



MONTANA FARM BUREAU *News Brief*

We Care for the Country

June 2021

TOP STORIES



Judith Basin County's Mary Hill talks about farm safety with students during the Judith Basin County Ag Safety Fair in Geyser. The event reached more than 40 students of all ages.

Safety Day in Geyser teaches kids awareness

Judith Basin County Farm Bureau held the Geyser Ag Safety Fair May 18 in Geyser. Judith Basin Board member Mary Hill explained that the area's last safety day was held about 15 years ago, and the county Farm Bureau felt it was time to restart that worthwhile program.

There were three "big" stations taking 15 minutes each: PTOs, auger entanglement and tractor rollovers; ATV Safety; and distracted driving.

"We reached about 40 kids, kindergarten through high school. We divided it into age groups with the presenters adjusting to fit each age group," Hill explained. "For instance, we had a Judith Basin County deputy sheriff who talked to the older students about not texting and driving, while telling the younger ages not to distract their mom when she's driving. Another example was telling the younger children if there's an

accident to call 911, with the older kids actually learning some CPR they could use in case of an emergency."

Smaller stations included electrical safety, grain bin safety (thanks to District 3 Director Kris Descheemaeker), weed and insect spraying, water safety, wildlife safety and bicycle safety.

"We'd like to have more time to talk to the students since we were limited to two hours due to bus schedules," said Hill. "We thought just before summer vacation was a good time to have this safety fair. This was a great way to promote Farm Bureau, as well as keep these kids safe. We're hoping they go home and tell their parents, 'Don't step over a PTO' and 'Don't ride ATVs up steep hills.'"

The organizers plan to get input from others involved in the safety fair and from people in the community to glean new ideas for keeping children safe.

MFBF Report Card rates legislators

Wondering how your legislator voted on agricultural issues and bills important to Montana Farm Bureau in the 67th Montana Legislative Session? The Montana Farm Bureau has produced their Legislative Report Card which provides a comprehensive look at the voting record of Montana legislators. The report card, which grades all legislators' voting records in the House and Senate, was scored using a methodology that included floor votes and committee votes as well as points for sponsoring bills that MFBF prioritized. Legislators that sponsored MFBF opposed bills received a negative score for that category.

In addition, the report card contains information on legislators receiving the Outstanding Friend of Farm Bureau Award, the Distinguished Service Golden Plow Award and the 2021 Rookie of the Year Award. This report card also includes summaries of MFBF's priority bills for the session. Visit <https://mfbf.org/Policy-Advocacy/Legislative> to see the 2021 Legislative Report Card.

News Brief Plus

Want more information regarding articles in this *News Brief*? Check out the *News Brief Plus* which can be found online. Full stories and press releases will be posted along with information gleaned from other sources.

The *June 2021 NB Plus* contains:

- Hail insurance available
- Wheat and barley survey
- Senate Ag Committee letter to Biden
- Livestock groups discuss challenges

Visit mfbf.org/News/News-Brief.

Interim committees play important role

The 67th Montana Legislative Session has ended and many good bills have been signed into law. MFBF thanks the hard work of the legislators and the Governor for a successful session for agriculture. While the lobbyists have moved out of town, MFBF continues to monitor what is happening in Helena. Interim Committee meetings will commence in the coming weeks to begin the work of many study bills from this session.

During the session, bills were passed to encompass studies on subject matters that needed more information before a bill could go through the legislative process. Legislators are appointed to different committees to serve on during the interim or time between legislative sessions.

Often, professionals and experts can be asked to participate in these committees to help answer questions. MFBF and many other members of the public can participate in this process much like they can during the session. Montana Farm Bureau is frequently involved with the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC), the Environmental Quality Council and Economic Affairs to name a few. Legislators then use this new knowledge and information to make well-informed decisions on what bills to consider for the next legislative session.

