



MONTANA FARM BUREAU *News Brief*

We Care for the Country

September 2017

TOP STORIES



Gil Gasper and Charlie Hollenbeck share ideas during the 2016 MFBF Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet.

Discussion Meet covers tough topics

How can Farm Bureau help members with increasing legal and regulatory obstacles so they can focus on farming and ranching? With a growing demand for U.S. farm products abroad, how can agriculture overcome public skepticism of foreign trade to negotiate new trade agreements and open new world markets? How can Farm Bureau help first-generation farmers and ranchers get started in agriculture?

Those are a few of the questions for the 2017 Farm Bureau Young Farmer & Rancher Discussion Meet. The Discussion Meet is open to Farm Bureau members age 18-35 and simulates a meeting with ideas and solutions.

The Montana Farm Bureau Discussion Meet will be held Monday, November 13 during the MFBF Annual Convention in Billings. The winner of that Discussion Meet gets an all-expense paid trip

to Nashville to compete in the American Farm Bureau Discussion Meet in January. The winner of the MFBF competition will receive a brand new Polaris Ranger 570.

The YF&R Polaris is brought to you by these participating dealers.

Adventure Cycle-Dillon; Jesco Marine & Power Sports-Kalispell; Kurt's Polaris-Missoula; Kurt's Polaris, Inc.-Seeley Lake; Redline Sports, Inc.-Butte; Gallatin Recreation-Bozeman; Helena Cycle Center-Helena; Hi-Line Polaris-Havre; Lewistown Honda & Polaris-Lewistown; Riverside Marine and Cycle-Miles City; Sports City Cyclery-Great Falls; Yellowstone Polaris-Billings. Be sure to stop by their dealership and say thanks!

For more information on the Discussion Meet contact Sue Ann Streufert, 406-587-3153, sueanns@mfbf.org or visit www.mfbf.org.

WOTUS public comments extended

Farmers and ranchers now have until Sept. 27 to submit comments in support of the Environmental Protection Agency ditching the 2015 Waters of the U.S. rule. The rule, which was halted by the courts, had more to do with controlling land than protecting water and only created confusion for farmers.

The regulations were so broad the agency was able to blur the distinction between regulating water and land use, or in other words, allowed the agency to regulate land use even on land that was dry most of the time.

Farmers and ranchers are encouraged to submit their comments through the advocacy section of AFBF's website, fb.org.

Stay on the couch

Want to participate in Hoofin' it for Hunger but want to stay on your couch in air-conditioned comfort? No worries. You can still "run" in the Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Hoofin' it for Hunger race Saturday, Oct. 7 at Fort Keogh in Miles City by being a virtual runner. As a virtual runner you'll still "get the t-shirt" while contributing to the Montana Food Bank Network.

If running is your thing, sign up today for the half-marathon, 10K or 5K. The course takes you through the beautiful grounds at Fort Keogh and there is also a one-mile walk.

Don't miss the free runner's dinner Friday evening at the Range Riders Museum. Register at www.406running.com.

Women Stepping Forward for Ag

The annual Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Conference at the DoubleTree Hotel in Billings will be held Sept. 26-28. This year's conference is packed with speakers that will deliver information on today's most pressing topics.

Registration information and a full agenda can be found on the Women Stepping Forward for Ag website at womensteppingforward.org. For more information, contact Tara Becken, conference chairperson, 406-930-4205.

Hurricane Relief Fund

The Texas Farm Bureau has established a relief fund to address the agricultural losses inflicted by Hurricane Harvey. The category four storm struck Texas with a vengeance. Farm and ranch families are now left facing overwhelming odds following unprecedented rainfall. To make a tax-deductible donation: <http://texasfarmbureau.org/texas-farm-bureau-hurricane-harvey-relief-effort/>.

County Annual Meetings

Thumbs up to all county Farm Bureaus who scheduled their annual meetings.

Aug. 28	Chouteau
Sept. 6	Wheatland/Golden Valley
Sept. 7	Fergus
Sept. 12	Custer/Fallon
Sept. 13	Powder River/Carter
Sept. 14	Judith Basin; Lewis & Clark Rosebud/Treasure Carbon/Stillwater
Sept. 15	Sweet Grass
Sept. 17	Broadwater; Front Range
Sept. 18	Musselshell
Sept. 19	Cascade; Big Horn; Prairie Dawson/Wibaux
Sept. 20	Ravalli; McCone; Meagher
Sept. 21	Hill/Liberty/Blaine; Park Richland
Sept. 22	Southwest
Sept. 23	Gallatin
Sept. 25	Roosevelt; Valley
Sept. 26	Northwest; Phillips Yellowstone

A history of Farm Bureau advocacy

For nearly a century Montana Farm Bureau members have joined together across the state and become the voice of agriculture. MFBF continues to evolve to serve the needs of members and their families on and off the farm or ranch. The Farm Bureau legacy includes leadership within local communities, advocacy on rural issues, public service and outreach, agriculture literacy and environmental initiatives that protect the environment and preserve its productive beauty for the next generation to utilize and enjoy.

