



MONTANA FARM BUREAU *News Brief*

We Care for the Country

March 2018

TOP STORIES



An impressive 38-member delegation at the National Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference in Reno.

Learning never ends at YF&R conference

Montana Farm Bureau took a delegation of 38 participants to the American Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference February 16-19 in Reno, NV. The theme, "Agriculture: Biggest Little Industry in the World" reflected a variety of workshops including technology, leadership, family and production topics.

Jasmine Evans, president of the Collegiate YF&R at Miles Community College, primarily attended the leadership and engagement workshops, and gleaned many new ideas to take back to campus and her county Farm Bureau.

"Motivational speaker Mark Lindquist's talk really resonated with me," Evans said. "He grew up on a farm in western Minnesota and talked about growing up in ag. His theme was that farmers and ranchers must have passion to continue what they are doing. They don't make a

lot of money in their chosen profession, so it's their passion for agriculture that keeps them going."

MFBF YF&R Chair Gil Gasper is no stranger to the YF&R National Conference and had nothing but praise for the Reno event. "As YF&R chair, I mainly attended the leadership workshops. This conference provided an excellent opportunity to gather new ideas for recruitment and retention."

This was the first time that Tyler Hamm, secretary of Meagher County Farm Bureau, attended. "This was a conference that I thought about attending in the past and I received the \$1,500 sponsorship from Montana Farm Bureau to attend. That definitely was the major reason I was able to go and I cannot thank them enough for that," Hamm said.

Read the full story at www.mfbf.org/news.

Foundation fire relief

With all of the rain and snow over the past few months, many ranchers are now focused on different weather challenges other than fires. However, since the devastating fires of 2017 summer and fall, the Montana Farm Bureau Foundation has been collecting donations from people wanting to help, and applications from those seeking assistance. The MFBFo Board of Directors allocated \$10,000 from its general fund to be added to the outside donations, resulting in \$20,000 for distribution. One large contribution was from the Draft Horse Driving Club at UM-Western who took on extra work in order to make their donation.

Along with sending relief checks to farmers and ranchers in Montana, the Foundation wanted to support rural fire departments who went above and beyond to protect private and public land. MFBFo made donations to the Broadus Volunteer Fire Department, the Custer County VFD and the Rosebud County VFD to help with any budget shortfalls and future firefighting efforts.

See the full story in the MFBFo Annual Report in the *Spring 2018 MFBF Spokesman*.

MFBF in D.C.

Montana Farm Bureau members traveled to Washington, D.C. March 6-9 to meet with their elected officials and to participate in the AFBF Issues Advisory Committee Meetings. The group included MFBF National Affairs Director Nicole Rolf along with Tonya Liles (Animal Health); Megan Hedges (Farm Policy); Chuck Rein (Federal Lands) and Don Steinbeisser, Jr. (Environmental Regulations).

MFBF Scholarships

The deadline of April 1 is approaching for most of the Montana Farm Bureau Federation and Foundation scholarships. Be sure to steer any young people to the website for applications at www.mfbf.org/foundation. Deadlines, as well as other information, is provided on the applications. Don't miss these great resources to fund higher education.

- Collegiate YF&R: one \$1000.
- Women's Leadership Committee: Two \$1500.
- Bernard Greufe Scholarship: One \$1500
- Future of Ag Honor Scholarship (through a generous donation from Seed Source, Toston): One \$1500.
- Foundation Mini-Grants - up to \$1000 for use in educational forums or activities promoting agriculture.

Questions? Contact Scott Kulbeck, 406-587-3153, scottk@mfbf.org.

Top of West Horse Sale

Looking for a well-started colt? Plan to attend the Equine Boosters of Montana State University's 12th Annual Top of the West Horse Sale & Ranch Horse Competition which will be held April 13-14 at Copper Spring Ranch west of Bozeman. The sale offers phenomenal young prospects started by the the MSU Colt Starting Class.

The catalog is available online at www.equineboosters.com and be sure to check out the MSU Colt Starting Class Facebook page. Questions? Contact Diana Bailey, 406-570-4101.

Still working on taxes?

If you're still working on those pesky 2017 Montana taxes, be sure to choose the voluntary check-off program to support "ag literacy in Montana schools." (Line 18c, on the short form or 69c on the long form.) Contributions to this program fund the development and presentation of education programs. Your donation is tax deductible for the 2018 tax year.

Welcome new Farm Bureau members

Farm Bureau welcomes these voting members who signed up in February 2018. We appreciate them joining the Farm Bureau family and look forward to having them involved in the state's largest agricultural organization.

