

# Oklahoma Country

Winter 2025  
The magazine of  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau

## Keeping *the* tradition alive

Recognizing nine Oklahoma farm and ranch families who embody the spirit of agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

### **No stranger to service**

*OKFB's two newest board members bring their leadership legacies to the table*

### **2024 OKFB convention recap**

*A look back at the action, achievement and awards from OKFB's annual meeting*

### **2025 legislative priorities**

*Preparing for the 2025 legislative session with our grassroots policy priorities*



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# Oklahoma Country

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## ON THE COVER

*Photo by Dustin Mielke*

The Cox family of Blaine County stands in a field of irrigated soybeans during their 2025 Farm & Ranch Family Recognition shoot.

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## ABOUT OKLAHOMA COUNTRY MAGAZINE

*Oklahoma Country* magazine is the official magazine of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, mailed to Farm Bureau members four times a year. *Oklahoma Country* magazine shares the story of Oklahoma agriculture and our rural communities through the eyes of Farm Bureau members, programs and activities.

## ABOUT OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU

Oklahoma Farm Bureau is Oklahoma's largest general farm organization, dedicated to supporting the agriculture community to improve the lives of Oklahomans. As a grassroots, member-led organization, OKFB gives a voice to family farmers and ranchers through advocacy, outreach, leadership development and supporting the future of agriculture.



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## A new year, a new agricultural landscape



**Rodd Moesel**

*President  
Oklahoma Farm Bureau  
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***“Our nation’s agriculture industry has a lot on the line as Farm Bureau advocates for policies that will help maintain and build trade opportunities for our agricultural products and inputs, ensure a reliable workforce for our farms and ranches, and create a solid safety net for our family agriculturalists.”***

**A**s Oklahoma Farm Bureau ushers in 2025, our organization is not only looking at a new year, but we are also facing a new landscape for agricultural policy with new leaders, a new administration and new opportunities.

On the national level, Farm Bureau will begin working with a new administration, including a new secretary of agriculture, new cabinet members, a new trade team and a new environmental regulations team. Add to that the change in U.S. Senate control with a new president pro tempore and majority leader, and our nation’s agriculture community will be watching cautiously as plans for the next farm bill take shape.

A new farm bill is a top priority for American Farm Bureau and OKFB as we work to provide our nation’s farmers and ranchers with a solid foundation of farm policy upon which they can operate. Numerous other national issues will also share the spotlight for our organization, including labor regulations, agricultural trade and expiring tax policies that will need to be addressed in 2025.

Our nation’s agriculture industry has a lot on the line as Farm Bureau advocates for policies that will help maintain and build trade opportunities for our agricultural products and inputs, ensure a reliable workforce for our farms and ranches, and create a solid safety net for our family agriculturalists.

Back here at home, we are also working with a new cast of state legislative leaders as Sen. Lonnie Paxton – a dear member of our Farm Bureau family – takes on the role of state senate president pro tempore, and another good friend of our organization, Rep. Kyle Hilbert, steps in as speaker of the house in the 2025 legislative session.

We look forward to working with these top legislative leaders along with our entire delegation to tackle our grassroots policy initiatives including stewardship of our water resources, eminent domain reform and orderly development of renewable energy projects –

including solar, wind and battery installations and their related transmission lines.

Rural Oklahoma has been abuzz with discussions about renewable energy development and the placement of National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor power lines, a discussion in which OKFB took an active role before the federal government scrapped their original plan. OKFB will continue to discuss ongoing and future projects with stakeholders to ensure fair treatment for landowners.

Our members can rest assured that OKFB will share our grassroots perspectives on the importance of private property rights as we engage in all our legislative priorities this year, and I encourage our members to make their voices heard throughout the legislative process at local Farm Bureau meetings, town hall events and visiting the Oklahoma state Capitol with their county Farm Bureaus.

A new year also brings with it our continued focus on developing rural Oklahoma and our state’s agricultural leaders with a variety of programs and events for our members. We will focus on even more rural economic development programs in the coming year as we help connect both startups and existing rural businesses with Oklahoma’s best resources. Our Women’s Leadership Committee, Young Farmers and Ranchers committee, Legal Foundation and Foundation for Agriculture are already hard at work to promote Oklahoma agriculture, providing opportunities for Farm Bureau members and developing our state’s rural and agricultural youth.

As we dive headlong into 2025, I invite all our Farm Bureau members to connect with their county Farm Bureaus and our state organization to lend their grassroots voice to our organization. As we share our ideas for Oklahoma’s future and roll up our sleeves to take an active role in our communities, together we will make 2025 a great year of achievement and progress for our beloved organization.



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## Being the local voice and face of agriculture

**W**hen somebody asks me what I like to do in my free time or in the evenings, I have several activities I generally recite as my favorite hobbies and pastimes. However, there is one interest that I'm always a little hesitant to share.

Yes, it's true – I like watching farming videos on YouTube.

As someone who has grown up in and around agriculture, watching farmers and ranchers go through their day-to-day tasks and facing common challenges on their operations is just another way I continue my lifelong fascination with agriculture, which started with following my grandpa around the family farm as a child.

Having now spent more years than I care to admit living in suburban Oklahoma City, watching farmers and ranchers ply their trade via my computer or phone is a great way to keep up with the realities faced by those producing food, fiber and fuel each and every day.

I am not alone in my curiosity in the daily joys and challenges of modern agriculture. From online comments sections full of wannabe agricultural enthusiasts to supermarkets in my neighborhood packed with consumers who are generations removed from the farm or ranch, there is a curiosity surrounding the seemingly idyllic farming and ranching lifestyle.

While our family farmers and ranchers may not have a bevy of followers who “like and subscribe” to their online farming exploits, each and every agricultural producer has the opportunity to share their own unique story in their local communities to help connect consumers – and those of us who crane our necks every time we see a tractor in a field – with the true story of production agriculture.

From being engaged in local community groups beyond Farm Bureau to reading agriculture-accurate books to schools to hosting area residents on our operations to sharing our daily chores on social media, we have incredible opportunities to be the local, personal face of agriculture.

***“By building understanding about agriculture in a positive, friendly way – starting in our own communities – we can increase our friends and allies to help us advocate for our way of life.”***

Sharing our agriculture story helps us build common ground with the consumers, influencers and lawmakers who collectively have an influence on our industry. By building understanding about agriculture in a positive, friendly way – starting in our own communities – we can increase our friends and allies to help us advocate for our way of life.

Each and every one of us involved in agriculture has a story to share, and I hope we each have a passion for helping others see and understand our little slice of our cherished industry.

Now if you will excuse me, I am going to watch a farmer in Canada haul wheat to town in the snow.



**Dustin Mielke**  
*Vice President of  
Communications and  
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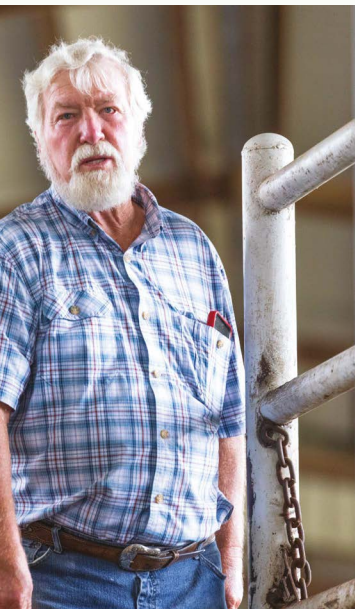




OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION

# KEEPING THE TRADITION Alive

PHOTOS AND STORIES BY MICKINZI FERGUSON AND DUSTIN MIELKE



### A message from the author:

Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to travel throughout the state of Oklahoma to hear the stories of our nine Farm and Ranch Family Recognition recipients. From the flatlands of the panhandle to the Wichita Mountains peaking in the skyline, our state knows how to paint a picturesque background for our stories and our lives.

The farm and ranch families recognized this year are as diverse as they come. Each shared a unique story of their current operation, their crops grown and animals raised, and their backgrounds that place them where they are today.

Even though each recognized family is diverse, it is the tradition of being an agriculturist that ties each farm and ranch family together. Whether that be to continue the tradition or to pass it along to those who come next, the legacy of being stewards of the land and its animals drives their passion.

There is no question that our farmers and ranchers face the demanding responsibility of being the one percent providing for the 100 percent, but as our district eight Farm and Ranch Family Recognition recipient, Jake Calvert, said, "If not me, who?"

It was an honor to sit down with all nine of our Farm and Ranch Family Recognition recipients to hear their stories of perseverance and success, and it is my privilege to share their stories with you. Each story is a true testament of keeping the tradition alive.

### About the Farm and Ranch Family Recognition program

OKFB's Farm and Ranch Family Recognition program celebrates nine farm and ranch families from around the state who carry on the best traditions of Oklahoma agriculture and our rural communities.

As part of their recognition, each family received a cash award and a custom sign to hang at their farm gate. Each family was also recognized at the 2024 OKFB convention with a video sharing their agricultural operation and heritage.



### WATCH OUR FARM AND RANCH FAMILY VIDEOS

In addition to reading about each 2024 Farm and Ranch Family Recognition recipient, you can watch videos featuring each family by scanning the QR Code.







*(From left to right) Eli, Maria, Boston and Braden Naylor*



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT ONE

# The NAYLOR Family

Beaver County

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
BEAVER COUNTY

Angus cattle move throughout their pasture sitting just 20 miles north of the Oklahoma-Texas line in Oklahoma's Beaver County.

Braden and Maria Naylor continue the Naylor family legacy, raising quality cattle, along with their multi-crop farm near Balko.

Starting in 1942, the Naylor family has utilized this land to grow wheat, grain sorghum and hay.

To be successful with the limited rainfall and shorter growing seasons, Braden said, the understanding of how to be conservative is crucial.

Braden follows his father's practices by finding new ways to grow crops in the harsh panhandle climate.

"My dad started no-tilling 20 years ago," Braden said. "Where we live, we have limited moisture. Every year we are looking for better ways to be conservative."