Remember to invite your friends, neighbors and business associates to join today and be part of the state's largest agricultural organization. Want to know more? Visit our website at www.mfbf.org or give us a call, 406-587-3153. Welcome to our new members:

Alison Anderson – Phillips County Farm Bureau • Roy Bilile – Northwest Counties Farm Bureau • John Campbell – Northwest Counties Farm Bureau • Thomas Cummings – Fergus County Farm Bureau • Boyce Lacock – Valley County Farm Bureau • Greg Lacock – Valley County Farm Bureau • Steve Lacock – Valley County Farm Bureau • Marvin Laubach – Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau • Loren Luthje – Southwest Counties Farm Bureau • Doran Lynch – Chouteau County Farm Bureau • Alvin McKamey – Cascade County Farm Bureau • Chad Reisig – Big Horn County Farm Bureau • John Robidou – Meagher County Farm Bureau.



Be a part of the Women's Leadership Committee "Faces of Farm Bureau" Photo Contest.

Faces of Farm Bureau

Like to take photos? Be sure to participate in the Montana Farm Bureau Federation Women's Leadership Committee Photo Contest. The theme is "Faces of Farm Bureau." Photos will be judged online on the MFBF Facebook page prior to the convention. They will be on display/voted on during the MFBF convention November 12-15. The winners will be announced at the Awards Banquet, Tuesday, November 14. Cash prize awarded to the top three winning photographs. The entry deadline is October 30.

For the complete set of rules visit the MFBF Facebook page, see the ad in the Fall *Spokesman* or contact Mary Hill. (Contact info below.)

Send photos to: Mary Hill, 1496 Goose Creek Rd., Raynesford, MT 59469 or email (preferred) to BarJRGelbvieh@3rivers.net.

MFBF Calendar

MFBF Board Meeting
September 11-12 • Bozeman

Hoofin' it for Hunger
October 7 • Miles City

Young Ag Leadership Conference
October 13-15 • Helena

MFBF Annual Convention
November 12-15 • Billings

People

Several Montana Farm Bureau members including Jack Bailey, Jim Baisch, Edgar Lewis and Ernest Briggs are being inducted into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame & Western Heritage Center. The inductees were chosen from a field of candidates nominated by the general public. Inductees are honored for their notable contributions to the history and culture of Montana.

Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau member Rhonda Johnston used skills she learned at her ACE training to write a letter to editor regarding Antiquities Act abuse. She submitted the letter to several newspapers.

Case IH discounts for Fall

Farm Bureau members can save \$300-\$500 on Case IH Farmall and Maxuum tractors, hay tools and more. Many MFBF members purchased Case IH equipment from Torgerson's in Ethridge, Great Falls, Lewistown, Havre, Billings, Hysham and Kalispell. Also, check out Musselshell Valley Equipment at musselshellvalley.com.

To get your CASE IH discount certificate, and to find out more about the many other money-saving benefits available to Montana Farm Bureau members, visit www.mfbf.org/benefits.

Congressional voting records

To share the voting record of members of Congress on the key issues affecting farmers, ranchers and rural communities, AFBF recently launched a Congressional Scorecard and Voting Record. The custom website application will track key issues and congressional votes. As key votes are recorded, AFBF will maintain scores and calculate the percentage at which each member voted in favor of AFBF's position on key issues.

Visit scorecard.fb.org and see how the Montana members of Congress voted.

Farm bill resources

Congressional lawmakers have started their listening sessions and early hearings on the next farm bill. Farm Bureau has spent a great deal of time and effort over the last 18 months working closely with a number of state Farm Bureau staff to develop a large set of resources for members to study as they think about issues around the next bill.

Those resources can be found on the AFBF website, www.fb.org and search for Farm Bill Resources In-Depth.

Duarte case update

Farmers and ranchers have closely watched the case where John Duarte, a California farmer and Farm Bureau member, was sued by the Army Corps of Engineers after plowing a wheat field without a permit. The Corps argued Duarte disturbed protected wetlands by plowing. The case was settled in mid-August with Duarte agreeing to pay \$1.1 million in fines.

Don Parrish, senior director of regulatory relations at AFBF, discussed what the Duarte case settlement could mean for farmers and ranchers.