Tammie Baker - Front Range County Farm Bureau • Brian Begger - Yellowstone County Farm Bureau • Charles Briese - Southwest Counties Farm Bureau • Mike Christianson - Gallatin County Farm Bureau • Jim and Sherry Ekland - Dawson-Wibaux County Farm Bureau • Carl and Stacy Fowler - Fergus County Farm Bureau • Mark and Sedona Heimann - Lewis & Clark County Farm Bureau • Bodel Johnston - Valley County Farm Bureau • Mark Johnston - Northwest Counties Farm Bureau • Noel Keogh - Carbon-Stillwater County Farm Bureau • Jamie and Karina Lannen - Park County Farm Bureau • George and Jeanie Mahlstedt - Dawson-Wibaux County Farm Bureau • Kail and Renee Mantle - Gallatin County Farm Bureau • William and Dana Milton - Musselshell County Farm Bureau • Steven and Kathy Nelson - Richland County Farm Bureau • Corey Schuknecht - Yellowstone County Farm Bureau • Robert and Barbara Thomas - Southwest Counties Farm Bureau • Zachary Weimortz - Carbon-Stillwater County Farm Bureau.



Campaign school attendees discuss campaign organization during the training in Helena.

Campaign school

Running a winning campaign takes work, dedication, organization and funding according to Victory Montana: A Campaign Management Seminar. The event was hosted by the Montana Farm Bureau Federation, February 12-13 at the Radisson Colonial Hotel in Helena.

The most essential information presented during the seminar was the 14/86 rule; 14 percent of the voting public have their minds made up, and the other 86 percent don't, so the candidate must make themselves the choice of the "86ers." The 14 percent wants detailed information on the candidate; 86ers select the candidates based on appearance, name identification and brochure bullet points.

Bruce Gillespie, Ethridge, who is running for Senate District 9, found the campaign school information useful. "This class provided a blue print to follow including what to do and what not to do. That's going to be very valuable as I start putting my campaign together."

MFBF Calendar

April 22-23
Council of Secretaries
Bozeman

June 12-14
MFBF Summer Conference
Fairmont Hot Springs

People

Chris Kolstad, secretary of the Hill-Liberty-Blaine County Farm Bureau, has been elected as Chairman of the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW). USW is the export market development organization for the U.S. Wheat industry.

Broadwater County Farm Bureau member Ehlke Herefords (Mark and Della Ehlke) was featured in a story on winter calving in the *Prairie Star*.

On his social media channels, Senator Steve Daines wished MFBF a Happy 99th Birthday February 13.

MFBF President Hans McPherson interviewed with RFD-TV regarding the impact on new infrastructure plan on Montana agriculture.

MFBF Executive Vice President John Youngberg interviewed with Northern Ag Network on the opioid epidemic, as well as on immigration.

Happy Ag Week

Farmers and ranchers can give themselves a high-five for their continued hard work growing food for families. Celebrate Ag Week March 18-24 by sending a pro-agriculture letter to the editor of your local paper or posting photos of your farm/ranch on your favorite social media platform.

The American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee is planning a fly-in to Washington, D.C. during Ag Week with an emphasis on Ag Day, March 20.

Case IH

Montana Farm Bureau members receive a discount up to \$500 on qualifying Case IH equipment. Choose from Case IH Farmall series tractors – including Compact, Utility and 100A Series – and Maxxum series tractors. Save on hay and forage equipment like self-propelled windrowers and large square or round balers. This discount may be used with other promotions, rebates or offers. Join Montana Farm Bureau today to pocket up to \$500 in savings. Visit mfbf.org/member-benefits.

Northey and Doud

Farm Bureau cheered two recent confirmations to national offices: Bill Northey as USDA Under Secretary of Farm Production and Conservation; and Gregg Doud as chief agricultural negotiator in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall noted that America's farmers and ranchers look forward to working with these men to continue agriculture's success in the country and the world.

Infrastructure plan great for rural areas

Last month, President Trump announced the 'Building a Stronger America' plan. Montana Farm Bureau President Hans McPherson said the proposed \$50 billion in rural spending will help Montana's farmers and ranchers realize better roads, bridges and improvements to other deteriorating essential infrastructure.

"It's high time America reinvests in itself," said McPherson. "Our bridges, roads and even our railroads are old and crumbling. Our river systems, including locks, which is how our wheat and other commodities are shipped, are in serious need of attention. Whether you're hauling calves to a local sale or shipping grain overseas, it's essential to have the infrastructure that allows you to do so safely and efficiently."

