



MONTANA FARM BUREAU *News Brief*

We Care for the Country

September 2018

TOP STORIES



Gwynn Simeniuk shows a plate of lamb dishes during the Lamb Jam in Helena while Maysa and Madilynn Standley check out the delicious fare.

Lamb Jam brings tasty food to Helena

It started with an idea to expose more consumers to how tasty lamb can really be. The Lewis & Clark Farm Bureau submitted an application for a Montana Farm Bureau Foundation Mini-Grant, explaining their budget needs and goals for the Lamb Jam. The event would feature local lamb raised on Montana ranches.

"We explained on our mini-grant application that the event would feature information regarding American lamb, how to cook it, where to find it, and other resources available to attendees," said Jeff Patten, L&C board member. "We pointed out that this would provide an opportunity for local 4-H members to practice marketing by promoting their sheep project and helping with the event."

The MFB Foundation approved the impressive Mini-Grant application and Lamb Jam became a reality.

Nearly 200 people came to the Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds in Helena August 25 to enjoy the culinary efforts of three chefs from the 320 Guest Ranch, Electric City Coffee and the Celtic Cowboy. Each chef created three dishes highlighting what makes lamb unique. Three judges rated the chefs' creations, and a People's Choice Award allowed the attendees to vote for their favorite dish.

Some of the delicious food included a Moroccan-style lamb chop; a lamb roulade, lamb merguez sausage slider and braised lamb shanks with rosemary.

Wool items, sheep's milk and sheep cheese were also showcased.

The event was sponsored not only by the MFB Foundation, but by the American Lamb Board, American Dorper Sheep Breeders Society and the Montana Wool Growers Association.

Hoofin' it for Hunger

Get ready to run at the annual Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) Hoofin' it for Hunger trail run Saturday, Oct. 6 in Miles City. Sign up for the half-marathon, 10K or 5K. The course takes you through the beautiful farming and ranching grounds at Fort Keogh and there is also a one-mile walk. If even a walk sounds like it's too much—or you just can't get over to Miles City—sign up to be a virtual runner. As a virtual runner you'll still "get the t-shirt" while supporting the event and raising money for the Montana Food Bank Network.

Registration fees are \$50 (half-marathon), \$40 (10K) and \$30 (5K and virtual).

Register at <https://runsignup.com/Race/MT/MilesCity/HoofinItForHunger>. Be sure to check out the Hoofin' it for Hunger page on Facebook. Questions? Contact Sue Ann Streufert, 406-587-3153, sueanns@mfbf.org.

Beef Check-off limbo

Due to the ongoing Ranchers-Cattlemen Action Legal Fund, United Stockgrowers of America (R-CALF) versus U.S. Department of Agriculture lawsuit, Montana ranchers who would like up to half of their dollar to remain with the Montana Beef Council Board of Directors will need to complete a producer consent form on an annual basis. By signing a form, you are allowing the MBC Board of Directors to have local input about beef education and promotion right here in Montana. Visit montanabeefcouncil.org or call the MBC office at (406) 656-3336 for a form.

STATE NEWS

YF&R competitions

The Montana Farm Bureau/American Farm Bureau are offering three great contests open to people ages 18-35.

The **Achievement Award** recognizes Young Farmers & Ranchers who have excelled in their farm or ranch and have honed their leadership abilities to superiority.

The **Excellence in Agriculture Award** 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.

The **Discussion Meet** simulates a committee meeting and is evaluated on an exchange of ideas and information on a pre-determined topic. (See next column on how to win a Ranger.)

For more information on the competitive events contact Sue Ann Streufert, 406-587-3153, sueanns@mfbf.org and visit www.mfbf.org/programs/young-farmers-and-ranchers.

Two great conferences

The 2018 **Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Conference** will be held Oct. 2-4 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Billings. Topics covered this year range from the Farm Bill and financial strategies to overcoming the opioid epidemic.

Registration fee is \$90 which includes all meals and speakers. For details, visit the website at www.womensteppingforward.org.

Don't miss the **15th Annual Young Ag Leadership Conference** Oct. 5-7 at the Big Horn Resort in Billings. The cost of registration is only \$50 for the entire conference, with all meals provided. After the pre-registration date of September 25, fees increase to \$60. For further information follow the conference on Facebook, @Montana YALC.

To register, go to eventbrite.com and search Young Ag Leadership Conference or contact Rikki Swant at (406) 231-4422 or rikkis@mfbf.org.

Welcome new Farm Bureau members

New members are encouraged to get to know more folks in the Farm Bureau community by attending their county annual meeting in September.