Keep your brand

If you have a brand, it needs to be re-recorded this year. Whether it's for a horse, cow or just a family nostalgia brand, 2021 marks the Decennial Montana Department of Livestock Brand Rerecord. The Brand Rerecord period started January 1, and ends December 31, 2021. Brands not rerecorded prior to midnight December 31 will become inactive. *There will be no grace period for brands filed after that date.* The fee to rerecord a brand for the next ten years is \$175 per brand.

For questions regarding Brand Rerecord, please visit <http://liv.mt.gov/Brands-Enforcement/Brands-Re-Record-2021>.

Welcome new members

Montana Farm Bureau gives a hearty welcome to new members who realize the importance of belonging to the state's largest ag organization.

Broadwater – Bruce and Charlene Beebe, Lenda and Kelly Webb; Carbon/Stillwater – Rick and Frances Lueck; Cascade – Karen Barta, Joe and Diana Dormer; Amanda Smieja; Chouteau – James and Suzanna Henderson, Kelsey Lippert; Custer/Fallon – Norman and Jill Leatherberry; Dawson/Wibaux – Kris and Jessica Buller; Fergus – B&C French, LLC, Gregory Smith, Stephen and Christina Smith, Levi and Ashlie Gregory; Front Range – Tim and Nyssa Baer; Judith Basin – Amber and Jeremy Milburn; Lewis & Clark – Donald and Wilma Hurni, Larry and Jeanette Ross, Troy and Cary Wheeler; Musselshell – Terry and Lavonne Frost; Northwest – Scott Buxbaum, Arnold and Katherine Foust, Joel and Lynn Gleason, Trenton and Katie Harding; Michael Johnson and Teresa Jenisch, Stanley and Carmen Kittock, Dan and Janey Solomon; Brad Schaefer; Park – Lillian Anderson, Taylor Johnson, Lauren Kett, Peter Pinto, Jim Willis; Phillips – Leo and Darla Barthelmess, Conni and Craig French; Powder River/Carter – Dawn Aye; Southwest – Kelly Jensen, Hugo Matamoros, Jessica Murray, Diana Widhelm, Nathan Yoder; Yellowstone – Toby Edwards.



Working farm and ranch dogs are eligible to win money, food and fame!

Farm Dog of the Year nomination deadline nears

The Farm Dog of the Year contests celebrates farm dogs and the many ways they support farmers and ranchers in producing nutritious food for families and their pets across America. Farmers are invited to submit nominations for the 2022 Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year contest, supported by Purina. Applications close July 2, 2021.

The grand prize winner – Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year – will win a year's worth of Purina dog food and \$5,000 in prize money. The winner will be recognized at a Farm Dog of the Year award ceremony at the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in January 2022. Up to four regional runners-up will each win \$1,000 in prize money.

Visit fb.org/farmdog.

Calendar

Long Range Planning Committee
August 30—Bozeman

Budget Committee Meeting
August 31—Bozeman

MFBF Annual Convention
November 8-11—Billings

People

Gallatin County members were featured in the Montana PBS documentary, "Keeping the Barn." The film, which follows the **Brouwer Family** near Manhattan as they struggle with the cost and complication of fixing the roof on their historic barn, received a 2021 Silver Telly Award in Television.

MFBF Exec VP **John Youngberg** was a guest on Montana Talks regarding President Biden's 30 x 30 proposal.

Cascade County member **Candace Weeda Strobbe** was interviewed for Montana Parent Magazine.

Potato News Today noted Yellowstone County member **Jill Herold** was hired as key account manager by HZPC Americas, a seed potato trading company based in The Netherlands.

Ag Innovation Challenge

Ag entrepreneurs face unique challenges—from limited broadband access to high transportation costs. Great ideas combined with support and funding have the power to transform startup businesses.

Launched in 2015, the Challenge continues to identify the next ag entrepreneurs to watch and support innovation essential to Farm Bureau member businesses.

Submit your application by August 20 for a chance to win \$165,000 in startup funds. Visit fb.org/challenge.