'Building a Stronger America' will play an important role in ensuring farmers and ranchers get their products from their farms to markets. "Most residents of rural areas can quickly provide a list of roads and bridges have been in steady decline," said McPherson. "It's rewarding to see this administration placing the decisions on how these dollars are spent back to the states and local communities. Governors and local officials know their roads and bridges better than anyone. We applaud the administration for developing an infrastructure plan that recognizes the importance of rural communities to the continued strength of our country."



Shipping livestock can present unique challenges.

More clarity needed for hauling

While again urging the Department of Transportation to grant agricultural haulers a waiver and limited exemption from the electronic logging device mandate, Farm Bureau in recent comments responded to the department's efforts to provide clarity to the 150-air mile agricultural commodity exemption and the hours of service regulations.

Until recently, very few Farm Bureau members or agricultural haulers were aware of their ability to use the newly interpreted 150-air mile agricultural commodity exemption, which provides exceptions from the HOS rules for the transportation of agricultural commodities within a 150-air mile radius from the source of the commodities. Enforcement officials have very little knowledge about this exemption. This lack of awareness, combined with the unforgiving realities of ELD technology, makes the need for clarity all the more pressing, Farm Bureau emphasized.

In terms of what products are categorized as agriculture commodities, all non-processed food, feed, fiber, livestock and nursery and greenhouse crops qualify, according to Farm Bureau.

Read the full story at www.fb.org/news.

MFBF supports release of Wilderness Study Areas

MFBF President Hans McPherson recently sent a letter to Montana Congressman Greg Gianforte reiterating the organization's support for release of all Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) that have been designated as WSAs for more than five years (some have had the WSA designation for 40 years) but have failed to reach wilderness status.

"As you know, there are around 40 Wilderness Study Areas in the state of Montana, many of which were designated as such more than forty years ago. Our members feel that five years is more than enough time for the agencies involved to properly 'study' the validity of a wilderness designation," McPherson explained. "Congress does not find that there is enough evidence supporting a full Wilderness designation after that period of time has elapsed, the land should be released from the 'study' and returned to former management practices."

The letter cited that WSAs are currently being managed as full-on Wilderness Areas, which inhibit the productivity of those lands, harm agriculture and other natural resource industries, as well as the communities that rely on those industries.

MFBF is supportive of Senator Daines Protect Public Use of Public Lands Act. Daines' bill protects public access and use of Montana's public lands by implementing the U.S. Forest Service's recommendation to release 449,500 acres of Wilderness Study Areas in Montana.

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COUNTY NEWS

Trade shows, book readings and socials for county Farm Bureaus

Even with the bad winter weather across Montana, county Farm Bureaus kept active.

Front Range County Farm Bureau helped facilitate the Next Generation Conference in Shelby in January 26-27. The comprehensive conference (with 36 workshops on a variety of topics) attracted more than 225 participants. (Read more in the MFBF *Spring Spokesman*.)

Custer-Fallon County Farm Bureau held a well-attended YF&R Social following the Beef

Breeders Show February 2 in Miles City.

Powder River-Carter County Farm Bureau held an enjoyable and successful Family Valentine's Dinner and Get to Know Farm Bureau event February 10 in Broadus. During the evening, the Broadus Volunteer Fire Department was presented with a check from the Montana Farm Bureau Foundation Fire Relief Fund.

Carbon-Stillwater County Farm Bureau members continued their sched-



MFBF Vice President Cyndi Johnson, left front, with members of the Broadus Volunteer Fire Department.

uled readings of Accurate Ag Books to Red Lodge Elementary School students.

Members of **Big Horn County Farm Bureau** helped with the **Montana Farm Bureau** booth February 15-17 during the MATE in Billings. District 4 Director Lee Boyer and Carla Lawrence, both **Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau** members, helped at the booth, as well.



Above: Trudy Bahm checks out the Spokesman with Big Horn County Farm Bureau Secretary Gina Stevens and District 4 Director Lee Boyer during the MATE Show.

Left: Sarah Boyer, Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau, reads to students at Red Lodge Elementary.



Custer-Fallon County Farm Bureau YF&R Social following the Beef Breeders Show in Miles City.

Right: Fred Wacker discusses the Chinese beef trade deal and the proposed packing plant and feedlot with members of Rosebud-Treasure County Farm Bureau.