Although his family has been raising crops for more than eight decades, Braden's passion lies within his cattle herd, specifically focusing on their genetics. This passion was ignited beginning with his time showing steers while growing up.

From the early 1990s to the early 2000s, the family raised Maine-Anjou cattle and club calves. By 2012, the Naylor family saw an opportunity to improve the success of their operation

by raising, developing and marketing Angus bulls.

Today, the family raises seedstock Angus cattle, including bulls and cow/calf pairs, along with commercial and stocker cattle.

"We're always striving for the next calf crop to be better than the year before," Braden said. "Come calving time, it's like Christmas day, every day."

Along with their cattle and crops, the Naylor family take pride raising their three sons, Alex, Eli and Boston, on their farm and ranch.

"We have really enjoyed being a farm family because of the rural community and small schools," Maria said.

Eli is involved in FFA, showing Angus heifers, while also helping Braden with the cattle and crops. In addition to his strong ties with agriculture, he is an all-around athlete, playing football, baseball, basketball and running track. Boston's favorite activity on the farm is feeding and checking the cows.

As strong supporters of the community that plays a role in the development of their own children, the Naylor family understands the importance of being involved in their community of Balko and Beaver County.

"It's really nice to live in a rural community where common sense prevails," Braden said. "We pray and do the pledge before every ball game. Everybody is there to support each other's kids. Our kids are almost raised by committee because everyone helps each other."

The Naylor family serve their local church on the deacon board and in the Sunday School classroom. Braden serves on the Beaver County Farm Bureau Board in addition to several other community organizations.

Whether it is looking at the latest genetics to improve their herd or harvesting each season's crops, the Naylor family recognize the importance of being successful in every sector of their operation.

"In agriculture, every day is a new day," Braden said. "At the end of the day, being stewards of what the good Lord gave us is a responsibility that most people in agriculture take seriously."

Scan to watch  
the Naylor  
family's 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







(From left to right) Paige, Jaycee, Derek and Tucker Jacobs



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT TWO

# The JACOBS Family

Tillman COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
TILLMAN COUNTY

For both Derek and Paige Jacobs, their roots for agriculture run deep throughout Tillman County as their families have farmed and ranched in the area for more than 100 years.

Today, the Jacobs family have cultivated their own operation of owned and rented land spanning Tillman, Kiowa and Cotton counties.

The Jacobses have a diversified farm where they grow cotton and wheat, with a recent introduction of corn.

The return to the farm was the goal for Derek and Paige after they graduated college. Both coming from farm and ranch families, they strived to plant their roots together to build a strong foundation for a family of their own.

“I grew up helping my dad and uncle, who are partners on a beef cattle and farming operation,” Derek said. “I really never thought of doing anything else. It’s a great place to raise a family.”

Derek got his feet under him in college when he began his custom hay business. By 2008, Derek was offered the opportunity to rent land where he started growing alfalfa, cotton and wheat while still managing their custom hay operation.

As the family’s farming operation continued to expand, they decided to

supplement their custom hay business by adding custom cotton, corn and wheat harvesting, and in 2015, they began their trucking company hauling grain and cattle.

In addition to their extensive crop farming, the Jacobses have continued to grow their cow-calf operation. The family runs registered Angus and commercial Red Angus, and in the last few years, they have introduced stocker cattle on their wheat pastures.

While Derek and Paige succeed with their farming and ranching, they both find true success by having the opportunity to raise their two children, Tucker and Jaycee, on their farm and ranch.

“I want to teach our kids that community is important and our values on the farm are important,” Paige said. “I think being out here helps with that.”

Tucker has started finding his way on the farm as he helps by running the grain cart, hay rakes and loader tractor. This year, he was given the exciting opportunity to begin plowing.

Much like Derek, his work does not end there. He also helps with the cattle, especially in the sorting pen, and shows heifers, which helps keep him busy through the school year.

Jaycee, at just four years old, is getting the all-around farm

experience as she tags along with her family.

With such deep roots in Tillman County, the Jacobses strive to be involved within their community. Both take an active role in their county Farm Bureau as Derek serves on the Tillman County Farm Bureau Board of Directors and Paige serves on the Tillman County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee.

The family also is involved with several of their children’s school activities and community events, along with county 4-H and FFA events, especially with livestock.

Farming and ranching has been the way of life for both Derek and Paige. Now, they have the opportunity to continue their families’ legacies, raising their children and instilling in them the values of hard work.

“It doesn’t feel like we go to work, really,” Derek said. “We have bad days like everybody else does, but this is who we are, it is what we do.”

Scan to watch  
the Jacobs  
family’s 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







(From left to right) Grant & Skylar Williams, Debbie, Shawn and Dakota Cox



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT THREE

# The COX Family

Blaine COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
BLAINE COUNTY

Shawn Cox is a man of few words. However, once he begins to share his story of tradition and his family's passion for agriculture, he turns into an open book.

Shawn is no stranger to farming, as he began as a young kid helping his dad, uncle and grandfather on the farm. As he got older, he helped a neighboring farmer and slowly began to rent land and buy equipment and cattle to begin his own farm.

"I've been around farming all my life with my grandpa and my dad," Shawn said. "I initially started with my grandpa, square baling hay in an alfalfa field while I was an 8-year-old. I've just been doing it ever since."

Now, Shawn and Debbie Cox are proud farmers and ranchers, farming 3,000 acres of wheat, soybeans and milo while running 300 head of Angus cows on their Blaine County farm and ranch.

In 2007, after starting their family, the Coxes decided to begin a water well business, Cox Water Well Services, in an effort to help provide for their family.

As their farm and ranch continues to succeed, their proudest success lies in their family and having the ability to give back to the community.

Shawn and Debbie have raised their two children, Skylar and Dakota, on

their farm, where they have strived to teach them the values and work ethic from working in agriculture to help them succeed in life.

Skylar, who is now married, would help drive the tractor through the fields. She was also involved in FFA in high school, where she showed sheep and pigs along with participating in speech contests. She now works for Bridge Creek Public Schools while she attends college to obtain her bachelor's degree in applied science.

Dakota, who is finishing his senior year in high school, helps Shawn with everything there is to do on the farm. He also has started running his own cattle herd on the family's ranch. Aside from the farm and ranch, he is involved in FFA, wrestling and track in his school.

Debbie proudly takes the role of being a farm wife. She helps wherever she is needed and she also serves as the secretary/treasurer for the family's water well business.

"On my end of it, I go get parts and supply the meals during harvest," Debbie said.

Both Shawn and Debbie take pride in having the opportunity and ability for their family to be able to give back to their community as they help farmers and rural residents of the Watonga area.

"I started with nothing, so every time I get a chance to give back, I will give back," Shawn said.

Both Shawn and Dakota serve as volunteer firefighters for Watonga. Shawn is also involved with the Watonga Public School board and he volunteers every year for the community Christmas dinner with his children. Debbie serves as the vice president for the Watonga All Sports Wrestling Group.

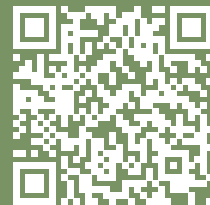
In Debbie's free time, she enjoys baking cupcakes, cakes and pies for others in her community.

"I feel like being a part of the rural community, it's just small and we're close," Debbie said.

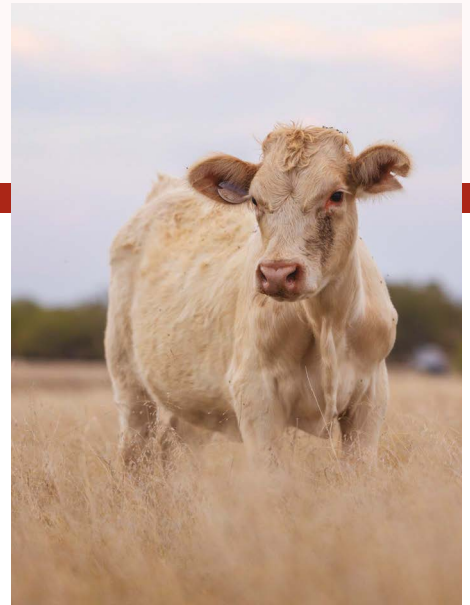
The Cox family would not trade living and working on the farm for anything, they said.

"You get the dirt under your fingernails, and I just love doing it," Shawn said. "Once you do it and you're around it, it's just something you just learn to love."

Scan to watch  
the Cox  
family's 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







*(From left to right) Jayci Fenhuas, Weston and Lacie Hoodenpyle*



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT FOUR

# The HOODENPYLE Family

Cotton COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
COTTON COUNTY

**W**eston and Lacie Hoodenpyle are the first to credit the success of their Cotton County farm and ranch to their faith.

“First and foremost, I do it to glorify God,” Weston said. “I don’t know how anybody can do what we do without faith. I have my Bible in my pickup. I crack it open, and that’s what gets me through it.”

Located 16 miles outside of nearby Walters, you can find the Hoodenpyle’s farm and ranch operation consisting of 3,000 acres of cultivation and grass.

The family primarily runs a stocker calf operation, along with cow/calf pairs growing on winter wheat. The family purchases their stocker cattle from Florida, then helps them transition to Oklahoma’s climate to graze on the family’s wheat pasture.

In addition to their cattle operation, the family grows summer sudangrass, for hay purposes.

As a fourth-generation farmer who learned from his great-grandfather, grandfather and father, Weston finds his passion in being able to take care of the land appropriately.

Weston grew up helping his father, who farms about 5,000 acres while also running about 3,000 head of stocker calves and about 600 head of cows.

“To me, why it is important to take care of the land is to leave something for the next generation,” Weston said. “I think I care on a deeper level than most people know. I just want to leave the place in better shape than I got it.”

Although Lacie did not grow up with the farming lifestyle, she now helps in each aspect of the farm and ranch.

