The LEAP Conference is designed to provide leadership and advocacy training for all Farm Bureau members. The conference is planned and hosted by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Promotion and Education and Young Farmers & Ranchers Committees alongside the South Dakota Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
Vance Crowe
Vance is a communications consultant that has worked for corporations and international organizations around the world. He has spoken before more than 100,000 people, answering questions about some of the most sophisticated and controversial technologies in the modern age. Vance helps organizations realize why the general public doesn’t agree with their perspective and offers new ways to communicate effectively, resolve disagreements, and build rapport with critics and stakeholders.

Dick Beardsley
Dick is one of the world’s most extraordinary, well respected, and compelling motivational/inspirational keynote speakers. Dick’s inspirational international best-selling autobiography Staying the Course, A Runner’s Toughest Race and the subject of the best-
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In late September, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler kicked off his Midwest swing in Minnesota with a tour of Brownfield sites in St. Cloud where he announced over $700,000 in a Brownfields 128(a) State and Tribal Grant, and $320,000 in environmental justice grants to the greater Minneapolis area. Administrator Wheeler also joined U.S. Representative Pete Stauber (MN-08) in a meeting with agricultural partners at a local farm.

Alongside U.S. Representative Pete Stauber (MN-08), the Minnesota Farm Bureau, and FFA students, Administrator Wheeler and Regional Administrator for EPA Region 5 Kurt Thiede toured Don and Shaun Fiedler’s farm in Stanchfield, Minnesota learning about their operations and conservation practices. They also met with local producers to discuss opportunities for future partnership and best conservation practices.

“Acting as good stewards of our land is of the utmost importance to Minnesota’s farmers. That’s why I was happy to join EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler at a farm in Minnesota’s Eighth Congressional District to see firsthand the important role local farmers play in preserving the environment and help announce a grant that will protect and empower our farmers as they continue this important work,” said U.S. Representative Pete Stauber (MN-08). “Agriculture is one of the top industries in our state, so I commend this Administration for working alongside myself and our farmers to address the issues that are most important to the agriculture community and I look forward to seeing this important partnership continue into the future.”

“Minnesota Farm Bureau appreciates Administrator Wheeler spending time talking directly to farmers in Minnesota. From the RFS to clean water to crop protection tools, the work of EPA has a direct impact on Minnesota farmers,” said Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Stenstrom.

With strong bipartisan support during the fifth special session, the Minnesota legislature passed HF 1, the bonding and tax bill. The bill was passed with strong support on both sides of the aisle with a vote of 100 to 34 in the House and 64 to 3 in the Senate. Included in this bill was conformity to Section 179 expensing effective for tax year 2020. The bill also provides for Section 179 expensing retroactively for tax years in which the like-kind exchange changes under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act were effective for federal purposes. (The bonding portion of the infrastructure bill included many local projects that are important to communities across Minnesota. Section 179 expensing, which takes its name from a section of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), allows businesses to deduct the entire amount of the cost of qualifying property in the tax year the property is placed in service, rather than claiming depreciation deductions over a number of years. This allows the business to accelerate recognition of the expense from future tax years into the present year. The number of years over which property would otherwise be depreciated ranges from three to 15 years, depending on the type of property and its useful life as classified under the IRC.

In 2017, Congress expanded the section 179 deduction. At the federal level, businesses may now deduct up to $1 million in qualifying property placed into service in the tax year. This amount is phased out dollar for dollar once a business’s qualifying property expenditure amount exceeds $2.5 million. The phase-out effectively prohibits businesses making more than $3.5 million in qualifying property expenditures.
Still Getting Our Chores Done

President’s Voice
KEVIN PAAP • MFBF PRESIDENT

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Karlin Schaefer, Executive Director ...... 651-768-2104
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James Doedds, North Region ............. 218-556-4667
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2020 has looked very different in just about every way. The one thing that has not changed, however, is Farm Bureau’s commitment to our members. Your Minnesota Farm Bureau Board of Directors and staff remains committed to being advocates for agriculture, driven by the beliefs and policies of our members.

COVID-19 has changed how many of our county Farm Bureau members were able to gather for annual meetings, but we continued to adapt and were able to celebrate the accomplishments of our members and plan for the year ahead. Farm Bureau members were able to form resolutions as part of our policy development process on issues that are impacting their farms and communities, just like they have for the past 101 years.

The 2020 Minnesota Legislature not only met virtually which changed how we interacted with our elected officials, but they also have met for a record setting five special sessions. Even though it looked different, Minnesota Farm Bureau members still had a constant and effective presence with the legislature. This was especially clear when the legislature passed a bill that included tax provisions that will allow full conformity of Section 179—a priority issue for Minnesota Farm Bureau. Thank you to our members who reached out to their elected officials to ensure they knew how important this was to agriculture.

The pandemic challenged Farm Bureau leaders to think creatively on how to reach out to their friends and neighbors to ask them to join their county Farm Bureau. However, it’s more important than ever to be a part of an organization like Farm Bureau. Nearly 30,000 members who join together to advocate on shared values and beliefs have more impact than standing alone. We all must show up, stand up and speak up.

This will be the year of Zoom meetings. While we may all be suffering from Zoom fatigue, our weekly webinar, Shop Talk, has continued to bring together Farm Bureau members to hear from issue area experts on important policy topics. With guests such as USDA Secretary Perdue and EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler and timely topics like the economic impacts of COVID, each episode of Shop Talk brings value to Farm Bureau members. It also provided an opportunity to showcase the strength of our organization’s talent by highlighting internal issue experts like Dr. Newton and Cody Lyon. You can learn more about Shop Talk and view previous webinars at fbfm.org/shoptalk.

The 2020 Minnesota Farm Bureau Annual meeting will look different than any other year, however, we look forward to safely gathering to complete the business of our organization.

But most importantly, no matter what twists and turns 2020 took, Minnesota farmers and ranchers were #StillFarming.

Lots of things have changed and we will all continue to adapt but know that Farm Bureau will always be a strong voice for farmers, ranchers and rural communities in Minnesota. Thank you for being a member.

Unexpected Challenges, Hidden Blessings

The Zipline
ZIPPY DUVALL • AFBF PRESIDENT

While this year has been full of unexpected challenges, we can also find hidden blessings throughout each season. I was reminded of this when my daughter Cora and her children came home for a short visit recently. One memory I’ll hold onto from the weekend was introducing my grandchildren to my first love in farming, dairying. Their excitement is contagious, and I hope they will always love learning.

