



MONTANA FARM BUREAU News Brief

We Care for the Country

February 2022

TOP STORIES



The Montana Farm Bureau delegation celebrates receiving the New Horizon and Pinnacle Awards during the American Farm Bureau Convention in Atlanta.

MFBF members at national convention

Montana Farm Bureau members attending the 103rd Annual American Farm Bureau Convention January 7-11 in Atlanta had plenty reasons to show their Farm Bureau pride.

In their membership category, Montana earned the Pinnacle Award, the highest honor a state Farm Bureau can be awarded, for program and membership achievement, as well as the New Horizon Award, which honors the most innovative new state Farm Bureau programs. MFBF received the New Horizon Award for their creative Virtual Farm Fair video series, launched during the pandemic when in-person events weren't possible, allowing educators, classrooms and the general public to learn about different practices on farms and ranches.

Montana Farm Bureau was recognized in all four categories in the Awards

of Excellence which recognize state Farm Bureaus that demonstrate outstanding achievements in four program areas: Advocacy, Coalitions & Partnerships, Engagement & Outreach, and Leadership & Business Development.

Montana's Discussion Meet winner J.M. Peck represented MFBF admirably, advancing to the Sweet Sixteen Round in the national YF&R Discussion Meet.

The group heard keynote speakers including Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack, Former F-15 Instructor Jim Murphy and Comedian Jeff Allen.

Members enjoyed an evening at the College Football Hall of Fame where state Farm Bureau presidents competed in a football throwing challenge and watched a college football championship.

For additional stories about the AFBF convention visit www.mfbf.org/news and fb.org/newsroom.

Support ag on taxes

Working on your taxes? Choose to support ag literacy in Montana schools on your 2021 Montana tax return. These funds have the potential to provide materials and agricultural curriculum to teachers and schools across the state.

Whether you are using a tax preparer or completing the tax form yourself, check line 69c on the long tax form or 18c on the EZ form. Donating \$5, \$10 or another amount will benefit the agricultural knowledge of our youth.

Montana Farm Bureau Federation is a founding member of the Montana Ag in the Classroom Foundation.

Scholarships available

The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation and the Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee are offering several scholarships for students pursuing higher education.

Students wishing to apply for these scholarships will need to sign in to the Montana Farm Bureau scholarship portal, which is available by visiting mfbf.org/Programs/Scholarships. All scholarships are due April 1.

For more information call 406-587-3153 or email scottk@mfbf.org.

News Brief Plus

Want more information regarding articles in this *News Brief*? Check out the *News Brief Plus* online. The *February 2022 News Brief Plus* contains:

- Wheat & Barley Committee news
- Scholarships available
- ACE class announced
- More

Visit mfbf.org/News/News-Brief.

Meetings and more

The New Year started out with many interim committees getting right to work. In January Montana Farm Bureau has been in Helena keeping up with the Water Policy Interim Committee, Revenue Interim Committee, Environmental Quality Council and the Montana Board of Livestock.

The Water Policy Interim Committee shared updates on many important water subjects. Adjudication productivity was at its highest in 2021. The Flathead Reservation Water Management Board has been established, with appointments made by both the Governor and the Tribe. Lt. Governor Kristen Juras and Anna Pakenham Stevenson explained the Comprehensive Review of Water Administration and Management. WPIC reported on the ARPA funds that are being used for water and sewer, including irrigation. The DEQ shared what the Nutrient Working Group has been doing. Lastly, the interim committee reviews the ballot issue regarding a designation of outstanding resource waters.

The Revenue Interim Committee took a deep dive into the Ballot Issue #9 or CI-121, which would constitutionally change how residential property tax works. Montana Farm Bureau opposes this ballot issue and testified in opposition at the committee meeting, along with many other business groups.

The Environmental Quality Council discussed the past year of drought in Montana and the upcoming year ahead. DNRC is working on updating the Drought Plan and utilizing stakeholders to be ready for the year ahead.

The Board of Livestock met to discuss Red Tape Relief on topics of predatory animal control, horse amnesty and feral swine.

Per capita fees due

Per capita fees for livestock must be reported by March 1, 2022. The Department of Revenue will then send out a bill, which is due May 31. For per animal fees and other information visit <https://liv.mt.gov/Centralized-Services/Per-Capita-Fees>.

