

PERSPECTIVE

March 21, 2025



Garfield County Farm Bureau



Nowata County Farm Bureau



Washington County Farm Bureau



Donations gathered at the OKFB Leadership Conference

OKFB YF&R committee collects more than 2,000 pounds of food with Fill the Sack food drive

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers committee gathered more than 2,000 pounds of food plus cash donations to help feed Oklahomans facing food insecurity through the committee’s Fill the Sack food drive.

The food drive collected a total of 2,036 pounds of food items along with \$1,425 in cash contributions that were donated to local food assistance programs across the state and to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City.

“Our Young Farmers and Ranchers are proud of the donations our Farm Bureau members and county organizations from all across our state made to help our fellow Oklahomans who face food insecurity,” said Jacob Beck, OKFB YF&R chair. “As farmers and ranchers who are committed growing and raising the crops and livestock that help feed Oklahomans, it is important for us to do our part to ensure that no Oklahoman goes to bed hungry.”

County Farm Bureau offices served as donation collection points for local

Farm Bureau and community members to donate food or money. More than 30 county Farm Bureaus directly contributed donations to the food drive along with the OKFB Women’s Leadership Committee and Farm Bureau staff.

The food drive ran from January through mid-February and culminated at the OKFB Leadership Conference Feb. 18 where donations from county Farm Bureaus were gathered before being delivered to the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City.

Herriman family of Nowata County named 2024 Oklahoma Leopold Conservation Award winner

Nowata County Farm Bureau members Scotty and Jo Herriman of South Coffeyville were named the recipients of the Oklahoma Leopold Conservation Award at the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 25.

The Herrimans received a \$10,000 prize as part of their recognition for their unwavering conservation efforts.

The award honors farmers, ranchers and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality and wildlife habitat on working land. Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes farmers and forestland owners who inspire others with their dedication to environmental improvement.

The Herriman's 2,000-acre farm in northeast Oklahoma sits along the Verdigris River, a fertile river bottom cleared and terraced for growing corn, soybeans, wheat and milo.

The road to conservation began in 2007 with a torrential downpour that caused the nearby Verdigris River to crest over 30 feet, breaking a levee that flooded the Herriman's home along with a local refinery, resulting in 42,000 gallons of oil spilling into the river.



The Herrimans lost three decades' worth of topsoil and were left with 13 acres of crops to harvest. Scotty said poor crop yields in 2008 followed the flood, and he was pushed to consider changing how he farmed.

Following the flood, he adopted no-till practices by incorporating soybeans and strip-till corn. Scotty added cover crops into his rotation starting with cereal rye, which he now sells as seed to farmers for cover crops. The Herrimans have also hosted many farm tours to showcase the soil health benefits of cover crops.

The Herriman Farm was also one site for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and American Farmland Trust's "Soil Health Case Studies" in 2022. The study analyzed the financial

impacts of conservation practices on 350 acres of the farm. It found the farm's net income increased by \$4 per acre, per year, achieving a 7% return on investment.

The Herrimans have been repeat winners in the National Corn Growers Association's yield contest for dryland corn in Oklahoma. Other sources of pride for Scotty and Jo are their three grown sons, each with agricultural careers. Scotty's passion for working with other conservation-minded people led the governor to appoint him to the Oklahoma Conservation Commission where he served for a decade including two years as chairman. He also served as president of the Oklahoma Soybean Association.



Learn More:

Read the Herriman's full story and watch Scotty and Jo's Leopold Award Winner video at okfb.news/Leopold25.

WLC Confernece registration due March 24

The OKFB Women's Leadership Conference is a two-day event **April 25-26**, in Lawton for Farm Bureau women from around the state. The event will feature a pre-conference tour, breakout sessions and guest speakers.

Applications are due **Monday, March 24**.

Registration for the conference and tour can be found at okfarmbureau.org/applications.

YF&R Day at the Capitol registration due March 28

OKFB YF&R and Collegiate Farm Bureau members will advocate for agriculture **Tuesday, April 1** at the State Capitol. Members will visit with lawmakers and elected officials about OKFB's priority legislation.

Applications are due **Friday, March 28**.

Registration can be found at okfb.news/yfrday25.

OYLA applications due April 15

Oklahoma Youth Leading Agriculture is a four-day summer leadership conference **May 27-30**, for high school students completing their junior year in 2025.

Students will experience leadership classes, speakers, team building, fellowship and industry tours.

The application is due **April 15** and is available online at okfarmbureau.org/applications.

A deep look at House Bill 2155, the Renewable Energy Facilities Act

Renewable energy has been a hot topic at the Capitol during this year's legislative session in Oklahoma, and Oklahoma Farm Bureau has been watching several bills that aim to tweak the renewable energy industry in Oklahoma.

One of OKFB's priority bills, HB 2155 or the Renewable Energy Facilities Act, authored by Rep. Mike Dobrinski of Okeene, would create a permitting process for both new and existing renewable energy facilities in the state.