Teaching the next generation about where their food comes from is a truly special privilege, and there’s no shortage of valuable lessons children can glean from agriculture.

At the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, our team has been working all year to find creative ways to continue to bring the farm home and give parents additional resources for distance learning. With more families spending time together, cooking and baking together, and even planting home gardens, I can’t think of a better time to learn more about how food is grown and raised. And many of these resources are FREE.

Teaching the next generation about where their food comes from is a truly special privilege.

Each week throughout the year, our Foundation team has gathered resources, activities and games for grades K through 5th. Those resources are focused on a different agricultural topic or commodity each week and can be used at home or in the classroom. For example, this week’s theme is apples, and includes an art activity and a video about how apples grow. It also features a farmer answering the question: What happens when you plant the seeds from the apple you just ate? Parents and teachers can find these resources and the entire collection of weekly educational activities at the top of the Ag Foundation’s website.

These resources are just a slice of the pie when it comes to all the work the Ag Foundation does to build a greater understanding of agriculture with students of all ages. From grants to support classroom teachers and community programs to carefully researched and developed STEM curriculum, we are committed to building a solid foundation for the next generation of consumers to understand all that goes into growing a safe, sustainable food supply. And for kids who can’t get out to the farm just now, we continue to bring the farm to them through interactive games, like My American Farm, to books that explore a variety of ag careers to videos of farmers answering kids’ questions about farming and ranching.

I’m proud to say our Ag Foundation has become a go-to resource for teachers and parents alike. Over 1 million students have played My American Farm, and this year alone half a million visitors have come to the My American Farm website, 85% coming back to play again. There is a hunger to learn more about agriculture, and our Ag Foundation has risen to the challenge this year, and every year. We cannot do it alone, however. Our work is fueled by volunteers across the country, and the generosity of donors who partner with us financially.

I invite you to join with us by sharing the story of agriculture and sparking curiosity for students across the country. Who can say, but maybe the lessons learned this year will inspire the next generation of ag researchers, nutritionists, veterinarians, farmers and ranchers. Let’s keep planting the seeds of agricultural understanding for a bountiful harvest to come.
Your financial future is one of the many things on your mind.

It’s the only thing on ours.

If 2020 has taught us anything, it’s the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. Could your financial future handle another year like this one? Our agents and advisors are committed to helping you gain the peace of mind that comes from knowing you’re not alone in preparing for your future.

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To order a FREE copy of the book, contact 
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and number of copies requested. An electronic 
copy of the book can be found at fbmn.org under programs.

Opioid Resource Guide Available
This past year the Minnesota Farm Bureau 
Foundation partnered with RALI to help with our 
work on promoting the FarmTownStrong.org 
website. The website brings awareness and resources 
to rural Minnesota that help combat the opioid crisis.
Along with the promotion of the website, a 
resource guide has been developed to help bring 
awareness and resources to our communities.
For a free copy of the Opioid Abuse in Rural 
Minnesota County Farm Bureau Guide log onto 
fbmn.org/safety or for free DeTerra prescription 
medicine disposal kits contact Ruth Meirick at 651-
768-2115 or ruth.meirick@fbmn.org.

2020 County Board Challenge
MFB Foundation Board of Directors is asking 
county Farm Bureaus to donate $10 per board 
member. Counties will be recognized as a County 
Board Challenge participant. Counties that elect 
to give to the Giving Tree automatically qualify for the 
County Board Challenge.

Giving Tree
The Minnesota Farm Bureau Foundation (MFB 
Foundation) Giving Tree is a permanent perpetual 
display in the Minnesota Farm Bureau office. 
Donors are recognized on the tree for donations to 
the MFB Foundation of amounts $1,000 or greater.

Discover MINNESOTA!
Visit a Christmas Tree Farm!

Rum River Tree Farm
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Greenhouse
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Lake Elmo, MN 55042

For more tree farms, go to 
fbmn.org/farm-fresh.

Proper Christmas Tree Care
Follow these tips to keep your 
real Christmas tree as fresh as 
possible. If you are unable to set 
up your tree when you get home, 
store it in a cool sheltered area 
like the North side house, away 
from the wind and sun. With 
proper care, your Christmas tree 
will bring warmth and pleasure 
throughout the holiday season!

1. Make a fresh cut.
   Before you bring the tree into 
your home and place it in a stand, 
remove the cut trunk at least one 
inch from the bottom just before 
putting it in the stand. Even if you 
just cut it on a choose and 
cut farm, this re-opens the 
tree stem so it can drink water.

2. Choose a spot away from 
heat sources.
   Heat sources like heat registers, 
spare heaters, fireplaces, wood 
stove, televisions, computer 
mounters, etc. speed up 
evaporation and moisture loss of 
the tree.

3. Water immediately.
   After making the fresh cut, place 
the tree in a large capacity stand 
with warm water. The stand you 
use should hold at least one 
gallon of fresh water.

4. Don’t add anything to the water.
   Research has shown that plain 
tap water is the best. Some 
commercial additives and home 
concoctions can decrease a tree’s 
moisture retention and increase 
needle loss.

5. Check water level daily.
   Do not allow the water level to 
drop below the fresh cut or the 
stem will resalal and be unable to 
drink. Christmas trees are very 
 thirsty! It is not unusual for a 
tree to drink 2 gallons of water 
the first day it is the stand.

In a tax year from using 
section 179 for 
the tax year. In 
2019, the 
legislature 
rerotatively 
conformed to 
these new 
limits, but 
retained 
the 
state 
addition for section 179. 
Under 
Minnesota law, 80% of 
the amount of 
the equipment 
purchased in 
excess of $25,000 is added-back 
to the taxpayer’s Minnesota 
income in the year of 
the purchase and the taxpayers are 
allowed to deduct as an expense 
on their Minnesota income tax 
20% of that deduction in excess of 
$25,000 over the next 5 years. 
In addition, the 2019 MN tax 
bill enacted retroactive state 
income tax increases on many 
farmers and businesses 
by conforming to the tax increases 
from the Federal Tax Cuts and 
Jobs Act but without adopting 
most of the federal offsets. 
Minnesota fully conformed with 
1031 federal like-kind exchange 
rules resulting in an increase in 
income tax liability for trade-in 
of certain equipment, but

EPA FROM PAGE 3

Minnesota did not 
conform with the 
tax offset of 
Section 179 tax 
immediate 
expensing. The 
result was that 
many businesses and 
farmers received 
unexpected tax 
benefits stating they 
owe more 
income taxes in 
Minnesota.

