

SCFB

news

SEDGWICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

November 2019



Mick Rausch showing a calf provided by the Pauly family to fourth graders at Adventures in Agriculture

NOTES FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Jon Kerschen

As the cropping season wraps up, the busy time of year for your Sedgwick County Farm Bureau board is just ahead. With the Kansas Farm Bureau annual meeting and the American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting coming in the next couple months, there will be no shortage of opportunities for the board to get together with other members from across our state and country.

Locally, your board has been active and will have several events coming up before the end of the year. In early October, we attended our fourth district listening post, which is the last opportunity for members to submit possible resolution changes before the KFB annual meeting in early December. Good policies are the foundation of this organization and why it maintains and updates its policies on an annual basis.

One item hopefully you have heard about from Kansas Farm Bureau is the rollout of the new member health benefit program. Health insurance costs continue to be a major expense to everyone's bottom line, and this provides another option for our members. KFB opened up enrollment for their plan on October 1. Please contact your agent or the county office if you are interested in looking at the plans. Farm Bureau definitely saw a need for this amongst its members and has devoted a lot of time and resources in offering this benefit.

In December, the board is going to have a media training day at a local news station. It is important that we build our relationships with our news affiliates so we can make sure our story is being told accurately. It is imperative that when news outlets contact us as producers, we are able to convey our message correctly and be a reli-

able source for the media.

We have had several discussions in the past several board meetings about building a relationship with law-enforcement. We are aware of a couple issues recently in which producers have been reported to law-enforcement mainly concerning crop residue being left on roads from silage trucks and residues from harvest near homes. Law enforcement has to respond to complaints, and we need to be proactive and informative to our law-enforcement agencies so they understand what is going on in our production agriculture systems. This is very important for us, being in such an urban area. Rural and urban areas overlap in numerous parts of our county, and we need to educate so that we can coexist. Hopefully we will be able to reach out to local law enforcement and work on building that relationship and understanding.

As this year comes to an end, that means another legislative session will be getting ready to start in January. We will continue to communicate with our legislators and hopefully meet with most of them before they go back for the 2020 session. We feel it is very important to build our relationships with our legislators so that we make sure policies are in place to benefit our members.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone to please be safe. We have had too many accidents this fall in farm country. One example close to me is my brother-in-law's father, a farmer in Iowa, who fell off his combine last week doing the non-dangerous act of filling it up with fuel, and he is now paralyzed as a result. We know that we are in a dangerous profession; remember it only takes one misstep for a tragedy to happen.



The Listening Post held in October provided 4th District members an opportunity to offer a review of potential policy changes. Brian Wetta, District 4 Resolutions Chair, led the meeting.



ANNUAL MEETING

Anthony Seiler

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau held its 101st Annual Meeting on August 13th. In my first ten months as Executive Director, this was one of the most impressive experiences for me. In the full room that night, it was great to see old friends and neighbors, and I was so grateful for how many people came up and introduced themselves. I was inspired that night to see so many families and parts of our farming community present. It is a privilege and a great responsibility to work as your representative through Farm Bureau, one for which I am very thankful.

At the annual meeting, we also present several awards. Our Friend of Agriculture award was given to Gayle Ross, our long time County Administrator, in recognition of her years of service and leadership to Sedgwick County Farm Bureau. Kent Winter was awarded the Distinguished Service Award. In addition to being a past president of the county board of directors, Kent has served our community at the state and national level. We presented the Farm Family of the Year award to Jon and Emily Kerschen. Their four children;

Abigail, Jenevieve, Willie, and Otis were all in attendance as well. The Kerschen family farms near Garden Plain, and Jon currently serves as the president of our county board of directors. Century Farm signs were also presented to Kent and Susan Winter and Michael McGinn. We recognized the newest FFA chapter in Sedgwick County, which is located in Mulvane, with a check to assist with founding their chapter. A highlight was board member, Kent Ott, who is himself an alumni of Mulvane FFA, presented the check.

Finally, I want to say thank you to everyone who helped make our annual meeting such a success, from the folks at Sedgwick County Research and Extension, to our volunteers, and all of you who attended. I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish as an organization over the next year!



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.

(CW FROM TOP LEFT) CENTURY FARM: MICHAEL MCGINN; SUSAN & KENT WINTER | FRIEND OF AGRICULTURE: GAYLE ROSS
FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR: EMILY & JON KERSCHEN | DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD: KENT WINTER | MULVANE FFA

Did You Know?

Once a place to talk shop, #AgTwitter has helped curb depression among farmers.*

#AgTwitter provides a community of both information and support without the "toxic negativity" political Twitter tends to bring. And in a field that is somewhat solitary, it provides a place to observe and connect with other farmers both near and far.

Connect with us on Twitter at @SedgwickFB!

SAFETY ON THE FARM Kent Ott

Fall is a busy time on the farm with harvest, and my thoughts this past week were a little random with a burgeoning harvest just waiting to be brought in. Two thoughts floated to the surface though: farm safety and my dad. Since age six, I remember working with my father on the farm. We operated open tractors and tended rambunctious livestock. Concern for safety on the farm was always in the back of my dad's mind. Two farm accidents come to mind when I think of safety. My dad got himself wedged between a truck and building while working with sheep. He was unable to get himself free, and as a result of the accident, he broke several ribs. There was not much to do to fix ribs—just move gingerly and sleep fitfully in the recliner at night.