“I didn’t come from a farm life, I married into it,” Lacie said. “I always said I wanted to be a farmer’s wife. I wouldn’t want any other life than this.”

Weston and Lacie raise their daughter, Jayci, on their farm and ranch. Jayci helps with the responsibilities of moving and hauling hay, feeding cows, putting out minerals and rotating cattle from pasture to pasture. Outside of the daily farm and ranch chores, she also plays softball, basketball, runs track and shows sheep.

Weston also follows his passion of caring for the land by leasing the local golf course.

“This is something I have always wanted to do,” Weston said. “I always wanted to be in the turf management field. I love taking care of grass.”

While the golf course provides Weston the ability to follow his passion for turf management and

caring for the land, the family also uses the golf course to give back to the Walters community.

“Every Wednesday night we have a big scramble,” Weston said. “After everyone finishes their nine holes, my wife prepares food for everybody and we hang out and have fellowship and eat. That’s what a lot of guys look forward to get them through the week.”

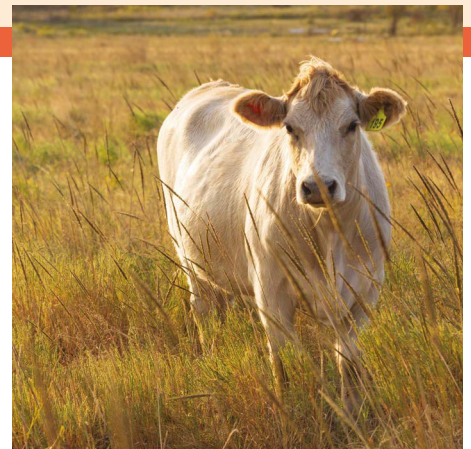
Weston also stays involved in his community by serving as a board member on the local rural water district, as well as for Cotton County Farm Bureau. He also served for five years on the Association of Southwest Oklahoma Governments.

“I can’t change the world, but I can start right here, I can go out from here,” Weston said. “I want to grow a product that I am proud of, that if I can just start right here in my community, helping the people around us comes first.”

Scan to watch  
the Hoodenpyle  
family’s 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







(From left to right) Cooper, Jett, David, Haley and Hadley McClendon



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT FIVE

# The McCLENDON Family

Pittsburg COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
PITTSBURG COUNTY MEMBERS

David and Haley McClendon understand the importance of supporting their community and local farmers and ranchers.

Just off of U.S. Highway 69 in the southeastern community of Kiowa sits the McClendons' processing plant and storefront, "Daylight 'Til Dark Processing."

"We started our processing plant in 2023 because we felt like there were not enough outlets to provide enough services for the folks in our area," David said. "In building the plant, that was our main goal, to be able to use this as an outlet for our own cattle and to help our local farmers and ranchers in the area having an outlet for theirs."

After finishing building their first processing facility in October 2023, the family began processing wildlife. By June 2024, they expanded their processing facility and added livestock processing to the services they offer to their community.

The family took the opportunity to purchase and renovate the building that neighbors their processing plants to house their storefront. The storefront gave the family the ability to market inspected beef and pork to their community. Along with meat, they also sell fresh produce, fresh eggs, jams, preserves, and local honey.

Along with their processing facility and storefront, the family also finds time to farm and ranch in Atoka and Pittsburg counties.

The McClendons run a 150-head cow/calf operation on 140 acres of owned land and 1,100 acres of leased land. They also bale 2,500 bales of haylage and 1,000 bales of dry custom hay, in addition to baling their own hay and haylage for their cattle operation.

"For me, agriculture is a passion," David said. "I got into doing it because my dad did it, then that turned into something more than that. It's a love of the land, it's a love of being able to raise the cattle, to see the babies and the need to provide a service to the community and to leave a legacy."

David and Haley find contentment in raising their three children, Jett, Cooper and Hadley, on their Wardville-area farm and ranch. Each child finds a place to integrate themselves into the family's operation, providing vital roles to keep the operations running.

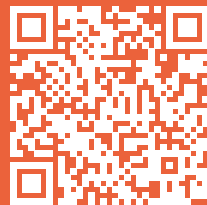
Their oldest, Jett, works in the family's processing facility. Cooper works on the ranch, and their youngest, Hadley, helps Haley in the storefront as she finishes her senior year of high school.

"I just wanted to teach our kids that the food that we are raised on and that people eat every day comes from agriculture," Haley said. "The beginning of that and where it starts is at the farm, and with their own hands, they can do that and they can generate something to help with the next generation."

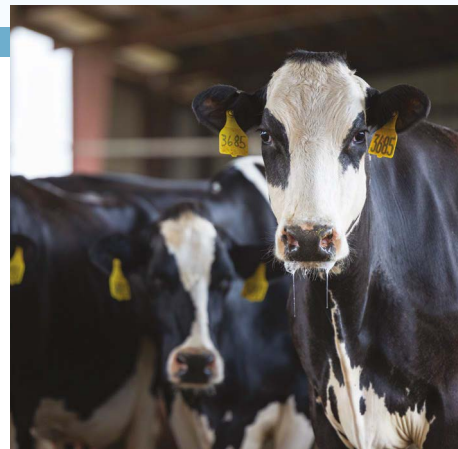
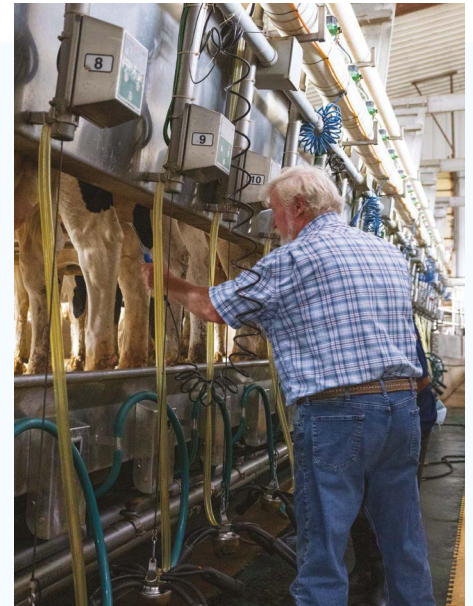
Along with helping ranchers provide an outlet for their products, the McClendons are also involved with their church and multiple county organizations. David serves as a board member for Pittsburg County Farm Bureau and is an associate board member for the Pittsburg County Conservation District. Haley serves as a steward of their church boards and assists in decorating the church for special events.

"Faith, family and community is a big deal — it's the main deal," David said. "That's what we want to extend to all of our local ranchers and farmers here in the area."

Scan to watch the McClendon family's 2024 Farm and Ranch Family Recognition video.







*Charles and Ellen Coblentz with their sons Charles, Adam and Anthony and their families*



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT SIX

# The COBLENTZ Family

MAYES COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
MAYES COUNTY

Long before the morning sun breaks into the sky, the Coblentz family of Mayes County has already been marking tasks off their morning chore list as they begin their day.

As dairy farmers, the family maintains a strict schedule to milk more than 1,400 head of dairy cows in their milking barn every day, multiple times a day.

Charles and Ellen Coblentz have been operating their diversified dairy farm in Chouteau for 51 years. In addition to caring for their dairy herd, the family also grows soybeans, corn, wheat, alfalfa and wheat pasture for grazing.

Along with their dairy and crop operation, the Coblentzes take pride in aiding local farmers and ranchers with their input needs while also decreasing their own operating costs with their on-farm seed and fertilizer business.

The family said that their main goal is to be able to raise everything on their farm that each of their animals needs to eat.

“We started dairying in 1972 here and we have a diversified operation,” Charles said. “We went through dairy to beef farming, raising our own feed and then in 1990, we also started marketing chemical seed and fertilizer to other farmers.”

While Charles heads the dairy operation, Ellen, along with feeding calves and managing the farm bookwork, supervises the chemical seed and fertilizer business.

“The fertilizer, chemical and seed is a very large operation,” Ellen said. “I want every one of my customers to know that they are getting the best price they can get anywhere. I strive to keep my customers happy because I want to have their respect and know that I have tried to treat them just like I would treat myself.”

The Coblentzes raised their four children, Priscilla, Charles, Adam and Anthony, on their operation, with Charles, Adam and Anthony returning to work on the farm.

“This is definitely a family farm,” Ellen said. “I have been at it for nearly 50 years. Our children went to college and came home and wanted to work in it, too, — all but our daughter, who we miss very much. Everyone has a place.”

Together, Charles, Adam and Anthony take care of the cattle as they plant crops, run the hay crew and oversee the numerous other farm tasks.

Although the Coblentzes stick to a strict schedule dairying and operating their farm input business, the two still find time to be highly involved within

their local community and national organizations. Charles has served on several boards and currently serves on the Dairy Farmers of America council, representing dairymen from Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri. They both have been Farm Bureau members for more than 50 years.

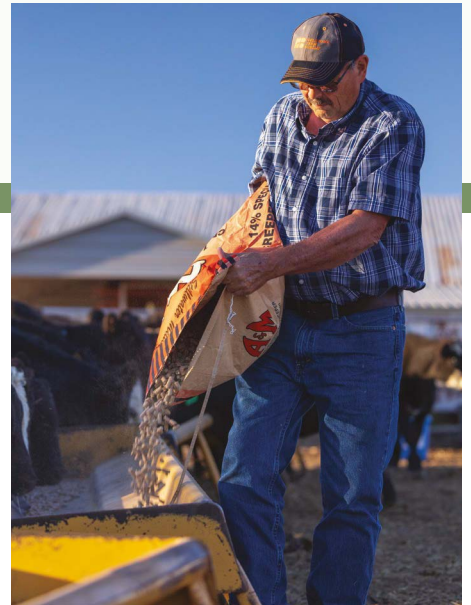
Their eldest son, Charles, and his wife, Gretchen, have taken on prominent positions volunteering within their community. Charles serves as the president of Mayes County Farm Bureau and vice president of the Chouteau-Maize School Board. Gretchen stays involved by serving as the vice chair for the Mayes County Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Committee.