Section 179 is a key tool 
to allow farmers to 
invest into their 
businesses and 
in their rural communities”

—MFBF President 
Kevin Paap

“Section 179 is a key tool to 
allow farmers to invest into their 
businesses and in their rural 
communities,” said 
Minnesota Farm Bureau 
President Kevin Paap.
We appreciate the 
bipartisan support in both 
chambers for this important 
tax tool that provides certainty 
in the midst of financial challenges 
in the ag economy. Minnesota Farm 
Bureau members made it clear to 
their legislators that this was a 
priority issue for farmers and 
ranchers across the state and we
are excited to see this finally 
become a reality.”
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The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Board of Directors elections will be held at this year’s Annual Meeting on November 17. Board of Director positions up for election include: MFBF Vice President (two-year term) and board members (three-year terms) from Districts III, IV and VII.

The Young Farmers and Ranchers chair and the Promotion and Education chair (one year terms) will also be confirmed by the voting delegates.

District caucuses will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, November 20. County Farm Bureau delegates from Districts III, IV and VII will nominate an individual to represent that district on the MFBF Board of Directors. The election of president, district board directors and confirmation of state committee chairs will be conducted by all county Farm Bureau delegates during the Annual Meeting Voting Delegate Session.

I am running for the position of Vice President of the Minnesota Farm Bureau because I believe in the work that Farm Bureau does for Minnesota farmers and their families. Just like the way a corn plant grows and thrives, Farm Bureau advocates for agriculture from the roots up! The county leaders all across the state are the backbone of what Farm Bureau is and will continue to be into the future. My start in Farm Bureau began when I served in the role of my county’s Young Farmers and Ranchers chair position. It was through this position I learned to appreciate all Farm Bureau has to offer. Whether it’s the leadership development programs or promoting and engaging our consumers about what we do in agriculture, county leaders do great things all across rural Minnesota. Visiting with lawmakers and other elected officials is another aspect of Farm Bureau that was and will continue to be critical to the organization’s success. We need to continue to be involved in those conversations with the people that make laws and rules that farmers have to adhere to everyday on our farms. I’ve come to appreciate what Farm Bureau does for its members through these different programs, it is that appreciation that drives me to want to serve as your Vice President. I humbly ask for your support in the upcoming election at our annual meeting.

 Counties of Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock and Yellow Medicine

My name is Carolyn Olson. My husband, Jonathan, and I farm near Cottonwood in Lyon County. We raise corn, soybeans, small grain, and alfalfa organically and contract finish pigs conventionally. We have three grown daughters, one son-in-law, and one granddaughter.

Earlier this year I completed my Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership (MARL) course as part of Class X. Along with learning leadership skills during our seminars, we had the chance to tour various types of agriculture and agriculture-related industries all across the state while learning about the issues they face. We also learned about the communities we were staying in, and how they depend on agriculture to help support their communities. Minnesota is unique with the variety of forestry, livestock, and agriculture crops grown. The Farm Bureau members in District III are unique with the variety of livestock and crops grown as well. This diversity makes our district rich not only in agricultural goods, but also a depth of knowledge. I have learned so much by hearing your stories and that has allowed me to share your stories at the state and national level. I have advocated for conventional, organic, and livestock farmers and will continue to do so. It is my belief that we all have a place at the table no matter the size of our farm or ranch, what we grow, or how we grow it.

Carolyn Olson

Just like the way a corn plant grows and thrives, Farm Bureau advocates for agriculture from the roots up!

Dan Glessing

It has been an honor to serve the 4th District of the Minnesota Farm Bureau. I have learned much since I have taken office and would look forward to continuing to fill this seat on the Minnesota Farm Bureau Board of Directors. My wife and I have had many great opportunities through Farm Bureau including leadership development, educating kids about farm safety, presenting to civic groups on today’s agriculture, meeting many members of the Minnesota Legislature and so many more.

I and my wife and our three kids farm in partnership with my brother, Sean, growing corn and soybeans, and we are also partners in a local custom forage harvesting business. I would appreciate your consideration and vote. I look forward to serving District IV and working with the Farm Bureau members.

Nathan Collins

I have learned much since I have taken office and would look forward to continuing to fill this seat on the Minnesota Farm Bureau Board of Directors.

Nathan Collins

I have been awarded to me through my involvement in Farm Bureau over the years is very humbling and I am so grateful.

Shayne Isane

The opportunities that have been afforded to me through my involvement in Farm Bureau over the years is very humbling and I am so grateful.

Shayne Isane

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Board Candidate Statements

The counties of Becker, Clay, Kittson, Mahnomen, Norman, Northwest Regional, East Otter Tail, West Otter Tail, East Polo, West Polo and Wilkin

I hope this finds everyone healthy and coping well during these challenging times. My wife, Denise and I live on our family farm in Roseau County in Northwest Minnesota. We are blessed with 2 grown children and 4 grandkids. I farm with my brother Jamie and not too far from our diversified farm. We raise spring wheat, soybeans, corn, perennial ryegrass, alfalfa, grass hay and have cow-calf operation. We also have a small trucking and construction company.

The tagline of Farmers, Families and Food is such a great description of the work this great organization does at the local, state and national level. None of this would be possible without the lifeblood of our group, our members. It has been so rewarding to meet and make friends in the Farm Bureau family. I ask you to continue your great work and urge others to be a part of this organization that is so committed to the strength of agriculture today and into the future. I believe that I have helped lead Minnesota Farm Bureau through a time of transition and change. I can assure you this Board of Directors and Leadership have a passion for the continued strength and effectiveness of Minnesota Farm Bureau.

It has truly been a privilege to serve on the Minnesota Board of Directors for the past 3 years. The opportunities that have been afforded to me through my involvement in Farm Bureau over the years is very humbling and I am so grateful. I use this as motivation to work hard to represent District VII on the State and National level. I have also been fortunate to represent Minnesota Farm Bureau on the AFBF Issue Advisory Group on Farm Policy. I have enjoyed the support of the membership and delegates of District VII in the past and ask for it again. Thank you.

Shayne Isane

Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Board Candidate Statements

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Board Candidate Statements
Annual Meeting Spotlight

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers’ Excellence in Agriculture winner will be announced at the end of November. The winner will represent Minnesota at the national competition at a later date. They will also receive a $500 prize, a trip to the MFBF LEAP Conference to be held in Sioux Falls, January 22-23, 2021 and a leadership development trip to Washington D.C.

The Young Farmers’ and Ranchers’ Excellence in Agriculture spotlights young Farm Bureau members who are agricultural enthusiasts but have not earned a majority of their income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in the past three years. Competitors are evaluated on their understanding of agricultural issues, leadership experiences and achievement, and their ability to communicate their agricultural story. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, involvement and participation in Farm Bureau and other organizations.