The second accident was mine. As a young man, I was working to remove a three-point

blade from a tractor. I was not careful, and it fell on my ankle, crushing it. I was alone and had to figure out how to extract myself from the blade. Once I did, I drove my tractor across the field toward my father who was on the far side of the field. As I started my trek for help across the field in my open tractor, I was trying to motion him toward me. He in turn just waved his friendly wave back, thinking "My, Kent is happy today!" To have had a cell phone...

I give thanks today for my father who was an excellent farm partner and safety enforcer! And remember, please stay safe out there this fall. Slow down and think ahead!



I am sure that if all of you are as crazy busy as I am, you have been thinking about and looking ahead to the 2020 elections. Even though I say that somewhat sarcastically, I am sure it is on many of your minds; you can't really help it if you watch the news! I wish that there were some outstanding insight I could give about who to vote for, but unfortunately, I have no such insight. I will just have to try to pay attention to the candidates' messages and agendas. The one thing I do know is that we all need to be informed and most importantly to get out and vote. Your Sedgwick, Kansas, and American Farm Bureaus will soon be reviewing candidates and deciding which ones are most qualified to receive their endorsements. As members, your input is always welcome and appreciated. If you have thoughts or concerns about a particular candidate, don't hesitate to contact the office or one of your board members. Hope everyone has a safe and productive fall.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Donna Wise

Your Sedgwick County Farm Bureau board has been busy since our last newsletter. Of course, in July we had the Sedgwick County Fair and all that goes into the celebration of agriculture at the fair through our livestock and other ways of promoting the growth of the products that we need to live every day. One of the highlights is delivering donuts and cartons of milk to the 4-Hers and purchasing animals at the livestock show.

In early August, my husband and I went to the KFB Summer Summit in Garden City to take in some workshops to learn more about agriculture and the uses of our products as well as to celebrate 100 years of Kansas Farm Bureau. Also in August, Sedgwick County Farm Bureau had our 101st annual meeting. What a wonderful time of celebrating what we do together to be the voice of agriculture.

On September 14th, we had our usual Adventures in Agriculture at the Sedgwick County Extension Center. We had 10 different stations teaching 4th graders from various schools around the county

many aspects of agriculture and all that goes into what we do. I got to participate in the strawberry DNA session where we were able to extract the DNA from strawberries. It was such fun to watch the kids' reaction when they were able to pull the DNA out of a strawberry for themselves. Other sessions that we had at our Adventures in Agriculture show cased a tractor, calves and goats, and growing a sprout from a seed in addition to many others. A big thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make this a fabulous success.



Fourth graders separating DNA from strawberries at Adventures in Agriculture

On October 1st, many of your board members traveled to Eureka for our Listening Post where we worked together on setting the policies that our Farm Bureau use to determine what direction we go concerning policies on both the state and national levels. Then on October 4th, our executive director, Anthony Seiler, Karen Burditt, and I were at the Cowtown Education Day in Wichita where we set up a booth on grains and seeds to teach all of the various schools that came through what sort of products are made from the grains and seeds that we grow in this area. A big thank you goes out to Gavilon Grain for providing the grains that the kids got to run their fingers through to know what a grain is.

Besides our Farm Bureau activities, my husband and I also like to travel. I am dictating this article from a ship in Greece. I hope that you are finding ways to celebrate the wonderful life we've been given and the opportunities to be producers on our land.



MEET THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Gavin Beesley

Hello, my name is Gavin Beesley and I am one of the Farm Bureau Ambassadors this year. I heard about this program from a farmer that I go to church with, and he encouraged me to apply. I'm very excited for the opportunity to learn more about Farm Bureau and to attend and help with events. I am a home-schooled senior in high school, and I am currently working on my associate's degree in Animal Science at Cowley County Community College. I raise Boer goats for meat and am involved in 4-H and youth group at the church I attend. With wanting to go into the agriculture field, this ambassador program is awesome. It allows me to meet people in the industry, and I also get to work with a great group of people who want to help others.

One requirement with being an ambassador is attending monthly board meetings. I had no clue what to expect going into my first meeting. I was able to meet other board members and get a feel for how meetings were conducted. There are several things that stick out to me in board meetings. One is that meetings always begin with a prayer, and to me this is such a great thing. It's great to see an organization that emphasizes God and gives Him credit for success; I haven't seen this with many other organizations. The other major thing that I noticed is how everyone is there for a reason and wants to better not only the organization but also the people who are involved in it. Overall, I am grateful for the opportunity to be a Farm Bureau Ambassador and am excited to work with them this year.

Mollie Reno

Hello! My name is Mollie Reno. I am a senior at Cheney High School, and I am one of the new Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Ag Ambassadors. Throughout the next year, I will be attending board meetings and Farm Bureau activities in order to learn more about the organization and its involvement in all aspects of Kansas agriculture. I look forward to meeting you during the next year!