Time for car rental discounts

Get back on the road this summer! After a long year at home, use your Farm Bureau membership to rent an Avis or Budget rental car and save up to 30 percent.

In addition, enjoy other offers like dollars off, a complimentary upgrade or a free weekend day.

Learn more by visiting mfbf.org/benefits or book your reservation now by calling 1-800-527-0700.

Remember, being a Farm Bureau member saves you money.

June is Dairy Month

AFBF's Foundation for Agriculture is focusing on the theme "June is Dairy Month" for its At-Home learning program.

Kids can visit "In the Parlor with Dairy Farmers" online module! This free resource takes the Dairy Ag mag further, exploring dairy cow breeds, introducing learners to real farmers and much more. Kids can learn how to make butter.

Visit www.agfoundation.org/news/at-home-learning-june-2021.

Coalition expresses tax proposals concerns

The Tax Aggie Coalition sent a letter, signed by 41 national and regional agriculture organizations, to House and Senate leadership to express significant concerns about legislative proposals that would jeopardize the future of family-owned farm and ranch businesses.

As members of Congress work to implement President Biden's American Families Plan, the coalition urges lawmakers to enact commonsense policies that preserve a sustainable and vibrant business climate for rural America through the preservation of long-standing tax code provisions. These provisions—stepped-up basis, like-kind exchanges and business income deductions—are fundamental to the financial health of production agriculture.

With more than 370 million acres expected to change hands in the next two decades, the policies Congress enacts now will determine agricultural producers' ability to secure affordable land to start or expand their operations.

MFBF Tax Committee Chair Gina Stevens said, "There is very little in President Biden's bill that encourages agricultural producers to continue to take the financial risks necessary to operate in today's environment."

The Hardin CPA added, "In addition, his plan would be completely detrimental to passing the family business to the next generation."



Groups defend wolf delisting

A coalition of agriculture and forestry groups — including the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Forest Resources Council, the American Sheep Industry Association, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and the Public Lands Council — filed motions in court in defense of delisting the gray wolf under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Three cases filed by environmental and animal welfare groups in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California challenge the final delisting rule issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on November 3, 2020. The coalition is defending the delisting because it recognizes the successful recovery of the wolf, and enables responsible wildlife management and protection of private property by farmers, ranchers, and forest resource users."

Montana, however, successfully delisted the wolf in March 2008.

"Wolves have been delisted in Montana for years now, after their population numbers far exceeded what was needed to be considered recovered," noted MFBF Senior Governmental Affairs Director Nicole Rolf. The state of Montana has done a good job of managing the population here and there is no reason that other states won't be equally as successful. It's time to get delisting done in the rest of the west."

Livestock organizations discuss market challenges

Member leaders of American Farm Bureau Federation, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Farmers Union, R-CALF USA, and the United States Cattlemen's Association met in Phoenix, Arizona.

These groups convened at the request of the Livestock Marketing Association to discuss challenges involved in the marketing of finished cattle with the ultimate goal of bringing about a more financially sustainable situation for cattle feeders and cow-calf producers.

The group talked openly and candidly about a wide range of important issues facing our industry today, including but not limited to packer concentration, price transparency and discovery, packer oversight, Packers and Stockyards Act enforcement, level of captive supply, and packer capacity.

"As we departed the meeting, we agreed to continue discussions," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "By working together, we can leverage the power of our collective voice to further elevate the issue and ensure a fair and transparent marketplace for livestock producers. At Farm Bureau, we have the pleasure of representing all types of agriculture operating on farms and ranches of all sizes. In this case, we're standing up for small and medium-sized livestock operators who might otherwise have a difficult time making their voices heard. We're proud to do it."

MONTANA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
502 S. 19th Ave., Suite 104
Bozeman, MT 59718

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COUNTY NEWS

County Farm Bureaus busy with membership month, farm fairs

Lewis & Clark County met May 11 to finalize summer plans.