2020 Excellence in Agriculture

Lucas, Alise and their family own and operate their cheese plant on the family dairy farm near Breoton in Stearns County. Lucas has a career off the farm as the executive director for Minnesota Milk. Alise works full time as the president of the Redhead Creamery cheese company. Both strive to advocate for agriculture by being able to bring over 100,000 people to their farm and being voices for farmers at the local, state, and national levels.

ALISE AND LUCAS SJOSTROM, STEARNS COUNTY

2020 Discussion Meet Finalists

EIGHT SEMI-FINALISTS to compete in the final two rounds of competition, held virtually in November are Madie Weninger – Wright County, Amanda Cook – Chisago County, Elizabeth Nass – Clearwater County, Grant Moore – Lyon County, Jeff Pagel – Olmsted County, Jonathan Giberson Jr. – Cass County, Jamison Schneckloth – Mower County and Justin Crowley from Washington-Ramsey County.

2020 Excellence in Agriculture

Mark, Sara and their family farm crops, cattle and bees near Kilkenny in Le Sueur County. Mark has a career with Soil Warriors as a service manager and started his own a precision agriculture business. Sara works off the farm as the manager of industry relations for the Minnesota Soybean Research & Promotion Council. Both Mark and Sara use various forms of social media to share their agricultural story and showcase their experiences as beginning farmers.

MARK AND SARA HEWITT, LE SUEUR COUNTY

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4 Lessons to Teach Teens About Financial Responsibility

Your teen is becoming more independent, and still needs plenty of advice from you. With more money to spend and more opportunities to spend it, your teen can easily get into financial trouble. So before money burns a hole in your child’s pocket, teach him or her a few financial lessons. With your help, your teen will soon develop the self-confidence and skills he or she needs to successfully manage money in the real world.

**LESSON 1:**

Handling Earnings From a Job

Teens often have more expenses than younger children, and your child may be coming to you for money more often. But with you holding the purse strings, your teen may have difficulty making independent financial decisions.

One solution? Encourage your teen to get a part-time job that will enable him or her to earn money for expenses. Here are some things you might want to discuss with your teen when he or she begins working:

- **Agree on what your child’s pay should be used for.** Now that your teen is working, will he or she need to help out with car insurance or clothing expenses, or do you want your teen to earmark a portion of each paycheck for college?
- **Talk to your teen about taxes.** Show your child how FICA taxes and regular income taxes can take a bite out of his or her take-home pay.
- **Introduce your teen to the concept of paying yourself first.** Encourage your teen to deposit a portion of each paycheck in a savings account before spending any of it.

A teen who is too young to get a job outside the home can make extra cash by babysitting or doing odd jobs for you, neighbors, or relatives. This money can supplement any allowance you choose to hand out, enabling your young teen to get a taste of financial independence.

**LESSON 2:**

Developing a Budget

Developing a written spending plan or budget can help your teen learn to be accountable for his or her finances. Your ultimate goal is to teach your teen how to achieve a balance between money coming in and money going out. To develop a spending plan, have your teen start by listing out all sources of regular income (e.g., an allowance or earnings from a part-time job). Next, have your teen brainstorm a list of regular expenses (don’t include anything you normally pay for). Finally, subtract your teen’s expenses from his or her income. If the result shows that your teen won’t have enough income to meet his or her expenses, you’ll need to help your teen come up with a plan for making up the shortfall.

Here are some ways you can help your teen learn about budgeting:

- **Consolidating out a monthly, rather than weekly, allowance.** Tell your teen that the money must last for the whole month and encourage him or her to keep track of what’s been spent.
- **Encourage your teen to think spending decisions through rather than buying items right away.** Show your teen how comparing prices or waiting for an item to go on sale can save him or her money.
- **Suggest ways your teen can earn more money or cut back on expenses (e.g., rent a DVD to watch with friends rather than go to the movies) to resolve a budget shortfall.**
- **Show your teen how to modify a budget by categorizing expenses as needs (expenses that are unavoidable) and wants (expenses that could be cut if necessary).**
- **Resist the temptation to bail your teen out.** If your teen can depend on you to come up with extra cash, he or she will never learn to manage money wisely. But don’t be judgmental—your teen will inevitably make some spending mistakes along the way. Your child should know that he or she can always come to you for information, support, and advice.

**LESSON 3:**

Saving For The Future

As a youngster, your child saved up for a short-term goal such as buying a favorite toy. But now that your child is a teen, he or she is ready to focus on saving for larger goals such as a new computer or a car and longer-term goals such as college. Here are some ways you can encourage your teen to save for the future:

- **Have your teen put savings goals in writing to make them more concrete.**
- **Encourage your child to set goals that are based on his or her values, not on keeping up with what other teens have or want.**
- **Motivate your child by offering to match what he or she saves towards a long-term goal.** For instance, for every dollar your child sets aside for college, you might contribute 50 cents or 1 dollar.
- **Consider increasing your teen’s allowance if he or she is too young to get a part-time job.**
- **Praise your teen for showing responsibility when he or she reaches a financial goal.** Teens still look for, and count on, their parent’s approval.
- **Open up a savings account for your child if you haven’t already done so.**
- **Introduce your teen to the basics of investing by opening an investment account for your teen (if your teen is a minor, this will be a custodial account).** Look for an account that can be opened with only a low initial contribution at an institution that supplies educational materials introducing teens to basic investment terms and concepts.

**LESSON 4:**

Using Credit Wisely

You can take some comfort in the fact that credit card companies require an adult to cosign a credit card agreement before they will issue a card to someone under the age of 21 (unless that person can prove that he or she has the financial resources to repay the credit card debt), but you can’t ignore the credit card issue altogether. Many teens today use credit cards, and it probably won’t be long until your teen asks for one too.

If you decide to cosign a credit card application for your teen, ask the credit card company to assign a low credit limit (e.g., $300). This can help your child learn to manage credit without getting into serious debt. Here are some things to discuss with your teen before he or she uses a credit card:

- **Set limits on what the card can be used for (e.g., emergencies, clothing).**
- **Review the credit card agreement, and make sure your child understands how much interest will accrue on the unpaid balance, what grace period applies, and what fees will be charged.**
- **Agree on how the bill will be paid, and what will happen if your child can’t pay the bill.**
- **Make sure your child understands how long it will take to pay off a credit card balance if he or she only makes minimum payments. You can demonstrate this using an online calculator or by reviewing the estimate provided on each month’s credit card statement.**

If putting money in your teen’s hands is a scary thought, you may want to start off with a prepaid spending card. A prepaid spending card looks like a credit card but works more like a prepaid phone card. You load the card with the dollar amount you choose, and your teen can generally use it anywhere a credit card is accepted. Your teen’s purchases are deducted from the card balance, and you can transfer more money to the card if necessary. Although there may be some fees associated with the card, no interest or debt accrues.