"This sends a couple of signals to farmers and ranchers that if you feel you are farming anywhere near a Waters of the U.S., (WOTUS) the government wants you to come in and ask if you can do tillage. That's something farmers have never had to do in the past. In my mind, now if farmers don't do that, they are at risk. That is a chilling result of what happened in this case. The other chilling thing is the new theory that if you plow and leave furrows, it's illegal. You are changing the hydrology of the site. I believe Congress had exempted these agricultural activities."

Parrish believes that CRP acreage could be kept out of production permanently due to the ruling.

To hear Parrish's Agri-Talk interview visit: <https://omny.fm/shows/agritalk> and search for Duarte.



This map is one resource available with "Food and Farm Facts."

Food and Farm Facts available

The new Food and Farm Facts book, map and pocket guide, produced by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture, are now available.

"Food and Farm Facts provides the opportunity to learn about the many ways modern farmers produce food to meet the needs of today's consumers. I hope it also puts into perspective how blessed we are to be Americans," said Foundation Chairman Zippy Duvall, who also serves as president of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Food and Farm Facts helps answer the questions "Where does our food come from and who grows it?" by exploring topics about agriculture in the U.S. The 32-page, full-color book features updated facts and easy-to-read infographics that can be used in a variety of ways to help increase agricultural literacy. The book would be a valuable resource in the classroom, at fairs and events, for student leadership organizations and on social media. The book is organized into sections: Consumers, Modern Farmers, Trade & Economics, Environment and Production.

Information about Food and Farm Facts, including how to order, is featured on the splash page of the Foundation's website: agfoundation.org/. Question? Contact Julia Recko, AFB Foundation, at 202-406-3737, juliad@fb.org.

Tax reform information from AFBF

Congress is back in session this month with a promise to work on tax reform. American Farm Bureau Federation tax specialist Pat Wolff says farmers need overall tax relief from Congress in any tax reform package.

"Farmers and ranchers need lower taxes overall, and in order for them to pay less taxes they need special tools that help them deal with the ups and downs of the farm economy," said Wolff. "There's a lot of talk about lowering business tax rates, but if rates are lowered and farmers lose things like cash accounting, like-kind exchanges, it could end up being a tax increase."

Wolff says there is a lot of talk about lowering corporate tax rates, but says business structures vary for farms, most of which are not incorporated. Other possible changes include priority items for agriculture.

"On the table are income tax rates, lower capital gains tax rates and possible elimination of the estate tax. All of those things are goals of Farm Bureau and would help farmers and ranchers," Wolff said.

To be decided is whether or not the tax reform bill will be revenue neutral, meaning for every dollar cut, another tax will take its place.

View videos and learn more on the AFBF Tax Reform Alert page, fb.org/advocacy/tax-reform-needed-now/.

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COUNTY NEWS

Parade floats, fairs and “fests” keep Farm Bureau in public eye

Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau had a float in the Red Lodge Rodeo Parade which highlighted Farm Bureau activities and beliefs. Members handed out water to parade watchers during the Red Lodge Rodeo Parade and the Jim Bridger Day Parade. During both parades, the county Farm Bureau received an ovation. The Red Lodge FFA Chapter and the Clarks Fork FFA Chapter assisted in the parades by handing out water. The Carbon/Stillwater Counties Farm Bureau donated to both FFA chapters. On July 25, they provided youth ATV training at the Carbon County Fair. In addition, the Farm Bureau voted to donate \$1,000 to the Garfield

County Fire Foundation to assist the folks affected by the Lodgepole Complex fires.

Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau provided free bottled water during the Sweet Grass County 4-H and FFA Fair Auction July 28. They had a booth at the local Beef & Brew Fest August 19 with membership information and are selling Cat/Griz game raffle tickets.

Yellowstone County Farm Bureau was a sponsor of the MontanaFair August 11-19 in Billings. The county Farm Bureau offered fun activities for the public including a skillet toss competition, “roping” lessons and a stick horse rodeo. In addition, they had an “Ask A Farmer” panel where several Farm Bureau members talked about work on their farms and ranches.



Cyndi Johnson, MFBF Vice President interviews with Jim Sargent, Star Radio, at the State Fair.

Dawson/Wibaux County Farm Bureau held a summer picnic that included speakers Alan Doane, House District 36 from Bloomfield, and Steve Hinebauch, who is running unopposed for Senate District 18.

Meagher County Farm Bureau sponsored the White Sulphur Springs Labor Day Parade. The theme of “150 years of Meagher County and the towns that got us here” saw floats representing each town in the county.

Northwest Counties Farm Bureau is having a Poker Ride for their members September 23. Contact Josh Senecal, 406-439-1014, for more information.



Big Horn County FB President Casey Mott assisted Yellowstone County Farm Bureau with the kids' roping lessons during the MontanaFair.



Above: Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau booth at the Beef & Brew Fest.



Right: Dawson-Wibaux picnic.