure your home by allowing you to program alarms, access video doorbells or detect maintenance issues remotely via your smartphone.
- Have a Fire Safety Plan: You likely have smoke detectors in your home, but have you tested them lately to ensure they are fully functional? Test your smoke alarms at least once a month and replace batteries periodically. It's also a good idea to create an emergency fire escape plan and practice it with your family so everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire.
- Install a Carbon Monoxide Detector: While inspecting

the fire alarms in your home, consider installing a carbon monoxide detector and adding that to your routine checks. Carbon monoxide is often referred to as a silent killer and can be deadly if undetected.

- Eliminate Hazards: Walk through your house and identify places where trips and falls are likely — loose rugs or wires, steep or poorly lit staircases. Take the time to eliminate these hazards.

Farm and Ranch Insurance Discounts

We believe strong working relationships should be rewarded. When you protect your operation with Farm Bureau, you could be eligible for our Ag Advantage and Ag + Rewards discounts, both of which can continue to grow over time.

- Ag Advantage: You can qualify for a premium discount when you write your farm or ranch policy with us.
- Ag + Rewards: The more you add, the more you get rewarded. Add auto coverage to your existing ag policy to earn a discount. Add umbrella coverage and you could save even more.

Financial Services Discount

Add life insurance and/or annuities to save on your existing Farm Bureau Member's Choice policy.³

Insurance Bundling

Bundling your home and auto insurance into one policy with Farm Bureau's Member's Choice is another way you may be able to save money.

Additionally, with our one deductible advantage, you pay just one deductible for all covered possessions that are damaged in the same loss, when insured on a single policy.

Paid in Full Discount

Whether you're paying for coverage in one area of your life or bundling multiple together, you can save money

based on how you pay. If you pay your annual policy premium in one payment for your property, or vehicles or both, you can lower your overall cost than it would be by paying monthly.

Your Farm Bureau agent can give you a cost breakdown of how much you can save by choosing the paid in full discount. Additionally, ask your agent about new payment enhancements available for a wider variety of payment options.

Here to Help: Your Local Agents

In a time when many are looking for ways to save, don't be afraid to ask what you might be missing. There's no better time than now to set up a SuperCheck® with one of the local Farm Bureau agents listed below to evaluate your current coverage and see if there are additional ways you can save money.

Doug Adams, (316) 755-2717
111 S Abilene Avenue
Valley Center, KS 67147

Josh Axline, (316) 794-2285
19922 West Kellogg Dr.
Goddard, KS 67052-9300

Gordon Rittahler, (316) 239-7800
301 W Grand Ave.
PO Box 354
Haysville, KS 67060

1 10% savings applied per vehicle at enrollment for select coverages. Future savings based on individual driving behaviors and varies by coverages selected. Discounts apply to the major coverages for your eligible and enrolled vehicles. Cannot be combined with the Low Mileage Discount. | 2 Safe Young Driver discount eligibility is subject to all eligibility requirements being met. | 3 Eligibility requirements apply for Financial Services Discount. Discount applies to select coverage on your Farm Bureau Member's Choice policy. | Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company,* Western Agricultural Insurance Company,* Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company*/West Des Moines, IA. *Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services.

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 and 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 have until Decem-

ber 6, 2024 to spend the funds.

You might ask, "How does this affect me?" Well, if you produce beef, pork, chicken, or turkey and have been looking to get your product sold at a local school, now is your chance! Reach out to the food service 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 a lot 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 the resources linked 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.

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_q-a_final.pdf?sfvrsn=c170fd37_9

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YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS

Joseph Neville

We just wrapped up with another year of the Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference in Manhattan. We had quite a few more folks attend this year than in the last couple years with just over 500 attendees! If you or your spouse is 18-35 and has any interest in attending in the future, I would highly recommend you go!

We had quite the variety of workshops to choose to learn from and dedicated time to network with other young producers, industry experts, and KFB staff and board members. One highlight was gaining insight into the fertilizer market, including what to expect in the future and timing purchases. Another was a look at transition planning, which has many layers to it. Often transition planning sessions are about getting the older generation to the table to have conversations to get things started; however, this year's session provided guidance for young producers to prepare us for the future, what we can control now, and how we can help get our plan in place. Also, there is quite the push for carbon markets with a lot of money being funneled into this new market and finding ways to capitalize on the funds available. Finally, don't be afraid to get involved and be willing to learn. There are a lot of good opportunities to learn and help serve not only in the Farm Bureau world but also in our industry and local communities.



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<< Sedgwick County delegates along with District 4 board member Steve McCloud and District 4 FSA Claire Coleman attending the 2024 YF&R Conference in Manhattan, Kansas at the beginning of February.