One thing you may especially like about prepaid spending cards is that they allow your teen to gradually get the hang of using credit responsibly. Because you can access account information online or over the phone, you can monitor your teen’s spending habits, then sit down and talk with your teen about money management issues.

As your family situation changes, you may want to review your financial plan to ensure it provides for all your goals—including education funding, retirement, and other events. Contact a Farm Bureau financial advisor to set up a time to talk about your financial future.
For farm families and agribusinesses, selecting a health plan shouldn’t be a one-size-fits-all approach. That’s why 40 Square Cooperative Solutions offers a variety of major medical health plans with a range of options to best fit the needs of Minnesota’s agricultural community. With seven plans to choose from and a large provider network, 40 Square is here to help you navigate your health coverage options.

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

COVID Reminders – How to Protect Yourself and Others

Know how it spreads
- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Everyone should:
- Wash your hands often
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - It’s especially important to wash:
    - Before eating or preparing food
    - Before touching your face
    - After using the restroom
    - After leaving a public place

- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling your mask
- After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Avoid close contact
  - Inside your home: Avoid close contact with people who are sick. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
  - Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don’t live in your household.
    - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
    - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people.
    - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

- Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others
  - You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
  - The mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
  - Everyone should wear a mask in public settings and when around people who don’t live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
  - Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
  - Do NOT use a mask meant for a healthcare worker. Currently, surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.
  - Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

- Clean and disinfect
  - Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
  - If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
  - Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.

- Monitor Your Health Daily
  - Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
    - Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.
  - Take your temperature if symptoms develop.
  - Don’t take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
  - Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Protect Your Health This Flu Season
It’s likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter. Healthcare systems could be overwhelmed treating both patients with flu and patients with COVID-19. This means getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 is more important than ever.

While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 there are many important benefits, such as:
- Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death.
- Getting a flu vaccine can also save healthcare resources for the care of patients with COVID-19.

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**Splendor Ridge Elk Farm**

MFBF ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR of Public Policy, Josie Lonetti visited with Farm Bureau member Brenda Hartkopf about her family’s elk farm, Splendor Ridge Elk Farm in Howard Lake.

**FROM THE ARCHIVE**

BRENDA HARTKOPF, OWNER of Splendor Ridge Elk Farm has raised elk with her husband since 1993. The Hartkopf’s decision to raise elk happened by chance. They were looking to get into farming when they heard a radio commercial about the value of elk antler velvet. Having grown up on a dairy farm they were familiar with livestock and made the decision to start with a few cows. Since then, their herd has grown to 180 animals on 75 acres of land.

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**19 YEARS AGO**

MINNESOTA FARM BUREAU Annual Meeting 2001 Discussion Meet Winners were (L-R) Jeff Eickhoff, Peter Bakken, Rod Hamilton and Joel Mathiowetz.

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SUGAR BEETS

- Minnesota produces more sugar beets than any other state in the country.
- In 2019, Minnesota harvested 336,000 acres of sugar beets producing 8,400,000 tons of sugar.
- Because of the extremely cold temperatures, Minnesota and North Dakota are some of the few places where the harvested sugar beets can be stored in outdoor piles.

SOYBEANS

- On average, Minnesota farmers plant over 7 million acres of beans each year.
- Minnesota is the third largest soybean producing state in the nation.
- The primary component of soybeans is meal, used for animal feed and food products. The other soybean component is oil which is used for food, industrial uses, such as paints and plastics, and biodiesel and Bioheat®.

CORN

- Minnesota is the 4th largest producer of corn in the US.
- In 2019, Minnesota farmers harvested 7.26 million acres of corn with averages yields of 174 bushels per acre equating to 1.26 billion bushels of corn in total production.
- Corn in Minnesota’s second largest ag export commodity.

FROM THE FIELD

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STATE ISSUES

★ Grant Money Available to Minnesota Livestock Owners for Protection of Wolf Attack

New money is available to Minnesota livestock producers to help prevent wolf attacks. A total of $60,000 will be awarded by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) through the Wolf-Livestock Conflict Prevention Grants. Applications are due January 15, 2021.

The grants provide reimbursement for costs of approved practices to prevent wolf-livestock conflicts. Eligible expenses for the grant program will include any or all of the following items:

- Purchase of guard animals
- Veterinary costs for guard animals
- Installation of wolf-barriers which may include pens, fladry and fencing
- Installation of wolf-detering lights and alarms
- Calving or lambing shelters
- Other measures demonstrated to effectively reduce wolf-livestock conflicts

The grant application must be emailed or postmarked by 5 p.m. on January 15, 2021. Work for this grant must be done and expenses reported by August 31, 2021. The application and more information can be found at www.mda.state.mn.us/wolfflants.

★ MFBF Submits Comments on Chlorpyrifos

Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) submitted comments to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) in response to the Special Registration Review of Chlorpyrifos.

Chlorpyrifos is a critical tool used to protect agricultural crops and other plants from harmful pests. Without an alternative tool, it is vital to maintain access to chlorpyrifos to allow farmers the ability to protect crops.

★ Fifth Special Session

The Legislature gravely in on October 12 for the 5th special session of 2020. Similar to the previous four sessions, both the House and Senate took up procedural motions to terminate the Governor’s peacetime emergency powers. The vote failed to received support from the Democrat-controlled House thus the emergency order is extended another 30 days, until November 11. The Legislature also passed HF 1 - the bonding and tax bill which includes full conformity of Section 179 in addition to bonding projects across the state.

FEDERAL ISSUES

★ Congress Includes CCC Funding

The U.S. House has passed a continuing resolution (CR) that funds the government through December 11, 2020 and renews the USDA Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) anomaly. The U.S. Senate is expected to vote on it early this week. Since 1987, the CCC has been replenished annually at $30 billion to fund many programs farmers rely on, such as Agriculture Risk Coverage, Price Loss Coverage, Dairy Margin Coverage and the Conservation Reserve Program. Without an immediate replenishment of the CCC in a continuing resolution (a provision referred to as an “anomaly”), farm bill programs and payments expected to go out in early October would likely exhaust CCC resources by November.