Fergus County held a membership event at the Central Feed Brewery where they recruited new members. **Meagher County** held a Farm Fair May 25 along with an ATV safety training and board meeting. **Wheatland/Golden Valley County** members held a potluck membership event at the Shawmut Community Center June 5.

Broadwater County met May 10 and did an Ag Safety Training in Townsend. **Ravalli County** met May 27 to plan their summer activities. **Sweet Grass County** held a safety training and heard about the legislative session

Wrap Up May 12 in Big Timber.

District 4—**Big Horn, Carbon/Stillwater, Sweet Grass and Yellowstone** counties are holding a low-stress cattle handling event with clinician Curt Pate. The training takes place from 9 a.m. til noon at BLS in Billings. The event is free and district members are encouraged to bring along other ranching friends to recruit as Farm Bureau members.



Left to right: Regional Managers Liv Holt and Nicole Rolf have a good visit with McCone County members Tracy and Gil Gasper with T&G Processing. Circle.



Richland County held a 30 x 30 Informational Seminar Wednesday, June 2 in Sidney.



Above: The Carbon/Stillwater County board met at the Edgar Bar to discuss changes in leadership.



Above: The Fergus County membership event took place at the Central Feed Brewery. Right: Fun with kids at the Meagher County Farm Fair.



MFBF Eastern Regional Manager Nicole Rolf and the new Northeastern Regional Manager Liv Holt did a swing through eastern Montana in late May to introduce Holt to county leaders. They met with Ben and Rita Pehl (**Prairie**) at their home; Gil and Tracy Gasper (**McCone**) at their meat shop; MWFBMIC Agents Traci West and Shane Gibson (**Roosevelt**) in the office; Scott and Jessica Toavs (**Roos-evelt**) at their home; MWFBMIC Agent Jim Mires (**Dawson/Wibaux**) in his office, along with the Dawson-Wibaux Board of Directors.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 19, 2021

CONTACT:

[Chelsi Bay](#), MT Dept. of Agriculture, (406) 444-3684

Montana Farmers Encouraged to Participate in Wheat & Barley Varieties Survey

Helena, Mont. – The Montana Department of Agriculture is reminding producers to participate in the upcoming Wheat and Barley Varieties Survey conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

“This year’s varieties survey will give our breeding program unique and widespread insight into the characteristics that are truly important to Montana farmers,” said Cassidy Marn, Executive Vice President of the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee. “With producer checkoff dollars helping to fund breeding programs, and MSU varieties accounting for a substantial portion of wheat and barley acreage here in Montana, responses to the survey are essential to our continued success.”

The survey is a collaborative project among the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee, Montana State University, and USDA NASS targeting specific data points that will influence future breeding research and varietal selections. USDA NASS will begin contacting Montana farmers by phone at the end of May to collect data for June survey reports, then continue compiling information through mid-July.

With end-use quality driving markets around the world, Montana can maintain a competitive edge by utilizing survey results to guarantee crop quality and improve production. The Wheat and Barley Varieties Survey is one of many initiatives led by the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee to promote research, marketing, and education for the benefit of Montana producers. To learn more about how the committee is putting checkoff dollars to work, visit wbc.agr.mt.gov.

The Montana Department of Agriculture is serving Montana Agriculture and growing prosperity under the Big Sky. For more information, visit agr.mt.gov.

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MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

CONTACT:

[Dani Jones](#), Montana Department of Agriculture, (406) 444-2402

Hail Insurance Available Through Montana Department of Agriculture

State policies available for purchase until August 15, 2021

Helena, Mont. – Applications for the [State Hail Insurance Program](#) are now available through the Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA).

Producers can insure crops against hail damage at the maximum coverage rate of \$75 per acre for dryland and \$114 per acre for irrigated land. Rates charged are a percentage of the insured amount and vary by county. A detailed list of rates by county and crop can be found [online](#) by visiting the MDA website. State policies are available for purchase until August 15, 2021.