Wendy and James Campbell - Ravalli County Farm Bureau • John Colledge - Northwest Counties Farm Bureau • Jess and Junita Drange - Custer-Fallon County Farm Bureau • Kerry and Kim Erickson - Custer-Fallon County Farm Bureau • James Gelhaus - Park County Farm Bureau • Peter Heryford - Cascade County Farm Bureau • Donald McKinlay - Fergus County Farm Bureau • Daniel and Jennifer Miller - Carbon-Stillwater County Farm Bureau • Robert Oconnor and Patricia Farley - Meagher County Farm Bureau • Landon and Mindy Olfert - Valley County Farm Bureau • David Sauer - Ravalli County Farm Bureau • William and Jimmie Sparks - Custer-Fallon County Farm Bureau • Austin and Taylor Standley - Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau • Colton and Jessie Stephens - Northwest Counties Farm Bureau • John Walker - Valley County Farm Bureau • David Wicks - Hill-Liberty-Blaine County Farm Bureau • Amy Wortman - Chouteau County Farm Bureau • Curt Zimmerman - Roosevelt County Farm Bureau • Duane Zimmerman - Roosevelt County Farm Bureau



The 2018 Discussion Meet winner Sophie Davis with Polaris representatives.

Win A Polaris Ranger

The Montana Farm Bureau Young Farmer and Rancher Committee is thrilled that for the fourth year, Montana Polaris is the sponsor of the MFBF YF&R Discussion Meet, awarding a Ranger® Side by Side UTV to the winner of that competition. The MFBF YF&R Discussion Meet will take place Thursday, November 8 during the MFBF Annual Convention in Billings.

In addition, the Discussion Meet winner receives an all-expense paid trip to participate in the AFBF national competition in New Orleans in January.

Thanks to these participating Polaris dealers for supporting our Young Farmers and Ranchers: Gallatin Recreation, Helena Cycle, Sports City Cyclery, Yellowstone Polaris, Beaverhead Motorsports, Riverside Marine & Cycle, Montana Power Products, Jesco Marine, Kurts Polaris, Redline Sports and Lewistown Honda & Polaris. For Discussion Meet questions and information visit www.mfbf.org/programs.

MFBF Calendar

October 5-7

Young Ag Leadership Conference
Billings

October 6

Hoofin' it for Hunger
Miles City

November 7-10

MFBF Annual Convention
Billings

People

MFBF Vice President Cyndi Johnson had an op-ed piece on the Endangered Species Act reform and grizzly bears. The op-ed was published in the Billings Gazette, the Great Falls Tribune and as a FOCUS piece distributed by American Farm Bureau.

MFBF Director of National Affairs Nicole Rolf was interviewed by Northern Ag Network regarding breakthroughs in trade negotiations with Mexico.

MFBF Executive VP John Youngberg was interviewed by KBZK-TV on the farm bill and by Northern Ag Network on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Youngberg also spoke at the Western Congressional Committee in Bozeman.

NATIONAL NEWS

There's an app for that

Farm Bureau members can have their savings on the go with the Farm Bureau Member Benefits app. The app will show where you can use your membership discounts with Grainger, Case IH, Choice Hotels, John Deere and more. Plus, with the app your membership card is on your phone for easy access.

It's free! Download the App today. Simply go to the App Store or Google Play and download the "FB Benefits" App.

Support the farm bill

The Montana Farm Bureau has been keeping close tabs on what's happening with the 2018 Farm Bill. They continue to support H.R. 2 as farm bill conferees hash out the details. MFBF hopes for a compromise bill, and is pleased Montana's Congressional Delegation supports H.R. 2.

Keep informed on the developments when MFBF's National Affairs Director has Facebook Live updates. Visit the Montana Farm Bureau Federation Facebook page for more information.

Ag Innovation Challenge

The American Farm Bureau Federation has online applications for its 2019 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge. Entrepreneurs will compete for \$145,000 in startup funds. The competition provides an opportunity for individuals to showcase ideas and business innovations in agriculture. Competitors are invited to submit for-profit business ideas related to food and agriculture online at <https://www.fb.org/events/ag-innovation-challenge> by Sept. 24

MFBF comments on detrimental WOTUS

The Montana Farm Bureau has submitted comments to the Environmental Protection Agency urging a repeal of the 2015 Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) for failure to achieve its stated goal of providing certainty and consistency. MFBF stated, "Unless repealed, the 2015 rule poses a serious threat to landowners' ability to use their land for farming and ranching."

The 2015 rule would allow regulators, and perhaps more concerning, citizen plaintiffs, to argue for seemingly limitless federal jurisdiction over lands used for farming and ranching, including, but not limited to, low-lying land features that retain only the slightest bit of water after a rain event or during snow melt, and isolated ponds, reservoirs and wetlands far removed from anything that could fairly be characterized as a navigable water.