The Coblentz family has put their nose to the grindstone for the past 51 years to create their successful diversified dairy operation.

“You don’t quit,” Charles said. “You wake up seven days a week and you just stay focused.”

Scan to watch  
the Coblentz  
family’s 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.





(From left to right) Steve and Denise Kienholz



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT SEVEN

# The KIENHOLZ Family

Noble COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
NOBLE COUNTY

There is a no greater love story than the one told by Steve and Denise Kienholz.

The couple's story began in the summers when they were teenagers, only seeing each other when Steve picked up Denise on his way to the elevator with his last load of wheat each day.

Those two 14-year-olds who grew up four miles apart in Marland grew into high school sweethearts who then established their homestead in Noble County.

"We have been married for 47 years, and it has been a blessing to me to have her," Steve said.

Steve and Denise now raise 185 head of commercial cow/calf pairs along with 3,900 acres of crop and grassland, which includes wheat, soybeans and milo on their farm and ranch near Red Rock.

"This is where we've always been, and this is home," Denise said.

The Kienholzes have found numerous ways throughout the years to implement conservation methods to improve their operation.

Steve and Denise implemented a crop rotation program and have continued to experiment with new technology in an effort to improve their yields. They use no-till on 25% of their crop acres. Their end goal for

their operation is to increase their no-till production, and to control weeds to save labor.

"You just have to have an optimistic attitude about it, and if you don't have an optimistic attitude, I don't think you can be successful in anything," Steve said. "You've got to be happy with what you're doing."

Steve and Denise raised their two children, Jason and Courtney, on their farm and ranch. During harvest, you can find their daughter, Courtney, with her husband and eldest son, helping the family bring in the crop.

"I just wanted the kids to be raised on the farm," Denise said. "I think they enjoyed it, and it's just a great life for raising kids. They learn work ethic, and they know what needs to be done and they just jump right in and get it done."

The Kienholz family strives to stay involved in their local community, organizations, and they have served in various roles throughout the years.

Steve is currently serving as the vice president of the Noble County Rural Water District Four, a board member on the Noble County Farm Service Agency committee and is the president of Noble County Farm Bureau.

Denise serves as president of the Noble County Farm Bureau Women's

Leadership Committee. They both continue to be active members within their church as Steve serves as an elder deacon and Denise serves as their secretary.

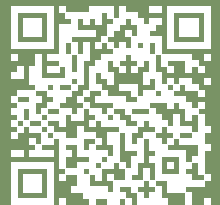
"It's just where I think we are meant to be," Denise said. "I think God planted us here and gave us all of our blessings to continue."

Those two 14-year-old high school sweethearts have thrived over the last 47 years. There is no question their love for each other prevails against each hard day.

They also continuously place this shared love into their farming and ranching operation, which has sustained their success throughout the years.

"It's in my blood," Steve said of his lifetime in agriculture. "I don't think I would do anything else. It's a hard life, you've got plenty of ups and downs, but I enjoy being out with the cattle. I just don't think I could do anything else. It's just a great life."

Scan to watch  
the Kienholz  
family's 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







*(From left to right) Jake and Samantha Calvert*



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT EIGHT

# The CALVERT Family

Cleveland COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
CLEVELAND COUNTY

As the fourth generation of Calverts to live on the family's Cleveland County ranch, Jake and Samantha Calvert's ultimate goal is to keep the next generation here.

"I live under no illusion that this is going to last indefinitely," Jake said. "There will come a point when they throw me in a wood box and try to find somebody to say good words about me. I hope then that I have kept the family land together long enough that it is worth something that my kids can go and build something bigger and better."

Jake knows the way of the cowboy lifestyle well, having spent most of his childhood either driving a tractor or on horseback helping his uncle on the place he now calls home. Years later, he said he managed to con a beautiful young lady into doing it with him.

Today, the Calverts run 100 head of cattle on their Norman ranch, where they focus on marketing directly to consumers in Norman, Moore and south Oklahoma City. Along with their cattle as they also raise quarter horses that are on the ranch. Samatha also has a flock of 40 laying hens.

"He will tell you that his pride and joy and things he looks forward to doing and dealing with is the cattle," Samantha said. "For me, it's the horses."

Most importantly, the Calverts continued their family legacy by raising their three adult sons, Jacob, Marshall and Paton, on their ranch. While each son holds off-ranch jobs and families, they all provide a crucial role in maintaining the success of the ranch. Their oldest, Jacob, is an aircraft mechanic who helps as needed with maintenance and processing. Marshall, a welder, helps with the maintenance, processing and the horses. Their youngest, Paton, helps with the processing and is the colt starter and farrier.

"The opportunity to raise kids out here ensures that there's another generation of self-sufficient individuals," Jake said.

He said that his boys certainly could have grown up with an easier lifestyle, but their sons now know the value of hard work, pride in a job done right and the gravity of life and death. Both Jake and Samantha agree: they would not have it any other way.

Jake and Samantha each find ways to stay involved in their local community. Jake serves as president of Cleveland County Farm Bureau and is part of the Cleveland County Fair Board and Cleveland County Cattleman's Association board. Samantha serves on the Cleveland County 4-H Foundation board.

While marketing their beef directly to consumers, the Calvert family also donates their beef to help local organizations throughout the year including to the Norman FFA chapter, Cleveland County Oklahoma Home and Community Education, and Cleveland County 4-H club. They also provide beef for the veterans celebration at Tiffany's Restaurant in Noble.

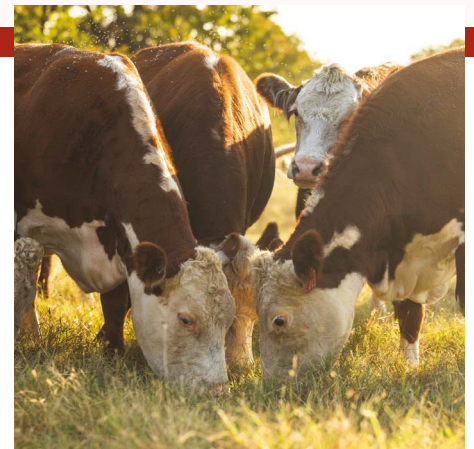
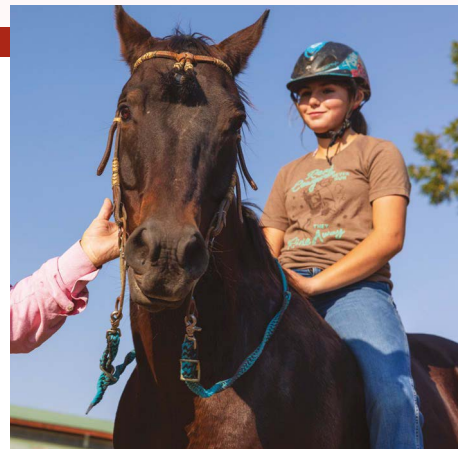
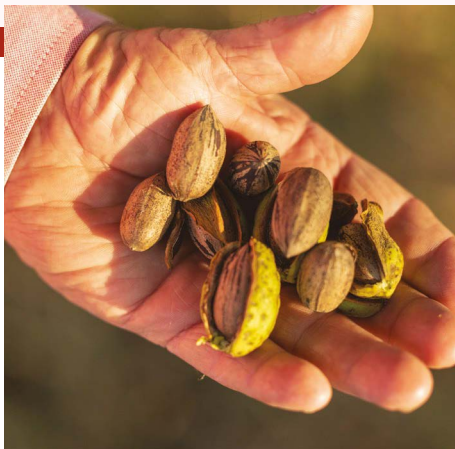
As the family continues to ranch on the same land their ancestors settled on in Norman almost 100 years ago, the Calverts show the true dedication one must have to continue the legacy of the ranch. Jake recognizes that while agriculture can be a thankless profession, he would not want any other life for himself and his family.

"Watch a cow lick a calf clean. Watch a colt stand up and nurse for the first time. Then ask, 'If not me, who?'" Jake said. "Somebody's got to feed the country. It is a noble profession that goes without thanks far too often."

Scan to watch  
the Calvert  
family's 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







(From left to right) Mike and Lotsee Spradling



OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU DISTRICT NINE

# The SPRADLING Family

Tulsa COUNTY

FARM AND RANCH FAMILY RECOGNITION  
TULSA COUNTY

Lotsee is a small town located just west of Sand Springs where the only residents you will find are the Spradling family.

As the town of Sand Springs and the city of Tulsa began to grow westward, Lotsee Spradling's father, George Campbell, incorporated his 1,200-acre ranch to protect his land from being taken over by the surrounding town and city. Conveniently, he named this new town after his daughter.

Lotsee, Oklahoma, has now been home to Flying G Ranch for decades, as Mike and Lotsee Spradling continue Lotsee's family's tradition.

After graduating from Oklahoma State University in 1968, the two returned to the ranch, and through 57 years of marriage, the couple has grown the ranch to 2,000 acres. While running one of the oldest herds of registered polled Hereford cattle in Oklahoma, which was started by Lotsee's mother, they also own The Nut Shop, a retail store selling their pecan, snack and gift items.

"My mother as a young girl went to a fair in Wichita Falls, Texas, with her family and saw her first polled Hereford, and she fell in love with them," Lotsee said. "She started putting together a herd, and we have just kind of continued that over the years."

While the Hereford cattle and Flying G Ranch have been a part of the family for over a century, it was by accident that Mike found his true passion: pecans.

"One day I was there in the bottom dozing trees out, and some of them were pretty good size and they didn't move very easily," Mike said. "I started paying attention to what kind of tree it was, and it was a pecan tree. I said to myself, 'If I can't get you out, I'm going to make you produce.'"

That day, Mike set a goal to produce enough pecans for his mother-in-law to use for a pecan pie for Thanksgiving. Since then, Mike has well exceeded that goal, producing over three-quarters of a million pounds of pecans in a year.