Welcome new county Farm Bureau members

Big Horn – Edward and Colleen Wilson; **Broadwater** – Jill Flynn, Hidden Hollow Hideaway; **Carbon-Stillwater** – Alice Salo; **Cascade** – James and Leanna Campbell • Kalem and Susanne Halley • Ron and Lou Lords; **Custer-Fallon** – Frank and Judy Rawhouser • James Young; **Dawson-Wibaux** – Laura and Edwin Dukart • Myrtle Shultz; **Fergus** – Calvin Bronce • Keith and Brittany Geary • Larry and Cynthia Gill • Evan Haughian and Gabby Drishinski • John McIntosh • Bryan and Peggy Purkey • Beau and Kristy Smith • Kathy and Jerome Stenberg • Neal and Laura Tucek • Larry and Joyce Tuss • Garrett Wichman; **Front Range** – Lyle Benjamin, Skookumchuck Ag • Carrie Lerum, Lerum Ag, Inc.; **Gallatin** – Traig Deboer, Coles Corner Farms, LLC • Bill and Marian Kimm, Kimm Seed • Tonya Queen, Queen O' Hearts Ranch; **Hill-Liberty-Blaine** – Larry Billmeyer, OV Farms, LLC • Donald and Alvina Bjornstad • Ken Wilson; **Judith Basin** – Kevin and Tammy Fiechtner; **Lewis & Clark** – Sharon Ellis • Lindsay and Marc Orem • Jay Owen • Peggy and Mark Schluter • Johnny and Anita Wilson; **McCone** – Earl and Carol Jensen; **Meagher** – Candi Richardson; **Musselshell** – Daniel Brewer and Sheila Jorgenson, OY Cattle Company • Janet Whelan; **Northwest** – Jeff and Bobbi Baker • Russell and Kate Cleveland • Katherine Danson, U Lazy V Ranch, Inc. • Dean and Carli Hughbanks • David Price, Moiese Valley Ranch, LLC • Jake and Jessica Sol • Norma Trammell • Yuyu and Xiaolong Chen; **Phillips** – Troy Manoukian, TM Ranch; **Powder River-Carter** – Terry and Rosalle Powell; **Prairie** – Ron Devlin, Devlin Ranch Co.; **Richland** – Eric and Samantha Browne • McKade Mahlen; **Rosebud-Treasure** – Daniel and April Zetterberg; **Southwest** – Dan and Laurie Bersanti • Jim and Carrie Bignell • George and Joyann Breakall • Jeff and Marcia Lamb • Christopher and Jena Madrid • Haley Potter • Diane Reid, Faraway Farms, Inc. • David and Keri Wendt; **Sweet Grass** – Roy Oliver • Lester and Rita Wilson; **Valley** – Edward and Dora-Jean Beill; **Yellowstone** – Scott and Tamara Bowen, KS Land Company • Betty Hart, Laurel Farms Inc. • Janice Linn.



Left to right: Josh Senecal, Lindsay Orem and Andee Baker concentrate on their "Anti-Average" traits during the ACE leadership seminar.

ACE program begins

The fifth Montana Farm Bureau ACE Leadership Program class started 2022 with a great lineup of participants selected to MFBF's leadership program. The first ACE training took place in January in Bozeman.

The three primary objectives of ACE is developing leaders, engaging local communities, and issues advocacy.

The training featured Montana Farm Bureau and Montana agriculture past and present with *MFBF Legacies* book author Laura Nelson. The group also spent time with natural resources advocate Bruce Vincent and leadership trainer Sarah Bohnenkamp.

The class included Farm Bureau members Morgan Kuntz and Becky Stuart, Southwest County; Josh Senecal, Northwest Counties; Canyon Rehbein, Richland County; Lindsay Orem and Zach Coccoli, Lewis & Clark County and Andee Baker, Carbon/Stillwater County.

Calendar

MATE Show

February 17-19 - Billings, MT

AFBF YF&R Conference

February 25-28 - Louisville, KY

MFBF Board Meeting

March 7-8 - Three Forks, MT

MFBF Summer Conference

June 13-15 - Fairmont Hot Springs, MT

People

Northern Ag Network interviewed Cyndi Johnson, Gary Heibertshausen, Carla Lawrence, J.M. Peck and Nicole Rolf during the AFBF Convention.