Minnesota Farm Bureau appreciates the leadership of our members of Congress that advocated for the inclusion of the CCC anomaly in the Continuing Resolution.

★ Legislation Brings Needed Reform to Conservation Compliance Program

Legislation introduced in the Senate would bring much-needed reform to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Compliance Program. The NRCS’ Wetland Compliance and Appeals Reform Act, introduced by Sen. Mike Rounds (R-S.D.), would require the NRCS to provide more evidence in determining wetlands and give farmers more rights in the appeals process.

Farmers have been subjected to repeated, unjustified and costly decisions by the NRCS, as documented by American Farm Bureau. It is important for these issues to be addressed. AFBF has advocated for clear rules and safeguards to ensure the fair treatment of farmers in conservation compliance. When USDA released the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Final Rule, it was clear that the issues had not been remedied. Thus, the need for legislation.

★ Denial of Petitions for Small Refinery Exemptions from the Renewable Fuel Standard

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced they denied petitions for small refinery exemptions for past compliance years, the so-called “gap-filling” petitions for the 2011-18 compliance years. These denials do not apply to outstanding requests for exemptions from 2019 and 2020 mandates.

★ SBA Releases New Loan Forgiveness Procedures

The U.S. Small Business Administration, in consultation with the Treasury Department, released a simpler loan forgiveness application for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans of $50,000 or less. Farmers and ranchers should consult with their accountant, tax preparer and/or financial advisor about the PPP application and loan forgiveness process to ensure all the proper documentation has been completed and reviewed.

★ HAULS Act Provides Flexibility

The newly introduced Haulers of Agriculture and Livestock Safety (HAULS) Act of 2020 would help accommodate the seasonal spikes in transportation of food, fiber and other agricultural supplies by modernizing the agricultural exemption to the hours-of-service rules, according to AFBF and 101 other farm, livestock and food production groups.

“Given the strong safety record of the U.S. agricultural trucking sector, Congress periodically has modified policies to enhance its usefulness to help ensure a more efficient and cost-effective freight transportation distribution system. But it is in need of updating,” the groups wrote in a letter to the bill’s sponsor, Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.), chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee’s Subcommittee on Transportation and Safety.

2020 Sporting Clay

RAIN DIDN’T STOP the Minnesota Farm Bureau 5th Annual Sporting Clay event from happening on September 9! Thank you to all who participated today and to our many sponsors.
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The 2021 LEAP Conference is going to be held in Sioux Falls, SD. We are hosting with the South Dakota Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and look forward to learning and sharing with our neighbors to the west.

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**Salted Nut Roll Bars**

16-20oz Salted peanuts
1 bag of peanut butter chips
3 tbsp butter
1 can sweet condensed milk
1 package mini marshmallows

Sprinkle ½ the peanuts on the bottom of a 9x13in pan. Melt together the peanut butter chips and butter. Add in the sweet condensed milk until warm (Do not allow to boil). Stir in the marshmallows until covered. Then spread over the peanuts. Add the other half of the peanuts and allow to cool.

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**Cassy Griebel**

**State YF&R Committee Member**

Hometown: Pipestone

Family: Husband, Tom. We have been together for 8 years and finally tied the knot on June 6 of this year. There are also multiple soft, furry family members. We have a border collie named Alphie, and 2 indoor cats named Kida and Kayren. There is one outdoor cat who guards the property named Wei Wei.

Educational Background: Both Tom and I graduated from the University of Minnesota. Tom graduated with a bachelor’s degree in computer science. He currently works for Microsoft and I graduated with a doctorate in veterinary medicine and work in southwest Minnesota at Western Veterinary Clinic.

Farm Description: Tom and I farm with my dad and grandpa. Our family grows soybeans and corn. We also rotate small grains to help with soil health. My dad and I also raise about 100 head of commercial ewes.

Innovative Farming Methods: We practice no-till farming procedures. Our farm works with other local farms to maintain proper manure management which helps us reduce synthetic additives on our fields. Through the work as a veterinarian, I work to help reduce antibiotic use by increasing vaccination education and nutrition of the animals. I also work to help educate clients about best practices for care and quick identification of illness in animals.

Hobbies: I love riding horses and Tom loves to read. Together we enjoy attempting Pinterest recipes, playing board games, and hiking. Being honest, both we love our jobs which makes it very easy to do and enjoyable at the same time.

**Why did you get involved with YF&R?**

I got involved with the YF&R because I was asked. I was involved with my county’s farm bureau and enjoyed all the tasks and opportunities provided. My first year on the YF&R has been a learning experience and it was amazing.
Reviewing CRP Enrollment

By John Newton, AFBF Chief Economist

USDA’s Conservation Reserve Program is one of the largest federally administered private land retirement programs. Under CRP, in exchange for annual rental payments ranging from $10 per acre to nearly $300 per acre, farmers and landowners voluntarily remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production to conserve soil, water and wildlife resources. Annual outlays under the CRP program are nearly $2 billion per year. The 2018 farm bill made several changes to CRP including expanding the acreage cap to 27 million acres by 2023, allowing for emergency haying and grazing on CRP land and a reduction in CRP rental rates, i.e., Conservation Reserve Program in the 2018 Farm Bill.

2020 CRP County-Level Enrollment

Recently released data from USDA’s Farm Service Agency indicates that as of September 2020, 21.9 million acres were enrolled in CRP, with annual rental payments totaling $1.795 billion. Compared to September 2019, 400,000 fewer acres were enrolled in CRP and total rental payments have declined by $20 million. Despite fewer acres being enrolled in CRP and lower total rental payments, the average rental rate per acre this year increased marginally to $82 per acre.

CRP enrollment was the highest in the Texas Panhandle, portions of western Kansas, eastern Colorado, Iowa, North and South Dakota and into Washington. Average CRP enrollment states, nearly 12 million acres were enrolled in CRP. The top 10 states, including Nebraska, Montana and Minnesota, represented nearly 70% of all CRP acreage. Across the U.S., a total of 21.9 million acres were enrolled in CRP. Figure 1 identifies county-level CRP enrolled acres.

While CRP enrollment was the highest in Texas, Kansas, Colorado and Iowa, annual rental payments were the highest across the Corn Belt and in northwest Washington. In portions of Illinois, CRP rental rates approached $300 per acre. Meanwhile, across much of the Southwest and West, CRP rental rates were below $50 per acre, and were less than $20 per acre in portions of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. The national average CRP rental rate was $82 per acre.