The two raised their three children, Arron, Stacy and Michelle, on their ranch. Their oldest daughter, Arron, now operates Flying G Equestrian Center on the ranch and manages The Nut Shop with her husband, Bo.

"It has been a privilege to grow up here," Lotsee said. "It's been a privilege to raise my children here. I've helped raise hundreds of children out here, and so did my folks, working. We've tried to instill to them respect for everything they have."

After spending nearly 40 years raising pecans in Tulsa County, the

two made the decision to sell the orchard in 2023. Mike now has the opportunity to spend more time with Lotsee, his children, grandchildren and the ranch.

Mike will be the first to share the importance of being involved in the agriculture community, as he has served in several notable roles throughout his career, including president of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, president and director of Oklahoma Pecan Growers Association, chair of Oklahoma Pecan Commission, council member of American Pecan Council and life member of the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association. He now serves as vice president of the Tulsa State Fair Board.

"I have been very fortunate," Mike said. "I only wanted three things in life: a good wife, a good family and a good environment for them to live in. If I don't see the sun rise tomorrow, nobody shed a tear for me, because I've had it all." **FB**

Scan to watch  
the Spradling  
family's 2024  
Farm and  
Ranch Family  
Recognition  
video.







**JIMMY TAYLOR**

# NO STRANGER



## **MEET OUR NEWEST GRASSROOTS LEADERS**

*Jimmy Taylor and Gary Crawley were elected to serve Farm Bureau members in their OKFB districts by the very members they represent at OKFB's 2024 Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City. As board members, each will represent farmers and ranchers as they work alongside their fellow OKFB state directors to advocate for family agriculture and strengthen our rural communities in addition to overseeing the operation of OKFB Insurance.*





**GARY CRAWLEY**

# SERVICE

## TWO LONGTIME GRASSROOTS LEADERS ANSWER THE CALL OF LEADERSHIP TO SERVE ON THE OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU STATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### JIMMY TAYLOR • DISTRICT 2

**L**ongtime Farm Bureau members know well the Taylor last name. Taylor's grandfather, John I., helped start OKFB back in 1942 and served as the organization's first president. Taylor's father was deeply involved in Farm Bureau, and Taylor himself has been a county Farm Bureau leader going back more than four decades.

Taylor began his own Farm Bureau journey by attending meetings with his family as a child and attending a Farm Bureau event while he was still in high school.

As a rancher in Roger Mills County, Taylor and his wife, Tracy, raise Angus cattle with a focus on quality genetics that provide consumers with an enjoyable cut of beef on their dinner tables.

"We try to raise animals that have quality about them," Taylor said. "What that will do is give the consumer a good eating experience where they'll want beef again."

Having ranched his entire life, Taylor knows the daily challenges that face Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers along with the perennial issues that family agriculturalists have worked together to tackle through Farm Bureau.

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau's two newest grassroots leaders are no strangers to serving fellow farmers and ranchers as leaders in the agriculture community.

Jimmy Taylor and Gary Crawley have each spent a lifetime in agriculture as farmers and ranchers in addition to serving in numerous leadership capacities for Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations in their counties, around the state and even across the nation.

As newly elected district directors who will serve on the OKFB state board, Taylor and Crawley are once again stepping up to the plate to advocate for agriculture.

Taylor and Crawley were elected to the state board by fellow Farm Bureau members from their districts at the 2024 OKFB annual meeting in November. Taylor represents District 2, which includes nine counties in far west and southwestern Oklahoma. Crawley represents the nine counties of District 5, which encompasses the southeastern corner of the state.

While Taylor and Crawley may be recent additions to the OKFB state board, each of them has decades of leadership experience and service in the agriculture community beginning in their own local communities.





“It’s quite an honor to serve the agriculture industry in Oklahoma in this way,” Taylor said of his election to the OKFB state board. “Farm Bureau has been very important to my operation and to agriculture in Oklahoma – specifically legislatively. And I want to do what I can to help the organization move forward in a positive way.”

Taylor has served as an agricultural advocate with leadership positions in numerous organizations, including as a local electric co-op board member and as a trustee on the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives board. Taylor’s expansive résumé of agricultural service includes board member positions on the Oklahoma Beef Council, a recent term as the chairman of the Cattlemen’s Beef Board, which oversees the beef checkoff program that promotes beef across the nation and the world, and a spot on the U.S. Meat Export Federation board.

In his time as both a Farm Bureau member and as a national leader in the beef industry, Taylor sees pressure from animal activists as an ongoing issue that Farm Bureau members can help step up and address.

“Animal activists are a big issue,” Taylor said. “They put out a lot of misinformation, and I think it’s part of everyone’s job who is involved in agriculture to be an advocate. When we see untruths and misinformation, we should get the right word out there and correct it.”

With a wide array of agriculture experience in his back pocket, Taylor is focusing his time on the OKFB state board to reach across the industry and make sure agriculturalists from around the state are making their voices heard.

“It takes us all,” Taylor said. “If you’ve been involved in agriculture for several years, your perspective might be a little different than other people’s. We need all perspectives on our county boards, and we need everyone’s ideas. All Farm Bureau policy starts with individual members coming to the county level.”





## GARY CRAWLEY • DISTRICT 5

**G**ary Crawley spent a career helping Oklahoma's agriculture community, and he is back in a seat of service as OKFB's District 5 director, a position in which he served from 2012 to 2021.

Crawley grew up on his family's Pittsburg County farm. After earning his bachelor's degree in agriculture, he went to work as a loan officer with the United States Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration. Crawley had a 32-year career with USDA, retiring from the Farm Service Agency as a district director in southeastern Oklahoma where he oversaw 13 counties.

Crawley made a career out of connecting fellow agriculturalists with programs, resources and ideas to help farmers and ranchers improve their operations. His love for making connections with fellow agricultural producers is central to his service as a Farm Bureau board member.

"Over the years I've stayed involved with agriculture and gotten to know farmers and ranchers," Crawley said. "It's an enjoyment to get out and visit with them and to see their operations. It's amazing how you meet people and they start asking your opinion or for input."

Crawley stepped into Farm Bureau service as a Pittsburg County board member four decades ago, carrying on a legacy of leadership from his father, who also served as a county Farm Bureau board member.

A love for the agriculture community and fostering conversations about the industry he loves is what drives Crawley to travel to meetings across OKFB's District 5, working to ensure the voices of southeastern Oklahomans echo in the halls of state and national government.

"As I've worked in the agriculture field, there's always a need for farmers and ranchers in southeastern Oklahoma to have a voice and access to programs and opportunities,"

Crawley said. "With Farm Bureau, you have a more hands-on approach to visiting with legislators and trying to get something accomplished that will help farmers, ranchers and our rural areas."


Crawley said his previous time spent on the state board not only provided him with a wealth of agricultural knowledge he will use to represent OKFB members in District 5, but it also gave him a deep understanding of OKFB Insurance and the important role insurance plays in the lives and livelihoods of Farm Bureau members. The OKFB state board oversees the operation of OKFB Insurance as it serves the needs of Farm Bureau members.

"I feel like we're in a position where we know the path forward for the insurance company to help our members out in rural Oklahoma while building the farm organization and representing our agricultural producers," Crawley said.

In addition to his longtime work representing agriculture with Farm Bureau, Crawley also serves on the Pittsburg County Conservation Board as vice president, and is the area five commissioner for the Oklahoma Conservation Commission.

Crawley and his wife, Wilma, continue the family's agriculture legacy as they raise cattle in the Savanna area with the help of their family. Crawley also continues to do appraisals and inspections on a contract basis.

Whether he is out working an appraisal job, attending the weekly livestock sale at McAlester Stockyards or at a local community event, Crawley said he works to make sure rural residents know the importance of Farm Bureau.

"Engaging with producers and seeing their operations and visiting with them is something I really enjoy," Crawley said. "A lot of people don't know what Farm Bureau is about. When I'm out and about, I try to educate people about Farm Bureau." 





# A POSITIVE OUTLOOK A BRIGHTER FUTURE

## OKLAHOMA FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau members from across the state gathered Nov. 8-10 at the Omni Hotel in Oklahoma City for the organization's 83rd annual meeting where they elected new leaders, set organizational policy for the coming year, recognized outstanding members and learned from speakers.

"We had a really wonderful convention this year," said OKFB President Rodd Moesel. "Everybody enjoyed the chance to fellowship and visit with one another and address the issues of the day during the resolutions sessions. A lot of times in agriculture, we are out on the farm or ranch and don't get to see each other as much. There is a lot of learning that occurs in the networking between one another at convention and a lot of reassurance that although there may be challenges, many are facing the same things."

### LEADERS ELECTED

OKFB members elected several new and returning leaders throughout the weekend, including two new members to serve on OKFB's board of directors.

Jimmy Taylor of Roger Mills County was elected to serve as the new District 2 director. Gary Crawley of Pittsburg County will return to the OKFB board of directors as District 5 Director. Get to know our new board members on page 30 in this magazine.

Mike Leverett of McClain County was re-elected to serve another three-year term as District 8 director. He will represent Cleveland, Coal, Garvin, Hughes, McClain, Pontotoc, Pottawatomie and Seminole counties.

Jill Derusha of Greer County was elected to represent District 2 on the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee.

OKFB Young Farmers and Ranchers re-elected Jacob and Chastity Beck of Logan County to serve a one-year term as YF&R chair. Additional members re-elected include Jaclyn Darling of Coal County, District 8; and serving in an ex-officio capacity are Tommy and Chalayna Salisbury of Tulsa County. Lincoln and Gracee Muller of Jackson County

were elected to represent District 2; Jake and Jonessa Cantrell of Haskell County were elected to represent District 5; Nick and Dani Marlin of Mayes County were elected to serve in an at-large position; and Teegin Crosthwait of Oklahoma State University was elected to serve as the Collegiate Farm Bureau representative.