The Western Ag Network interviewed Cyndi Johnson, Gary Heibertshausen, JM Peck and Scott Stoner at the AFBF Convention.

Randy Bogden, KMON, interviewed Cyndi Johnson about the convention and what happened during the AFBF delegate session.

Park County President Garrett Hamm was interviewed about the effect of agriculture's current challenges on mental health for a television segment produced by MSU Extension.

Mental health help

AFBF has developed a comprehensive, easy-to-use online directory of resources for farmers, ranchers and their families who are experiencing stress and mental health challenges. The directory features listings for crisis hotlines, counseling services, training opportunities, podcasts, videos, published articles and other resources in every U.S. state and Puerto Rico.

Visit the Farm State of Mind website at farmstateofmind.org.

Did you hear that?

Need help combatting hearing loss? ClearValue Hearing, The Starkey Group and Westone Earmold Laboratories have combined their resources to develop a comprehensive Hearing Healthcare Benefits Program for Montana Farm Bureau members and their families.

ClearValue and Starkey offers members up to 25% off all Starkey Hearing Instruments (discount off suggested retail).

Visit mfbf.org/benefits.

Book of the Year

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture has presented its 15th “Book of the Year” award to author Kiki Thorpe for “How to Grow a Monster.”

Tapping into the popular makers movement (hands-on learning), the book is part of a series of fun, easy-to-read stories that focus on problem-solving and hands-on action. It explores the theme of gardening and includes a gardening-related activity for young makers to try themselves.

Farm Bureau speaks up on WOTUS

Farmers and ranchers attending the 2022 AFBF Convention had the opportunity to send comments to the EPA and Army Corps of Engineers from the IDEAg Trade Show. Their comments stressed the importance of keeping the Navigable Waters Protection Rule and not backsliding to the 2015 Waters of the U.S. rule.

On January 25, the U.S. Supreme Court made a decision to hear *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, which challenges EPA’s overreach of its Clean Water Act jurisdiction.

“AFBF is pleased that the Supreme Court has agreed to take up the important issue of what constitutes ‘Waters of the U.S.’ under the Clean Water Act,” noted AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “Farmers and ranchers share the goal of protecting the resources they’re entrusted with, but they shouldn’t need a team of lawyers to farm their land. We hope this case will bring more clarity to water regulations.

“We call on EPA to push pause on its plan to write a new WOTUS rule until it has more guidance on which waters fall under federal jurisdiction. For the past 10 years, Farm Bureau has led the charge on elevating the issue of government overreach in water regulations. The goal is simple—clean water and clear rules. We need a common sense waters of the U.S. definition.”



AFBF sets policy for 2022

Farmer and rancher delegates to the American Farm Bureau Federation’s 103rd Convention in Atlanta adopted policies to guide the organization’s work in 2022. Key topics ranged from milk pricing and beef market transparency to urban agriculture.

Montana Farm Bureau had three policies pass through the process. The policies dealt with predator depredation on livestock, address needed mitigation and prevention of coal seam fires, and state property tax. Next year MFBF intends to bring back an improved version of their resolution dealing with increased levels USDA research funding for U.S.-grown organic food.

Long-standing frustration over imbalances in the meat industry led to calls for greater transparency in livestock markets. In this complex discussion, it was determined that while government should play a role in increasing the share of negotiated sales while being respectful of regional differences, government mandates setting percentages of cash sales should not be used to achieve this end as doing so will negatively impact cow/calf producers.

As farmers’ labor struggles continue, delegates approved additional policies that build on existing AFBF policies regarding the need for employee stabilization and reforms to the guestworker program.

“There were around 350 delegates representing 50 states and Puerto Rico, and we were all thrilled to be working together in-person again to shape the policies of the American Farm Bureau,” noted MFBF President Cyndi Johnson. “We had several opportunities to meet and network as presidents and vice presidents from around the country. We often find commonality in the issues and develop life-long friendships.”