Combining the CRP acreage and CRP average rental rates, total rental payments approached $1.8 billion. Total CRP rental payments are nearly $400 million in Iowa, followed by approximately $170 million in Illinois. Total rental payments in Minnesota are estimated at nearly $140 million, while rental payments across South Dakota are estimated at more than $100 million. At the county-level, Whitman and Douglas counties in Washington are each estimated to receive more than $10 million in CRP rental payments. Expanding into Texas and Colorado, nearly 300 counties are estimated to receive more than $2 million in CRP rental payments. Figure 3 identifies estimated CRP rental payments by county.

Summary

Recently released data indicates that nearly 22 million acres are enrolled in USDA’s CRP program. CRP enrollment is the highest in Texas, Colorado, Kansas and Iowa. Total rental payments are $1.8 billion, and the average rental rate increased this year to $82 per acre. Across the U.S., average county-level rental rates range from $10 per acre in the Southwest to nearly $300 per acre in the Corn Belt.

In the coming three years more than 12 million acres of current CRP contracts are expected to expire, providing farmers and landowners the opportunity to re-enroll environmentally sensitive cropland, enroll land designed to preserve or enhance wildlife habitat or potentially bring that land back into production agriculture.

Farm Bureau policy supports land in site-specific locations in critical need of conservation measures, such as highly erodible land, being enrolled in the CRP program. In regions where working land conservation programs are better for the rural economy, general whole-farm enrollments should be eliminated unless all acres on the farm meet the local criteria for conservation measures. Farm Bureau supports conservation programs and working lands programs that provide enhanced environmental protection, conservation and renewed economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers.

Minnesota Farm Bureau Congratulates “Friend of Farm Bureau” Award Winners

Minnesota Farm Bureau congratulates nine of our members of Congress for being awarded the “Friend of Farm Bureau” award for the 116th Congress. This award, presented by the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), is given to members of Congress who have supported Farm Bureau’s position on policy issues as demonstrated by their voting records. Voting records are based on issues selected by the AFBF Board.

Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith and Representatives Jim Hagedorn, Angie Craig, Dean Phillips, Betty McCollum, Tom Emmer, Collin Peterson and Pete Stauber each received this honor for the 116th Congress.

“Minnesota Farm Bureau appreciates these members of Congress and the votes that they took to support Minnesota farmers, ranchers and rural communities,” said Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Paap. “This award proves these congressional members understand and recognize the importance of agriculture to all of Minnesota and we look forward to continuing to work with them on issues impacting rural Minnesota.”

Minnesota Farm Bureau will present each congressional member their Friend of the Farm Bureau award at a later date.
Know the rules while working near and around grain bins this season to keep yourself and loved ones safe.

When workers enter storage bins, employers must (among other things):

1. Turn off and lock out all powered equipment associated with the bin, including augers used to help move the grain, so that the grain is not being emptied or moving out or into the bin. Standing on moving grain is deadly; the grain can act like "quicksand" and bury a worker in seconds. Moving grain out of a bin while a worker is in the bin creates a suction that can pull the workers into the grain in seconds.

2. Prohibit walking down grain and similar practices where an employee walks on grain to make it flow.

3. Provide all employees a body harness with a lifeline, or a boatswains chair, and ensure that it is secured prior to the employee entering the bin.

4. Provide an observer stationed outside the bin or silo being entered by an employee. Ensure the observer is equipped to aid and that their only task is to continuously track the employee in the bin. Prohibit workers from entry into bins or silos underneath a bridging condition, or where a build-up of grain products on the sides could fall and bury them.

5. Train all workers for the specific hazardous work operations they are to perform when entering and working inside of grain bins.

6. Test the air within a bin or silo prior to entry for the presence of combustible and toxic gases, and to determine if there is enough oxygen.

7. If detected by testing, vent hazardous atmospheres to ensure that combustible and toxic gas levels are reduced to nonhazardous levels, and that enough oxygen levels are maintained.

8. Ensure a permit is issued for each instance a worker enters a bin or silo, certifying that the precautions listed above have been implemented.

To prevent dust explosions and fires, employers must (among other things):

1. Develop and implement a written housekeeping program with instructions to reduce dust accumulations on ledges, floors, equipment and other exposed surfaces.

2. Identify "priority" housekeeping areas in grain elevators. The "priority" housekeeping areas include floor areas within 35 feet of inside bucket elevators, floors of enclosed areas containing grinding equipment and floors of enclosed areas containing grain dryers located inside the facility. Dust accumulations in these priority housekeeping areas shall not exceed 1/8th inch. Employers should make every effort to minimize dust accumulations on exposed surfaces since dust is the fuel for a fire or explosion, and it is recognized that a 1/8-inch dust accumulation is more than enough to fuel such occurrences.

3. Inside bucket elevators can undergo primary explosions. OSHA’s grain handling standard requires that belts for these bucket elevators purchased after March 30, 1988 are conductive and have a surface electrical resistance not exceeding 100 megohms. Bucket elevators must have an opening to the head pulley section and boot section to allow for inspection, maintenance, and cleaning. Bearings must be mounted externally to the leg casing or the employer must provide vibration, temperature, or other monitoring of the conditions of the bearings if the bearings are mounted inside or partially inside the leg casing. These bucket elevators must be equipped with a motion detection device which will shut-down the elevator when the belt speed is reduced by no more than 20% of the normal operating speed.

4. Implement a preventative maintenance program with regularly scheduled inspections for mechanical and safety control equipment, which may include heat producing equipment such as motors, bearings, belts etc. Preventive maintenance is critical to controlling ignition sources. The use of vibration detection methods, heat sensitive tape or other heat detection methods can help in the implementation of the program.

5. Minimize ignition sources through controlling hot work (electric or gas welding, cutting, brazing or similar flame producing operations).

6. Install wiring and electrical equipment suitable for hazardous locations.

7. Design and properly locate dust collection systems to minimize explosion hazards. All filter collectors installed after March 1988 shall be located outside the facility or located in an area inside the facility protected by an explosion suppression system or located in an area that is separated from other areas by construction having at least a one hour fire resistance rating and which is located next to an exterior wall vented to the outside.

8. Install an effective means of removing ferrous material from grain streams so that such material does not enter equipment such as hammer mills, grinders and pulverizers.
PROMOTION & EDUCATION
Meet the Jetsons

After serving as the chair of the Promotion and Education (P&E) Committee for the Minnesota Farm Bureau (MFB), I have realized this year had many parallels with the 1980’s cartoon The Jetsons. The realities of COVID-19 pushed us to communicate virtually, test new technology and do our best to make it all work. These changes have also brought the need for enhanced broadband to the forefront in order to connect across our industry and throughout the state.