"I learned of the abundance of new renewable energy projects coming to our state," said Dobrinski, who represents Oklahoma House District 59 in the northwestern part of the state, and who also serves as Chairman of the Oklahoma House Committee on Utilities. "Even though we are congested, Oklahoma is a prime target for many development companies that are not based in Oklahoma. At best, they are national companies."

HB 2155 was passed off the Oklahoma House floor on March fifth by a vote of 82-11. It has now moved to the Oklahoma Senate to work its way through the process on the senate side.

"HB 2155 creates the Renewable Energy Facilities Act, which establishes certain standards and permitting requirements for new construction of renewable energy facilities," Dobrinski said. "When HB 2155 is put into effect, it would require renewable energy projects and facilities to apply for a permit through the Oklahoma Corporation Commission before beginning the process of building the facility."

What will this mean for pre-existing or under construction renewable energy facilities? When it comes to obtaining a permit and following the guidelines of the bill, any generation project would go through the Oklahoma Corporation Commission for a permit.

"We aren't reinventing the wheel, and are using permitting that is similar to what oil and gas have been doing for decades," Dobrinski said.

If the bill becomes law, the Oklahoma Corporation Commission will promote

the rules along with setting up mechanisms to give permits and collect permit fees depending on the size, scope, and capacity of a proposed facility.

"It's not a restrictive process," said Dobrinski. "It's just an opportunity for early identification, and hopefully public notification so that neighboring landowners might have an earlier opportunity to become aware of it and how it's going to affect them."

One of the main concerns that inspired HB 2155 was the fact that records were not required to be kept on where these renewable energy facilities are located.

As of now, renewable energy facilities in Oklahoma are not required to give notice to adjacent landowners, oil and gas operators, and local and state emergency entities.

Dobrinski said that the only permitting that is currently required is for wind facilities through the Federal Aviation Administration and in some cases the Department of Defense.

Renewable energy facilities will not only have to obtain a permit, but will also be required to abide by the rules put in place by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

HB 2155 will require renewable energy facilities to not only obtain permits through the Oklahoma Corporation Commission prior to development, but it will also require pre-existing facilities to obtain a permit. The bill also requires safety and emergency plans to be provided to state, regional and local emergency management entities upon request, and it develops a complaint system for citizens to lodge complaints against operators. Decommissioning and abandonment plans would be recorded, and a fine structure would institute penalties for failure to comply with the requirements.

HB 2155 in its current form is an emergency bill, meaning it would go into effect immediately upon receiving a signature from the governor.

OKFB will continue to track HB 2155 through the legislative process as the bill works its way through the senate.



Develop strategic business plans with upcoming In the Weeds masterclass series

OKFB's Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators program invites OKFB members and rural business owners to attend the In the Weeds Masterclass: Crafting your Business Blueprint with LivePlan.

The "Crafting your Business Blueprint with LivePlan" In the Weeds session focuses on developing strategic business plans with the use of LivePlan. This masterclass offers valuable insights and practical skills to elevate your business to the next level.

All sessions will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., and dinner will be provided for attendees.

Crafting your Business Blueprint with LivePlan Dates:

April 2

Fairview • Northwest Tech Center
Pryor • Northeast Tech Center

April 23

Alva • Northwest Tech Center
Drumright • Central Tech Center

May 14

Duncan • Red River Tech Center
Wilburton • Eastern OK State College

June 4

Elk City • Arrowhead Center
Ada • Pontotoc Tech Center

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OKFB WLC, YF&R, Collegiate Farm Bureau members attend AFBF FUSION Conference in Denver



More than 30 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Women's Leadership, Young Farmers and Ranchers and Collegiate Farm Bureau members attended the 2025 American Farm Bureau FUSION Conference March 7-11 in Denver, Colorado.

The conference brought together more than 1,200 Farm Bureau members from across the country from four AFBF program areas, including WLC, YF&R, Collegiate Farm Bureaus and Program & Education.

Members at the event had the opportunity to hear from several keynote speakers including motivational

speaker, comedian and bestselling author, Josh Sundquist; AFBF President, Zippy Duvall; and Colorado State University Distinguished Professor of Animal Science, Temple Grandin.

Northern Oklahoma College student Ashlee Purvine competed in the AFBF Collegiate Discussion meet, where students from across the country replicated a committee meeting where discussion and active participation are expected from each participant to come to an answer or solution.

Purvine placed in the top four of the competition alongside competitors from Tennessee, North Carolina and Indiana.

Purvine received scholarship funds in recognition of reaching the final four.

OKFB members also took the opportunity to give back during the conference through a community service project, participating in the Clothes to Kids Denver Undie 500, an opportunity to support local teenagers in need by donating fun, new socks and undergarments. They also created no-sew blankets for A Precious Child.

During the conference members attended a wide variety of breakout session and closed out the conference by traveling to numerous locations across Colorado for various tours.