President, ag secretary share thoughts on ag

During a recorded message to American Farm Bureau convention attendees, President Joe Biden expressed his appreciation for farmers and ranchers and highlighted the administration’s priorities related to the Packers and Stockyards Act, infrastructure improvements and promoting fair competition in agricultural markets.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack shared his thoughts on broadband deployment, trade negotiations, and investments in livestock processing capabilities. Vilsack also addressed the prospect of climate-smart commodities.

“Listening to Farm Bureau and listening to those in agriculture, we know that it’s important to establish a partnership in this effort [to create climate-smart commodities],” Secretary Vilsack said. “This is not something that’s top-down, this is really a bottom-up effort. We know that it has to be voluntary, and it has to be incentive-based. It can’t be regulated.”

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COUNTY NEWS

Counties hold meetings, ag trade show booths

On January 3 **Cascade County** met to finalize their plans for the MAGIE trade show, their budget and Program of Work (POW) for the year.

Sweet Grass County held a board meeting January 10 and February 7.

The **Yellowstone County Young Farmer and Rancher Committee** had dinner and a meeting January 12 to plan events for 2022. **Carbon/Stillwater County** held their board meeting on January 18.

Cascade, Front Range and Chouteau county leaders, along with Federation staff, hosted a Farm Bureau booth at the MAGIE in Great Falls January 19-22, with Cascade County board members attending the Great Falls Ag Chamber Banquet featuring the Peterson Farm Brothers.



District 8 Director Ed Bandel interviews with KMON during the MAGIE show in Great Falls.

On January 26 **Lewis & Clark County** met to finalize their POW and Budget for the year.

Ravalli County hosted a board meeting January 31 to establish their POW for the year.

Fergus County held a board meeting January 10 and hosted Crazy Mountain Veterinary Services for a calving seminar January 20 in Lewistown. There were more than 60 people in attendance eager to glean new ideas about coping with calving difficulties.

DVM Katie Rein, a **Sweet Grass County** Farm Bureau member, brought her fiberglass cow, Stella, and rubber calf for a hands-on experience.



Katie Rein, DVM, explaining to a very young rancher the correct way to pull a calf during Fergus County's calving workshop.

Dawson-Wibaux and Richland Counties held board meetings January 26 and 27, respectively. Richland is working on their by-laws.

Rosebud-Treasure County is planning a safety seminar for February.

Park County held a board meeting February 2. **Yellowstone, Carbon/Stillwater and Sweet Grass Counties** are manning the booth during the MATE show February 17-19 in Billings. Yellowstone County as has a board meeting planned for Feb 22.



Governor Greg Gianforte visited the Diehl Farm in East Helena to highlight the good things he has been able to do for agriculture, including HB 303, reducing the business equipment tax exemption being taken from \$100,000 to \$300,000. From left to right. Lewis & Clark County Farm Bureau President Karl Christians with county members Marilyn and Jim Dusenberry, Carmen and Mark Diehl, and Governor Gianforte.



January 25, 2022

Montana Farm Bureau announces ACE program participants

The Montana Farm Bureau announces their ACE (Advocate. Communicate. Educate.) Leadership Program class for 2022. The fifth ACE program will empower Farm Bureau members to be confident, effective leaders in their county Farm Bureau and local communities. Advocacy follows leadership and with practiced, ever-evolving leadership skills, participants will be prepared to actively advocate on key industry issues. The three primary objectives include developing leaders, engaging local communities and issues advocacy.

“MFBF is excited to kick off another year of this program with an outstanding class of advocates for Montana agriculture,” said MFBF ACE Program Co-Coordinator, Sue Ann Streufert. “This leadership program strives to build a group of well-informed and well-trained leaders for Farm Bureau and our state’s number-one industry. We are looking forward to a great year ahead of us.”

The first ACE training took place in January in Bozeman and featured a look at Montana Farm Bureau and Montana agriculture, past and present with MFBF *Legacies* book author Laura Nelson. The group also spent time with Bruce Vincent and Sarah Bohnenkamp. Vincent is best known for his experience in the timber industry and work helping individuals and resource groups revitalize rural America. Bohnenkamp led the group through intensive discussion of their personal leadership skills and what it means to use those skills to identify ways to serve within groups and communities.