### MEMBERS SET 2025 GRASSROOTS POLICY

Farm Bureau voting delegates considered more than 100 grassroots policy resolutions throughout two business sessions, including resolutions on property rights, eminent domain, renewable energy, conservation, labor and more.

The policy resolutions presented on the floor in Oklahoma City began as county-submitted positions and advanced through the state resolutions process in October. The policies adopted by OKFB members during the annual meeting will help to guide the work of the organization at the state Capitol for years to come.

### OKFB MEMBERS AND COUNTIES RECOGNIZED

Comanche County Farm Bureau was honored as the top county Farm Bureau with the John I. Taylor Award, and Payne County was recognized for its programs with the Lewis H. Munn Award.

U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas received the Distinguished Service to OKFB Award for his decades-long service to agriculture in the United States House of Representatives.

Chasen Doye of Comanche County received the YF&R Achievement Award, and Jacob and Chastity Beck of Logan County received the YF&R Excellence in Ag Award.

Okmulgee County was presented with the Charles L. Roff Award for the most outstanding county YF&R committee, and Southwestern Oklahoma State University was honored as the top Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter with the YF&R Moesel Award.

Mayes and Okmulgee County Farm Bureaus were each recognized for an outstanding county activity with County Excellence Awards, and 46 county Farm Bureaus were



# OK, FUTURE

NOVEMBER 8-10, 2024

presented with OKFB Presidential Star Awards.

Austin Jackson of Payne County was named the YF&R Discussion Meet winner, Ashlee Purvine of Northern Oklahoma College was the Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet winner, and Heath Laubauch of Woodward FFA was named the High School Discussion Meet winner.

Learn more about each of the awards on the following pages.

The OKFB WLC recognized nine outstanding farm and ranch families from around the state with the annual OKFB District Farm and Ranch Family Recognition awards. This year's honorees were Braden and Maria Naylor, Beaver County, District 1; Derek and Paige Jacobs, Tillman County, District 2; Shawn and Debbie Cox, Blaine County, District 3; Weston and Lacie Hoodenpyle, Cotton County, District 4; David and Haley McClendon, Pittsburg County, District 5; Charles and Ellen Coblenz, Mayes County, District 6; Steve and Denise Kienholz, Noble County, District 7; Jake and Samantha Calvert, Cleveland County, District 8; and Mike and Lotsee Spradling, Tulsa County, District 9.

## MEMBERS LEARN FROM SPEAKERS, PRESENTERS

Farm Bureau members heard from U.S. Rep. Kevin Hern, Rep. Lucas, Gov. Kevin Stitt, Texas A&M's Bart Fischer, and American Farm Bureau's Jessica Cabrera throughout the weekend. Sen. James Lankford shared an inspirational message with members and Blake and Jenna Bolerjack provided worship music during the Sunday morning worship service.

Members also had the opportunity to attend one of three breakout sessions on Friday, Nov. 8, including a session on the Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program, a session featuring landowners' rights in wind and solar leases, and a Cultivating Healthy Minds workshop on mental well-being.







**ABOVE:** Comanche county Farm Bureau is recognized with the John I. Taylor Award during the 2024 annual meeting.

## COMANCHE COUNTY WINS OKFB JOHN I. TAYLOR AWARD

Comanche County Farm Bureau was presented with the 2024 Oklahoma Farm Bureau John I. Taylor Award on Saturday, Nov. 9, during the organization’s 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Named after OKFB’s first president, the award recognizes the state’s top county Farm Bureau, judged by the most effective programs and activities.

Comanche County was honored for excelling in the program areas of public policy, service to members, public relations, membership, Women’s Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

“The opportunity for our county to win this award means a lot to us,” said Isaac Fisher, Comanche County vice president. “It shows the hard work of our staff, our board of directors and all of the members in our county who work so hard throughout the year to promote agriculture.”

Comanche County Farm Bureau sponsored Farm Field Days in September 2024, an agricultural education event for area fifth-grade students developed by a Comanche County Farm Bureau member. The event featured 12 stations featuring farm equipment, large-animal veterinary care, aquaculture, horticulture and more. More than 1,400 students attended the multi-day event.



**ABOVE:** Payne county Farm Bureau is recognized with the Lewis H. Munn Award during the 2024 annual meeting.

## PAYNE COUNTY WINS OKFB LEWIS H. MUNN AWARD

Payne County Farm Bureau was honored with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Lewis H. Munn Award on Saturday, Nov. 9, during the organization’s 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Also known as the Farm Bureau Builders Award, this award is presented each year to the county that conducts the strongest program in a chosen area. This year, the program area was membership growth and development.

Payne County Farm Bureau hosted a block party in June 2024 for more than 1,500 members of the community to learn about Farm Bureau and the agriculture industry. The block party included educational booths about Farm Bureau membership and programs, Ag in the Classroom activities, a farmhand Olympics competition and more.

“It is an honor for our county to win this award,” said Nancy German, Payne County Farm Bureau president. “It is not a one-man effort – we have a wonderful board and a great group of members. For us, it is about sharing agriculture and trying to build community support.”

The Lewis H. Munn award is named after the second president of Oklahoma Farm Bureau, whose philosophy centered on building strong county programs.

## COUNTY FARM BUREAUS HONORED FOR EXCELLENCE WITH 2024 PRESIDENTIAL STAR AWARDS

Several county Farm Bureaus were recognized for their efforts to further agriculture and rural Oklahoma on Saturday, Nov. 9, during Oklahoma Farm Bureau’s 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Each year, OKFB recognizes the county Farm Bureaus that have excelled in program areas such as membership, public policy, local affairs, service to members, Women’s Leadership Committee and Young Farmers and Ranchers with a Presidential Star Award.

### SIX STAR PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Cherokee, Comanche, Mayes, Okmulgee and Payne

### FIVE STAR PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Caddo, Garfield, Grant, Kay, Kingfisher, LeFlore, Major, Ottawa, Rogers, Texas and Washington

### FOUR STAR PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Alfalfa, Canadian, Creek, Hughes, Lincoln, Logan, Love, McClain, Muskogee, Noble, Okfuskee, Pottawatomie, Seminole, Tulsa, Washita and Woodward

### THREE STAR PRESIDENTIAL AWARD

Atoka, Beaver, Choctaw, Custer, Haskell, Jackson, Kiowa, McIntosh, Nowata, Oklahoma, Pawnee, Pontotoc, Stephens and Woods



## MAYES, OKMULGEE COUNTIES RECOGNIZED WITH COUNTY EXCELLENCE AWARD

Oklahoma Farm Bureau presented the OKFB County Excellence Award to Mayes and Okmulgee County Farm Bureaus on Saturday, Nov. 9, at the organization’s 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Modeled after the American Farm Bureau Federation’s County Activities of Excellence Award, this award recognizes county Farm Bureaus with the most outstanding or unique local program, activity or event.

Mayes County Farm Bureau hosted a countywide ag tour for local 4-H and FFA students in June 2024. The students learned about farm equipment, processing meat, and producing and storing silage through stops at a meat processing plant, a

local seed and fertilizer business, a dairy operation and a corn and soybean farm.

The Okmulgee County Young Farmers and Ranchers committee developed a “Better Together” program to help other county Farm Bureaus start and grow successful county YF&R programs. The Okmulgee County Young Farmers and Ranchers committee kicked off their Better Together program with McClain County Farm Bureau, where they met with and advised the county’s new YF&R committee and offered tips and advice for member recruitment, fundraising, activities and more.



**ABOVE:** Mayes county Farm Bureau is recognized with the County Excellence Award during the 2024 annual meeting.



**ABOVE:** Okmulgee county Farm Bureau is recognized with the County Excellence Award during the 2024 annual meeting.

## LUCAS HONORED WITH 2024 DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO OKFB AWARD

Congressman Frank Lucas was recognized with the Distinguished Service to Oklahoma Farm Bureau Award on Saturday, Nov. 9, during the organization’s 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

The award honors individuals who have made outstanding contributions to agriculture and the Farm Bureau organization.

Lucas is a fifth-generation Oklahoman and farmer who has been a defender of agriculture for more than 40 years.

“Farm Bureau is a large family, and we operate like that in all 77 county organizations,” Lucas said. “I represent 32 counties in Congress – people I depend on, people who are responsible. When your family pays you this kind of compliment, it is just outstanding.”

Elected to Congress in 1994, he is recognized as the longest-serving member on the House Agriculture Committee and served as chairman of the committee from 2011 to 2015, playing an instrumental role in the 2014 farm bill. Prior to serving in Congress, Lucas served in the Oklahoma State House of Representatives where he focused on prominent agriculture issues.



**ABOVE:** Oklahoma Farm Bureau President Rodd Moesel (left) presents U.S. Rep. Frank Lucas with the Distinguished Service to Farm Bureau Award.

## OKFB PRESENTS 2024 DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR AWARDS

Oklahoma Farm Bureau recently presented its District Administrator of the Year Awards at the organization’s 83rd annual meeting Nov. 8-10 in Oklahoma City.

The District Administrator of the Year Award is presented to one county Farm Bureau administrator from each OKFB district for their contributions to the overall success of their county Farm Bureau organization. County administrators conduct the daily operations of the county Farm Bureau and help meet the needs of members.

**DISTRICT 1**  
**Diana Routon**  
Woodward County

**DISTRICT 2**  
**Krystal Hill**  
Kiowa County

**DISTRICT 3**  
**Kellie Thomas**  
Canadian County

**DISTRICT 4**  
**Jill Graham**  
Comanche County

**DISTRICT 5**  
**Amy Newcomb**  
Bryan County

**DISTRICT 6**  
**Haley McManus**  
Mayes County

**DISTRICT 7**  
**Ashley Heath**  
Noble County

**DISTRICT 8**  
**Samantha Carter**  
Hughes County

**DISTRICT 9**  
**Brenda McCollough**  
Washington County





**ABOVE:** Comanche County Farm Bureau member Chasen Doye (center) receives the 2024 Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Achievement Award during the 2024 OKFB Annual Meeting Awards Banquet Saturday, Nov. 9, in Oklahoma City.