Producers who previously purchased state hail insurance will receive applications in the mail. Application forms are also available [online](#) or by calling the MDA office. Staff are available to process policies, file claims, and help answer any questions producers may have regarding coverage options. Completed forms can be emailed, mailed, faxed, or used as a reference when contacting the office by phone.

Contact Information:

Montana State Hail Insurance Program
P.O. Box 200201
Helena, MT 59620
Phone: (406) 444-5429

Email: agrmail@mt.gov
Toll Free: 1 (844) 515-1571
Fax: (406) 444-9422

Loss claims are due to the office by October 1, 2021, and must be submitted within two weeks of the hail damage occurrence. Forms are available [online](#) or by request.

The Montana State Hail Insurance program was created at the request of producers in 1917 to provide basic hail insurance coverage on any crop grown in Montana. The program is directed by a five-member board consisting of the department director, state insurance commissioner, and three producers.

The Montana Department of Agriculture's mission is to protect producers and consumers, and to enhance and develop agriculture and allied industries. For more information on the department, visit agr.mt.gov.

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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture
Washington, DC 20515

June 2, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20501

Dear President Biden,

As Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, I applaud the historic investments you propose in the American Jobs Plan and American Family Plan, which are critical as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. However, I have serious concerns about proposed changes in tax provisions that could hurt our family farmers, ranchers and small businesses.

I am very concerned that proposals to pay for these investments could partially come on the backs of our food, fiber, and fuel producers. In particular, "step-up in basis" is a critical tool enabling family farming operations to continue from generation to generation. The potential for capital gains to be imposed on heirs at death of the landowner would impose a significant financial burden on these operations. Additionally, my understanding of the exemptions is that they would just delay the tax liability for those continuing the farming operation until time of sale, which could result in further consolidation in farmland ownership. This would make it more difficult for young, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers to get into farming.

While I appreciate that the proposal provides for some exemptions, the provisions could still result in significant tax burdens on many family farming operations. I look forward to working with you as negotiations continue. We must ensure that we protect our family farmers, ranchers and small businesses that keep our rural communities alive.

Sincerely,



David Scott
Chairman

Cc: The Honorable Glenn Thompson, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee
The Honorable Tom Vilsack, Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
The Honorable Gary Black, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Agriculture
Ag Tax Coalition
Mr. Zippy Duvall, President, American Farm Bureau Federation
Mr. Tom McCall, President, Georgia Farm Bureau



May 17 2021

Livestock Groups Discuss Challenges in Markets

On Monday, May 10, 2021, member leaders of American Farm Bureau Federation, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, National Farmers Union, R-CALF USA, and the United States Cattlemen's Association met in Phoenix, Arizona.

These groups convened at the request of Livestock Marketing Association to discuss challenges involved in the marketing of finished cattle with the ultimate goal of bringing about a more financially sustainable situation for cattle feeders and cow-calf producers.

The group talked openly and candidly about a wide range of important issues facing our industry today, including but not limited to:

- Packer concentration,
- Price transparency and discovery,
- Packer oversight,
- Packers and Stockyards Act enforcement,
- Level of captive supply, and
- Packer capacity.

The group also agreed to take to their respective organizations for consideration these action items:

- Expedite the renewal of USDA's Livestock Mandatory Reporting (LMR), including formula base prices subject to the same reporting requirements as negotiated cash and the creation of a contract library.
- Demand the Department of Justice (DOJ) issue a public investigation status report and as warranted, conduct joint DOJ and USDA oversight of packer activity moving forward.
- Encourage investment in, and development of, new independent, local, and regional packers.

This unprecedented meeting brought together diverse producer organizations to identify issues and discuss potential solutions. These issues and action item lists are not comprehensive, due to time constraints of this meeting. Attending organization representatives were pleased to have reached consensus on many issues and are committed to the ultimate goal of achieving a fair and transparent finished cattle marketing system.