Zack Simon

Agriculture has been a passion of mine from a young age. I would often get caught in just a diaper sneaking out of the house to go catch a ride on the tractor with Dad or one of my uncles. My love of agriculture grew right along with me as I went to work for a neighboring farmer in high school. I went off to K-State and majored in agronomy, with a minor in plant pathology. After graduation, I went to work on campus as an assistant scientist in the sorghum breeding program. In 2013, my wife and I had the opportunity to move back home after I was offered a job as the Sedgwick County Extension agriculture agent. Around a year ago, I took on a new role with the United Sorghum Checkoff as a regional marketing director. In addition to my work at the Checkoff, I have started farming with my dad. Together we grow wheat, sorghum, soybeans, and feed out a few cattle every year. I am a fifth generation Kansas farmer, and my wife, Staci, and I live in Colwich with our three children.

I am excited and honored to have the opportunity to serve on the Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Board. I had many mentors that taught me many things growing up in agriculture, and I look forward to opportunities to mentor others. I hope that as a board member I can educate those, especially youth, about our wonderful industry.

Meghan Mueseler

Interview with your new board member: Meghan Mueseler
What was your first memory on the farm? I remember moving up to my late grandfather's farm, which is located in the far northeast corner of Kansas, and being crushed because I was missing the estate sale as I was too young and would require lots of attention; the main reason for my sadness? I was missing the arrival of Miss Ellie-the first cow on our farm! I was definitely hooked on cattle from an early age!
Who do you root for during football season? I definitely have a divided allegiance when it comes to football season. First, my heart lies with K-State as I received a BS in Agriculture Economics with a minor in Animal Science. Second, I cheer for the OState Cowboys where I received an MS in Agricultural Education.
What brought you to Wichita? In 2020, I will celebrate 20 years working for Cargill in the protein part of the business. Today, much of my work life is spent working in the space of sustainability including how we ensure throughout the supply chain that we take care of not only the land and animals, but also the people involved in producing/processing the food for the end consumer.
When not at the family farm, cheering on the Cats/Pokes, or work, where do you spend your free time? I definitely LOVE to stay involved in my community, including Farm Bureau or FFA/4H activities as all hold a special place in my heart! I also have a passion for staying healthy through the power of protein and physical activity so you can usually find me cooking up something and/or riding my gravel bike on the dirt roads of Kansas!
Last question, what is one of your favorite quote/phrases? Currently on my LinkedIn profile I have the following quote up, which I really like: "Please trust the journey...keep going...stay on the path...just around the bend there is a life you could never imagine."-Author Unknown

YF & R Trapshoot

Joseph Neville



In early October, a group of young farmers and ranchers gathered for a trap shoot and meal. It was a great opportunity for board members to meet our young members and vice versa. The evening also gave the young members a chance to get to know each other so they would have some familiar faces at the YF&R conference. We had a ton of fun; watch for more events like this in the future! The next chance to be involved is at the annual YF&R Conference in Manhattan on February 7-9. Contact the office to get signed up!

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Mick Rausch

Why do you volunteer? The Sedgwick County Farm Bureau board is made up of members who volunteer their time to help our members. So why do we volunteer? For me, I hope to make the organization better by helping our members. Farm Bureau has so many things we provide as services to our members, sometimes we forget that it's the members who are the organization's biggest asset. I believe that we all need to give something back in whatever way we can. Being on the board, we can help provide services to our members that not only help them farm but also provides help with their personal lives. Case in point: the new Health Care plans. Our members have been wanting a more affordable health care option, and our organization is now able to offer a possible option to members.

Being a volunteer also allows me to connect with other farmers to discuss how my problems are also their problems

and that we share alike in how we deal with this ever-changing world that we call farming in these evolving times. Being a volunteer, sometimes you have to go outside of your comfort zone to push yourself to do things you might be uncomfortable doing. So the next time someone asks you to help out, go ahead and volunteer; you might be surprised by what you get out of it!

Also thank God this year is almost over; this has been one for the record books from too much rain before harvest, to torrential rains this summer, to dry in late summer, to too cold this fall. I'm ready to call it a year and start next year off on a new leaf.

(CCW FROM FAR LEFT)
 MEGHAN MUESELER,
 MOLLIE RENO, JOSEPH NEVILLE,
 JAY PAULY, JOY CARP,
 KENT OTT, ANTHONY SEILER
 (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR),
 JON KERSCHEN, MICK RAUSCH,
 DONNA WISE, BYRON WELLS,
 ZACK SIMON, GAVIN BEESLEY



PUT A FACE TO THE NAME! THE SEDGWICK COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD & AMBASSADORS

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New Healthcare Coverage Options for Kansans

Kansas Farm Bureau Health Plans provides members with affordable competitive rates for medical and dental coverage. No matter what stage of life you're in, Kansas Farm Bureau Health Plans will have options that fit your lifestyle. Plus, our network of providers is one of the largest available throughout the state of Kansas and beyond.

To get a quote or apply for coverage, visit your local Farm Bureau Financial Services agent, go to www.kfbhealthplans.com or call 833-282-5928.


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