## COMANCHE COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEMBER HONORED WITH OKFB YF&R ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Chasen Doye of Comanche County was honored with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award on Saturday, Nov. 9, during the organization's 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

The Achievement Award recognizes Young Farmers and Ranchers who have excelled in their farming or ranching operation and have honed their leadership abilities and skills through Farm Bureau and other activities and organizations.

"It means a lot to receive this award," Doye said. "The fact that my parents won the same award back in the day was really neat. There aren't many people who just farm anymore, so I'm honored to win this award and carry on a tradition for my family."

Doye is a fifth-generation farmer and raises registered Hereford cattle and stocker calves alongside a minimal-till farming operation consisting of wheat, corn, milo, oats, sudangrass and alfalfa. Doye also raises peas, radishes and turnips as cover crops on his operation.

As Achievement Award winner, Doye received a John Deere gator, courtesy of P&K Equipment. Doye also received an expense-paid trip to the 2026 AFBF Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California, where he will compete on a national level for the AFBF YF&R Achievement Award.

## SWOSU RECOGNIZED AS TOP COLLEGIATE YF&R PROGRAM

The Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter at Southwestern Oklahoma State University was honored with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Moesel Award on Friday, Nov. 8, during the organization's 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

The Moesel Award recognizes the top Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter that works to improve their local chapter while strengthening the Farm Bureau organization.

The SWOSU chapter was active throughout the 2023-2024 school year, hosting farm tours of local operations, hearing from guest speakers, participating in Read an Accurate Ag Book Week, hosting a flower bar for members to learn about floriculture and more. Several Collegiate Farm Bureau members also attended statewide Farm Bureau events throughout the year.



**ABOVE:** Logan County Farm Bureau members Chastity and Jacob Beck (center) receive the 2024 OKFB YF&R Excellence in Agriculture Award presented during the 2024 OKFB Annual Meeting Awards Banquet Saturday, Nov. 9, in Oklahoma City.

## LOGAN COUNTY FARM BUREAU MEMBERS HONORED WITH OKFB YF&R EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURE AWARD

Jacob and Chastity Beck of Logan County were recognized with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award at the organization's 83rd annual meeting Nov. 8-10 in Oklahoma City.

The award is presented to young farmers and ranchers who do not derive a majority of their income from a farming or ranching operation for excellence in agriculture and Farm Bureau.

"To us, winning this award is a reflection of all the time and hard work we have put into the family business," Jacob said. "It is a tribute to the legacy of family members who have come before us, and we are just so glad to have been able to be a part of this."

Jacob is the third generation to operate Beck's Farm Equipment in Guthrie, an agricultural equipment dealership with a full service and parts department. Both Jacob and Chastity work the family's retail business and raise cattle and wheat in Logan County.

The Becks received a Polaris Sportsman 450 HO ATV, courtesy of Oklahoma AgCredit and Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma. They also earned a trip to the 2026 AFBF Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California, where they will compete for the AFBF Excellence in Ag Award.



## OKMULGEE COUNTY HONORED AS TOP COUNTY YF&R PROGRAM

The Okmulgee County Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee was honored with the 2024 Oklahoma Farm Bureau YF&R Charles L. Roff Award on Saturday, Nov. 9, during the organization's 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Presented to the state's top county YF&R committee, the Charles L. Roff Award encourages YF&R members to improve their local committees while strengthening the Farm Bureau organization.

"Winning this award is special to us this year because our core group of YF&R members that started the program is now aging out," said Will Lewis, Okmulgee County YF&R chair. "We have good group coming up after us, and we are excited to see where they go from here."

In 2024, the Okmulgee County YF&R committee hosted their third county ag tour for students and community members to learn about agriculture in Okmulgee County. Stops included an agricultural equipment business, a stocker operation, a cow-calf operation, a local flower patch and a local agritourism operation.

The committee was also active in other events throughout the year, including hosting a pancake breakfast, purchasing a premium at a local junior livestock show, presenting a bicycle safety program at a local school, attending statewide Farm Bureau events and more.

The county received a traveling plaque in recognition of their outstanding committee involvement.



**ABOVE:** Okmulgee County Farm Bureau YF&R Committee members Tim Taylor, Kristin Story, Michelle Genova, and Will and Leslie Lewis are presented with the Charles L. Roff Award at the 2024 OKFB Convention Saturday, Nov. 9 in Oklahoma City. Also pictured are Chastity and Jacob Beck (left), YF&R committee chairs; Rodd Moesel (right), OKFB president.



**ABOVE:** Austin Jackson, Payne County (center).



**ABOVE:** Ashlee Purvine, Northern Oklahoma College (right).



**ABOVE:** Heath Laubauch, Woodward FFA (second from right).

## OKFB YF&R NAMES 2024 DISCUSSION MEET WINNERS

Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers named the winners of four discussion meet competitive events on Friday, Nov. 8, during the organization's 83rd annual meeting in Oklahoma City.

Austin Jackson of Payne County was named the 2024 winner of the YF&R Discussion Meet, which was held Friday, Nov. 8; Ashlee Purvine of Northern Oklahoma College was named the 2024 Collegiate Farm Bureau Discussion Meet winner, which was held Thursday, Nov. 7; and Heath Laubauch of Woodward FFA

was named the High School Discussion Meet winner, which was held before the OKFB annual meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 8 in El Reno.

YF&R competitors faced fellow participants in a panel-style discussion where each competitor's performance was evaluated on the exchange of ideas and information on predetermined topics. Participants were judged on their ability to offer constructive input, cooperation and communication while analyzing agricultural problems and developing solutions.

As the YF&R Discussion Meet winner, Jackson received a John Deere lawnmower, sponsored by P&K Equipment. Jackson also won a trip to the 2026 American Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California, where he will compete in the national discussion meet contest.

The collegiate winner received a cash prize and an expense-paid trip to represent Oklahoma at the 2025 AFBF FUSION Conference in Denver, Colorado, and the high school winner received a cash prize.



# 2025

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



*OKFB's priority issues stem from member-crafted policy resolutions and are voted on and approved by the OKFB board of directors each year. To stay informed on Farm Bureau's work at the state Capitol in 2025, be sure to follow OKFB on Facebook, Instagram and X (@okfarmbureau) and keep an eye out for regular legislative updates during session at [okfarmbureau.org](http://okfarmbureau.org).*

**A**s February draws near, so does another Oklahoma legislative session, and Oklahoma Farm Bureau members have been hard at work setting policy for 2025.

Each year, before the halls of the state Capitol fill with lawmakers and fellow Oklahomans, Farm Bureau members set the organization's legislative priorities, which are designed to guide the work of OKFB members and staff during legislative session.

These priority issues focus on several areas in 2025, including the protection of private property rights, water policy, production agriculture, education and extension.

### **Private property rights**

Farm Bureau members have long been adamant supporters of the protection of private property rights. Farmers and ranchers know best when it comes to caring for their land, and private property rights are crucial to ensuring a safe, affordable and abundant food supply for years to come.

OKFB members support protecting private property owners from the illegal use of eminent domain and support reforms to Oklahoma's eminent domain laws to ensure continued protection.

Farm Bureau also supports the reclamation of state jurisdiction over areas currently regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the United States Department of Energy.

### **Water policy**

Farmers and ranchers are the largest users of water in the state, and they strive to responsibly steward the precious natural resource. Water policy has been a hot-button topic at the state Capitol in recent years,





# Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Priority Issues

## Private Property Rights

- » Reclaim state jurisdiction over areas currently regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Department of Energy that legally can be
- » Protect private property owners from illegal use of eminent domain
- » Support reforms to Oklahoma's eminent domain laws to further protect private property rights

## Water Policy

- » Support the Oklahoma Water Resources Board commissioning a study to provide options for managing Oklahoma's groundwater

## Production Agriculture

- » Protect animal and production agriculture in Oklahoma

## Education and Extension

- » Develop educational tools for members regarding private property rights and crop insurance
- » Support adequate funding for county extension
- » Support funding for Oklahoma State University's wheat research program and the college of veterinary medicine

with many stakeholders involved from a wide scope of backgrounds and vantage points.


Farm Bureau members support the Oklahoma Water Resources Board commissioning a study to provide options for managing Oklahoma's groundwater as stakeholders continue to meet and strive to reach a responsible management solution for all Oklahomans.

### Production agriculture

Production agriculture has been the focus of many pieces of proposed legislation both in and outside of Oklahoma in recent years. OKFB supports the protection of animal and production agriculture in Oklahoma to ensure fellow Oklahomans and Americans have steady access to the food, fuel and fiber needed to thrive.

### Education and extension

OKFB strongly believes in the power of education, and Farm Bureau members are making it a priority to support the development of educational tools for private property rights and crop insurance in 2025.

Oklahoma State University extension services have been an important education and outreach source for farmers and ranchers in Oklahoma since the university's inception in 1890. OKFB members feel strongly in supporting legislation that ensures adequate funding for county extension services, OSU's wheat research program and the OSU College of Veterinary Medicine. 





Jennifer Meyer



Keli Groves



Joyce Langford



Amanda Beshear



Audrey Harmon



Kaitlyn James



Darla Hendricks



Crystal Pritchett



Rachel Crume

## Eighteen teachers receive agriculture books through OKFB's Bushels for Books program

**E**ighteen Oklahoma teachers were recently selected to receive a bushel basket of accurate agriculture books as part of Oklahoma Farm Bureau's Bushels for Books program.

A collaboration between the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture and the OKFB Women's Leadership Committee, Bushels for Books is designed to spread agriculture

literacy to children around the state through providing a selection of books that accurately portray the agriculture industry.

"The Women's Leadership Committee is proud to support this year's selection of teachers for our Bushels for Books program," said Mignon Bolay, OKFB WLC chair. "We hope the students can use these books

to learn the importance of agriculture and how food gets from the farm to their fork."