The comments explained, "not only does such a rule fail to provide any of the clarity of predictability that was promised, it opens the door to an unprecedented expansion of federal authority that would create enormous regulatory burdens and increased costs (permits can be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars) for farmers, ranchers, and others who depend on their ability to work the land."

"Clean water is important to all farm and ranch families in Montana but the 2015 WOTUS rule goes far beyond Clean Water Act authority," the comments concluded.



Still talking trade, NAFTA

The Montana Farm Bureau, which has been extremely concerned about the effect of tariffs on farmers and ranchers, was pleased to see some movement in the renegotiation of the NAFTA agreement with regards to Mexico.

"The announcement that the U.S. and Mexico have come to a preliminary agreement is very encouraging," said Nicole Rolf, Montana Farm Bureau National Affairs Director. "Mexico has become one of our major agriculture markets since the inception of NAFTA so securing those markets for the future is of utmost importance. We've been hearing for months now that an agreement was close with Mexico and that Canada would follow soon after. I certainly hope that proves true, as we'd like to see our markets to the north—Canada is our number-one trade partner—secured before harvest is completely over."

The American Farm Bureau Federation has been closely tracking the progress of trade talks between the two countries.

"This is the kind of trade news we have been waiting for. In a time when the U.S. economy is booming, our farmers have been left behind," noted American Farm Bureau President Zippy Duvall. "Open markets and good trade agreements will give American agriculture the opportunity to be a part of this booming economy. We need negotiators to convince Canadian officials that they, too, will benefit from a revised treaty. We are hopeful that the value of a continued and improved NAFTA for all will bring everyone back to the negotiating table."

Duvall said although Farm Bureau applauds the work with Mexico--and hopefully with Canada, there is still a lot of work to do outside of North America. "We need to resolve our trade issues with China to create better opportunities for American farmers and ranchers."

Ag Labor Bill long overdue for farmers, ranchers

The American Farm Bureau is supporting the Ag and Legal Workforce Act of 2018 which would replace the H-2A program with a new H-2C program, said AFBF's public policy managing director Paul Schlegel.

"The advantages of the new program are that it's open to all agriculture, it is less bureaucratic for farmers, it reduces unnecessary recruitment obligation, moves enforcement to USDA and takes it out of the Department of Labor," noted Schlegel. The other major aspect of the bill a mandated E-Verify system nationwide.

"There are things that we would like to see improved if we can do it. If you look at the policy our delegates have enunciated on what they want in a guest worker program, the bill comes very close to that," Schlegel said.

It's important for MFBF members to let Representative Greg Gianforte know that the ag labor bill is important to keeps farms and ranches running smoothly. Contact Rep. Gianforte at <https://www.fb.org/advocacy/aglabor/>.

MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
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COUNTY NEWS

Parades, fair booths and other good events

Meagher County Farm Bureau held their annual Labor Day Parade which had plenty of creative floats.

Southwest Counties Farm Bureau held a well-attended breakfast meeting in Twin Bridges.

Powder River/Carter County Farm Bureau had a booth at the Powder River County Fair in Broadus. They also hosted a YF&R social.

Broadwater County Farm Bureau had a creative booth at their fair with

members setting it up to look like a chuckwagon. **Big Horn, Richland, Yellowstone and Custer/Fallon County Farm Bureaus** read Accurate Ag Books to students during National Read a Book Day, Sept. 6. Farm Bureau members were encouraged to post pictures on social media of themselves reading in an ag setting on that day.

Sweet Grass County Farm Bureau is hosting a Candidates' Forum Sept. 24 at the Fairgrounds in Big Timber.

The MFBF Centennial—2019—is fast approaching and MFBF is looking



Nancy and Chris Schlepp drive the two parade marshalls in the Meagher County Farm Bureau Labor Day parade.

for an appointed “historian” in each county Farm Bureau to dig into the archives and find some history to include. Join the Facebook Group called “County History Initiative // MT Farm Bureau history treasures and tips.” Tips include going to your local library or contacting your Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Agent.

Don't know where to start? Visit with Laura Nelson at lauran@mfbf.org.



Above: Three generations of the Wheat family at the Southwest County Farm Bureau breakfast.

Below: The Broadwater County Farm Bureau fair booth.



Above: Montana Farm Bureau Foundation 4-H Scholarship winner Tyler Noyes sells his purple ribbon 4-H steer at the Broadwater County Fair Livestock Sale.



Powder River/Carter County Farm Bureau President Darcia Patten and District 5 Director Gary Heibertshausen at the PRC Fair Booth.