The 2022 ACE Class

Andee Baker – Park City, Carbon/Stillwater County Farm Bureau – Andee has been active in the Montana State University Collegiate Young Farmers & Ranchers Club and interned with the American Farm Bureau in the Summer of 2021. She hopes to glean the ability to convey the purpose of an organization as well as sharpening communication skills to non-agricultural groups.

Zach Coccoli - Helena, Lewis & Clark County Farm Bureau – Zach works as Ag Development Division Administrator for the Montana Department of Agriculture. He hopes to further his knowledge and develop new professional relationships to create more effective partnerships for the benefit of ag and rural Montana.

Morgan Kuntz - Dillon, Southwest County Farm Bureau – Morgan splits her time between working on her family’s ranch and writing for the Prairie Star. As an ag journalist, Morgan would like to leave ACE as a better advocate for agriculture, as well as foster new connections and be a more articulate leader.



January 20, 2022

Montana Farm Bureau offers scholarships for higher education

The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation and the Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee are offering several scholarships for students pursuing higher education.

"Our Montana Farm Bureau Foundation and Women's Leadership Committee are pleased to once again provide students with some financial assistance as they work toward furthering their education," said MFB Foundation Coordinator Scott Kulbeck.

Scholarships Available:

The Montana Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Scholarships: Two \$1,500 scholarships are available through the sponsorship of the MFB Women's Leadership Committee. The scholarships are available to young men and women. The applicant must be an incoming college freshman and must be from a paid Montana Farm Bureau member family. Applications will be scored on scholastic achievement, future goals, community involvement and school activities. Many county Farm Bureaus offer scholarships and the online form for this application will allow students to apply for any county Farm Bureau scholarship for which they are eligible. Due Date - April 1, 2022.

The 2022 MFB Foundation CYF&R Scholarship: The Montana Farm Bureau Foundation will award one \$1,000 scholarship to a current member of the Collegiate Chapter of Young Farmers and Ranchers at MSU Bozeman, UM Western, Miles Community College or Dawson Community College. The purpose of this scholarship is to assist Collegiate Young Farmer and Rancher members in pursuing a degree from an accredited institute of higher education and enrolled at that institution for the Fall 2022 semester. Due Date – April 1, 2022.

The 2022 Bernard Greufe Honor Scholarship: This \$1500 scholarship assists Montana high school students in paying for higher education. The applicant must be pursuing a degree from an accredited institute of higher education, although the award is not limited to students seeking a degree or career in agriculture. Due Date - April 1, 2022.

The 2022 Future of Agriculture Honor Scholarship: This \$1500 scholarship is administered by the Montana Farm Bureau Foundation. The purpose of this scholarship is to assist students towards the completion of a degree in a field pertaining to agriculture. A special emphasis will be given to applicants who have shown ingenuity in agricultural production and advancement of small-scale agriculture. Due Date – April 1, 2022.

Montana Wheat & Barley Committee News

Your checkoff dollars at work...

Four new public varieties releases that are guaranteed to “Work For The Best!”

-Sam Anderson



To kick off the New Year, stakeholders met with Montana State University (MSU) plant sciences leadership to discuss and vote on four possible crop releases. It's no surprise that this is a highly anticipated meeting because it's when producers can see firsthand the results of their checkoff dollar investment. All four varieties were approved for release in conjunction with one other important item of significance.

The Variety Release Committee with support of the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee (MWBC) voted to include “MT” on the naming of all new public release. From now on every commodity release from MSU will be titled like last year's MT Sydney hard red spring wheat.

“This change will bring clarity to both seed dealers and producers looking to purchase Montana State owned varieties,” said Cassidy Marr, Executive Vice President of the MWBC. “We are hopeful that it will continue to brand the highly successful public breeding program and improve the marketability of our genetics. Combining producer input, extensive agronomic trials and end use targets, these new varieties are a fit for your operation, and for our buyers around the world.”



Varieties Released PVP title IV:

Spring Forage Barley: A cross between Lavina and CDC Cowboy resulted in the more reliable, harvest flexible “MT16F02902”. A taller, high yielding, awn less forage with extended grain fill period that is certain to be widely adapted in the northern plains, Dr. Jamie Sherman is hopeful to name the new release “MT Cowgirl”. MT Cowgirl will bring common sense, reliability and profits to producers looking to plant this new release. Let's face it, a farm doesn't need a cowboy anymore. The “MT Cowgirl” has proven to be the backbone of the operation.