The impact of technology cannot be dismissed moving into the future. My dad always says, “There is nothing so bad, that there isn’t something good about it.” I, as well as my Board of Directors, believe this to be true. One of my goals prior to COVID-19 was to utilize technology with the P&E Committee to allow effective communication, without having to travel every time we had a meeting. We are all busy people and Minnesota is a big state. President Paap reminds us, “Our most precious commodity is our time.” We could use technology not only to make the best use of precious time, but to also be inclusive of the entire state and have the full participation of the committee.

The P&E Committee is a multi-year commitment and we want to decrease barriers to participate. As Robin Kinney, Membership and Program Director for American Farm Bureau, has said, “We want the doors.” There are qualified and capable Farm Bureau members across the state, who are doors, but distance cannot be overlooked. Along with email, phone calls and this new technology called Zoom, we were able to conduct the business of the P&E Committee and the duties of the Chair in a very fluid and effective manner. The work of the committee has run on schedule even during this pandemic. I was able to attend meetings such as the Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom Annual Meeting sitting in my tractor packing silage. Due to timing and distance, this would not have been an option without this significant shift in the use of technology. Proof that there is nothing so bad, that there isn’t something good about it.

The P&E Chair also has a spot on the MFB Board of Directors. The full impact of advanced technology use is further demonstrated by the ability to participate in the search and hiring process of the new executive director for Minnesota Farm Bureau, all while staying in SW Minnesota during a critical time in our farming operation - calving heifers and cows. One of the most abrasive meetings involved the annual setting of goals for the committee, not only was this an effective and very efficient virtual meeting, all committee members and President Paap were able to join.

It should be obvious why I feel a little more like George Jetson of the future than Farmer Pete of rural Minnesota. Somedays, however, I still feel strongly that in person face to face meetings have very significant value. In September, we tried out what I would consider to be an excellent model for the future. We held a “hybrid” P&E Meeting where we had two thirds of the committee meeting in person in St. Peter, Minnesota, and the other third of the committee participating virtually. These forced changes have given great perspective and opportunity for statewide representation and engagement. I hope that these tools of technology continue to expand and further advance the leadership skills, efficiencies and opportunities for Farm Bureau participation as a whole.

I cannot adequately express my appreciation for the help and guidance of not only Ruth Meirick, MFB Foundation Director and committee coordinator, but the MFB Board of Directors and all the supportive staff and volunteers that made this past year chairing the P&E Committee a very successful one. Regardless of the obstacles, your MFB P&E Committee advanced the goals, grew their leadership skills and expanded their outlook. We look forward to the joint LEAP Conference, January 22-23, 2021 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota and plan to once again show the strength of working together through Farm Bureau.

PETER BAKKEN
STATE P&E COMMITTEE MEMBER

Farm Name: BLAC-X Farms, Inc.; Bakken Land and Cattle
Hometown: Beaver Creek
Education: South Dakota State University agriculture business degree

Farm Description: Beef feedlot, 4 beef cow-calf, corn, soybeans, alfalfa and small grains, followed by cover crops. I am a third-generation farmer on my family’s homestead in Beaver Creek. My brother Jay and I run the day to day operation with the assistance of our dad, Richard and my son, E4, in addition to our valued employee Nick.

Innovative Farming Methods: We implement Transportation Quality Assurance practices and have earned a National Beef Quality Assurance Award. Our farm is Discovery Farm #11 for the Minnesota Agricultural Water and Resources Center - mnaecw.org/discovery-farms. We recently became a Minnesota Water Quality Certified Farm. Our work with cover crops has proven to improve water and soil health.

Why I became involved in Farm Bureau: When I was involved in Farm Bureau’s Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) Committee, I saw all the good YF&R and the Promotion and Education (P&E) Committees were doing to promote agriculture. I wanted to stay engaged, and P&E was the logical next step. I enjoy consumer education and Farm Bureau offers an exceptional platform and resources to promote and educate on behalf of agriculture. Farm Bureau has given me the tools to advocate for agriculture in my community, state and in Washington D.C.

Surround yourself with good people, step out of your comfort zone and be a voice for agriculture. Farm Bureau has helped me grow great confidence, it is the leadership, education and advocacy organization that benefits us all.

Personal Grilling Tips from a Cattle Guy:

I don’t subscribe to low and slow, when I am grilling. I like to take a one-inch cut rib eye and put it on a 400-450-degree grill, because I like grill marks. Grill it for 7 minutes on first side, flip it, grill another 7 minutes, season to taste. I prefer simple onion salt for seasoning, and you will have a juicy medium/rare rib eye.

My third pound burger is same process as the rib eye but a total of 10 minutes, 6 on the first side and 4 on the second. Perfect every time.

The key is putting the meat on cold and at no less than 400 degrees.

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Wow, 2020 has been a year of challenges. From shortages in the food chain at grocery stores, processing plants being shut down and local plants being booked for many months, to the many struggles that came about in other areas. Not only for us as agriculturalists, but also for parents, students, police departments, EMS, health care systems and anyone that is involved in everyday life. We have had to find alternate routes or resources to be able function through this life we are experiencing.

We have learned in the last few months of how important agriculture has become to all of us. Many have turned to the farmers for meat to put in their freezers after seeing what when there is a disruption in the supply chain. My family and I experienced the high demand from consumers that wanted pork and were able to help a family or two in a desperate need of getting hogs to market. Even during the worst of times, as farmers, we took care of each other.

I feel our door has been opened even wider to be able to educate the public more now than ever before because the public has seen first-hand where their meat comes from, how it enters the food chain and is sold in grocery stores. But the big question is, how do we continue to engage with consumers about the agricultural world and how it fits into the supply chain?

With the ever-changing world we live in now and in the future, we are going to have to become more creative to tell our stories. We may need to put ourselves out there on social media by doing small recordings about what you do on our farm or do a live feed harvesting crops and explain what is happening and what the product will be used for. Maybe schools will allow us to do a zoom call to educate the kids on a topic that we enjoy doing or something that the kids would like to learn about. I think we have options and it is going to come down to figuring out how we can educate the public on our life in the agricultural field. Take your story and run with it, be proud of what we as farmers are here for and most of all enjoy being a farmer.

As the end of the year draws near, we are engaging on some holidays, take the time and spend it with loved ones. Continue to check in on family, friends and neighbors that maybe can’t get out as much this time of year and through the winter to see if they need anything or just need someone to have a chat with. Happy holidays & enjoy life!
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