Semi-Dwarf Spring Durum: MTD18313 is a spring durum with a pedigree of Alkabo/Brigade/Alzada/Strongfield. MTD18313 has high yield potential under dryland

environments, early heading and maturity, consistent high-test weight under dryland environments, normal cadmium content, fungal leaf spot tolerance, sawfly tolerance and straw strength, good semolina quality, average protein strength and a pasta color retention trait. This variety will look to be an excellent tool in the tool belt for eastern Montana producers who want to harvest durum earlier and tend to have lodging issues on the farm.

Spring Durum: MTD18348 with a pedigree of Alzada/Strongfield//Brigade/Carpio. Favorable traits include very high yield potential, low grain cadmium accumulation, very high protein strength, excellent semolina quality, fungal leaf spot tolerance, good test weight, large seed size and high grain protein. MTD18348 is looking to rival the Golden Triangle mainstay of Alzada with superior yield and excellent pasta quality.

Hard Red Winter Wheat: MTS18149 with a pedigree of the semi-solid variety Loma (MAES, 2016) to AAC Gateway [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Lethbridge, Alberta), 2012]. Great yielding, improved winter hardiness and higher stem solidness than Loma, aluminum tolerance, and excellent end use characteristics. End users will be delighted to see high falling numbers, low PPO, high water absorption and strong mix times (7.1 Min). Look to see MTS18149 be desirable for northern Warhorse and Loma producers as it out yields and has better stem solidness. Northern Golden Triangle winter wheat producers are recommended to give MTS18149 a try.

Partner Spotlight...

China

-Cassidy Marn

The Chinese market is one that is both exciting and frustrating for Montana small grains producers. Looking at the potential for high quality wheat imports, along with Montana's excellent logistics to Asia, it is a pretty enticing country to focus on. However, add in some difficult trade barriers and sanitary-phytosanitary (SPS) issues, and it can become very trying.

First, a quick overview. China is one of the largest wheat producers in the world, and the Chinese government has remained very committed to maintaining a 95% rate of self-sufficiency in both wheat and rice production. This is one of the reasons why we see so many corn and soybean exports headed there, and wheat does not necessarily follow the same trend.

There are two major SPS issues regarding wheat imports to China. The first is TCK (*Tilletia Controversa* Kuhn). TCK is a fungus known to cause the smut disease in both soft white and hard red winter wheats. This plant pathogen stunts the growth of the plants and leaves smut balls in the grain heads, which emits a fishy odor when milled. From 1974 to 1999, China applied a zero-tolerance policy on TCK spores and banned shipments of grain from the Pacific Northwest. After the 1999 US-China Agricultural Cooperation Agreement, a tolerance level of 30,000 spores per 50-gram composite sample was put into place. This has facilitated movement out of the PNW but remains a concern.

The second SPS issue is ergot. In an infected plant, chemicals that are toxic to both humans and animals are produced, and any flour or feed made from ergot infected grains will be toxic. China has the tightest ergot specification of any country in the world at 0.01% maximum, versus the US standard of 0.5%

There are several additional trade barriers that have been put into place in order for the Chinese market to maintain that 95% rate of self-sufficiency. The United States Trade Representative brought two of these issues in front of the World Trade Organization in 2016. The first addressed the minimum price support received by Chinese growers, and the second was in regard to transparency and utilization of China's Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) allocation system. The US was successful in these WTO filings, and when these wins are coupled with the Phase 1 commitments of January 2020, the US did see a substantial increase in Chinese wheat imports in 2020.

Over the past 5 years, US wheat exports to China have looked like this:

Hard Red Spring 44%

Hard Red Winter 35%

Soft White 15%

Hard red spring typically dominates the imports, but the ergot specification can be challenging across the northern plains in high rainfall years.

The flip side to the many trade issues are the highly sophisticated end users in the Chinese market. These are high-tech companies serving a more and more affluent middle class. The need for a consistent and reliable end use product is becoming more important, and that is good for Montana. At this point, it is a difficult market to count on, but certainly one that can affect the demand and create competition for US wheat purchases on any given year.