Teachers who received bushel baskets include:

- Kaitlyn James, Woodward
- Amber Rinehart, Fargo-Gage
- Rachel Crume, Granite
- Amy Conkling, Weatherford
- Jo Anna Perdue, Harrah
- Darla Hendricks, Fort Cobb-Broxton
- Robin Burns, Walters
- Joyce Langford, Cache
- Amanda Beshear, Wister
- Sherry Shadwick, Fanshawe
- Crystal Pritchett, Salina
- Susie Murphy, Peavine
- Audrey Harmon, Morrison
- Jackie McGolden, Fairview
- Aimee Arnold, Purcell
- Jennifer Meyer, Grove
- Keli Groves, Bristow
- Abby Jeffrey, Stillwater

The program is open to Pre-K through eighth-grade teachers and librarians in Oklahoma.



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## OKFB members now save on Kohler generators with Advanced Electrical Technologies benefit

**O**klahoma Farm Bureau members now have access to great savings on Kohler-brand generators with OKFB's newest member benefit from Advanced Electrical Technologies. AET has been serving Oklahomans for 29 years with their electrical expertise for both homeowners and businesses. They have been providing sales and service for Kohler generators for the past 10 years.

OKFB members can beat power outages caused by severe weather with a Kohler generator from AET,

which serves Oklahomans from across the state in both rural areas and urban communities.

OKFB members can prepare for winter storms by contacting AET for a free quote. They will travel to your farm or home to provide an estimate for a Kohler generator installation.

With the purchase of a Kohler generator from AET, members will receive their first year of service free along with \$250 off their initial purchase with proof of OKFB membership. Members will also

receive a member-only 10-year warranty on their generator.

To learn more about the services AET provides or to take advantage of your OKFB member savings on a Kohler generator and more, visit AET's website using our direct link at [okfb.news/generator](http://okfb.news/generator). You can also call (405) 382-1604.

Learn more about all the benefits available to OKFB members on OKFB's website at [okfarmbureau.org/benefits](http://okfarmbureau.org/benefits) or browse the brochure that is mailed with every membership renewal bill.



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- B.J. Gann, Pryor, OK







## Navajo Public Schools showcase new greenhouse thanks to OKFB Foundation for Agriculture grant

In southwestern Oklahoma, you can find squash plants and radishes growing in the middle of December in a greenhouse located at Navajo Public Schools.

Navajo Public Schools received one of the \$10,000 greenhouse grants in 2023 from the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture.

Navajo STEM teacher Tana Curry purchased a 10 x 20-foot greenhouse using the foundation's Growing with the Foundation Grant.

"With us being a small rural school we wouldn't be able to have this opportunity if it wasn't for the Foundation for Agriculture greenhouse grant," Curry said.

The greenhouse is currently being

used to provide hands-on learning experiences for students to grow their own produce. Their FFA chapter, tech education and STEM classes have all used the greenhouse to teach students.

"They have not had a horticulture program for about 20 years," Curry said. "We are trying to push for a farm-to-school program, and we want the students to understand farming and growing their own vegetables."

Curry said the school hopes to establish a full horticulture program within the next school year.

The vegetables that are currently growing in the greenhouse are lettuce, radishes, squash and a variety of peppers. The next cycle of plants they hope to have in their greenhouse

includes pollinator plants for beneficial insects like monarch butterflies.

The OKFB Foundation for Agriculture's greenhouse grant program offers \$10,000 in grants each year. The grant is targeted to groups and organizations who have a hands-on impact in their local community and work to provide connections with food and agriculture through access efforts or education.

The grant program serves the foundation's mission of connecting consumers with production agriculture and educating Oklahomans about how their food is grown and raised.

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# Oklahoma Grassroots accelerators program launches rural development masterclass series

**T**he Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program has launched In the Weeds, a rural development masterclass program for entrepreneurs and business owners across Oklahoma.

In the Weeds is designed for rural entrepreneurs looking to hone and refine their businesses, their innovation pitches and learn more about the numerous Oklahoma-based business resources at their fingertips.

“The Oklahoma Grassroots Rural and Ag Business Accelerators program is honored to be one of the U.S. Treasury’s State Small Business Credit Initiative Technical Assistance providers,” said Amarie Bartel, OKFB rural economic development coordinator. “Through this program, our team is catalyzed to share more state and federal capital opportunities for rural small businesses. In the Weeds allows us to meet rural small business owners where they are with a

wealth of funding opportunities – and the tools to attain said opportunities – to close financial gaps.”

A series of four classes held across the state in eight rural locations throughout 2025 will provide rural entrepreneurs with cutting-edge business resources and the opportunity to develop skills, learn about opportunities and develop business connections with Oklahoma-based program partners.

In the Weeds will feature four unique sessions, including:

#### **Venture Forward: How to Pitch**

- Fairview & Pryor: January 8
- Alva & Drumright: January 29
- Duncan & Wilburton: February 19
- Elk City & Ada: March 12

#### **Crafting your Business Blueprint with LivePlan**

- Fairview & Pryor: April 2
- Alva & Drumright: April 23

- Duncan & Wilburton: May 14
- Elk City & Ada: June 4

#### **Unlocking Lending Opportunities with TEDC: Interactive SSBICI Loan Application Workshop**

- Fairview & Pryor: June 25
- Alva & Drumright: July 16
- Duncan & Wilburton: August 6
- Elk City & Ada: August 27

#### **Custom Solutions for Market-Specific Needs**

- Fairview & Pryor: September 17
- Alva & Drumright: October 8
- Duncan & Wilburton: October 29
- Elk City & Ada: November 19

Participants may attend the program most convenient for them. All classes will be held from 5:30 – 7 p.m. and are free of charge. Dinner will be provided.

To learn more or to register for an event, visit [okfb.news/intheweeds](https://okfb.news/intheweeds).



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# All Around **Oklahoma**

Farm Bureau news, events and programs from around Oklahoma

## OKFB and OKFB Foundation for Ag launch large animal vet scholarship



Oklahoma Farm Bureau and the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture have launched a new large animal veterinarian scholarship in an effort to help provide a pipeline of veterinarians who can provide services to farmers and ranchers.

The large animal veterinarian scholarship program focuses on providing reimbursement for students' tuition and other educational expenses.

Students who apply will be required to sign a letter of intent to provide large animal veterinary services or to

practice in a veterinary resource shortage area.

The deadline for scholarship submissions is March 15. To be eligible for the scholarship, the student must be a U.S. citizen, be enrolled at the Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine, be eligible for Oklahoma licensure as a veterinarian and intend to practice in a veterinary resource shortage area.

The scholarship application and instructions can be found on the OKFB website at [okfb.news/applications](https://okfb.news/applications).

## OKFB WLC honors teachers for Ag in the Classroom participation



The OKFB Women's Leadership Committee spent two days honoring teachers at the Oklahoma Christian Academy and Gore Public Schools for their attendance during the 2024 Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom Conference.

WLC members prepared lunch for approximately 50 Pre-K through fifth-grade teachers and staff on Tuesday, Dec. 3, at Oklahoma Christian Academy and about 30 Pre-K through fifth-grade teachers and staff on Wednesday, Dec. 4, at Gore Public Schools.

"Our WLC works with Ag in the Classroom on several events, including this one where we go to the school and feed the teachers," said Mignon Bolay, WLC chair. "This is one of our favorite events we have to fellowship with teachers about what the Women's Leadership Committee can help them with in the future."

## OKFB hosts annual Ag Defense fundraiser Saturday, Dec. 14 in Oklahoma City

More than 40 Oklahoma Farm Bureau members gathered at Castle Falls in Oklahoma City Saturday, Dec. 14, for the organization's annual Ag Defense Fundraiser.

The fundraiser serves as an opportunity for county Farm Bureaus and OKFB members to support the organization's efforts to defend agriculture.

The focus of the evening was the recent efforts by a well-funded, in-state organization that is pushing its animal activism agenda, which included filing two bills in the 2024 Oklahoma state legislature proposing changes to sow housing in the state.

Attendees heard from Matt Rosman, who shared his experience from an activist group meeting with fundraiser attendees. Rosman works with the Oklahoma Youth Expo, Cattlemen's Congress and in other agricultural enterprises in the state.

Fundraiser attendees also heard from Oklahoma animal agriculture leaders in a video where they detailed the challenges both in-state and out-of-state groups pose to animal agriculture.

Funds raised from the event will help OKFB respond to attacks on production agriculture in various forms.



## OSU Collegiate Farm Bureau participates in OSU Homecoming



The Oklahoma State University Collegiate Farm Bureau showed their spirit during OSU Homecoming week, Oct. 27-Nov. 2.

The OSU Collegiate Farm Bureau participated in the OSU Homecoming festivities by entering into the sign competition held on Library Lawn, making a window sign that was displayed on the front of Ag Hall and participating in the chili cookoff.

## Kinder appointed to USDA Task Force on Agricultural Air Quality and Research

Cotton County Farm Bureau member Jimmy Kinder has been appointed to serve on the USDA's Task Force on Agricultural Air Quality Research.

The task force promotes USDA research efforts and identifies cost-effective ways to improve air quality throughout agricultural production.

Kinder farms and ranches in Cotton County with his wife, Margaret Ann. He previously served as the OKFB District 4 director, and he is currently the vice president of Cotton County Farm Bureau.

Kinder is one of 27 members who will provide recommendations and discuss the correlation of ag production and air quality.



## OKFB selects six rural, ag innovators for the Fall 2024 Activate Oklahoma Cohort class

Activate Oklahoma Cohort members for the Fall 2024 class include:

**Well Fed**  
**A2AG by E2C Cattle Company**  
**Burgess Aerospace Innovations**

**Blackjack Legacy**  
**CASSIE, Inc.**  
**Invision Smart Window**

The Activate Oklahoma rural innovation pipeline provides resources and assistance for innovative rural Oklahoma businesses that have an innovation or product that will bring economic opportunities to rural Oklahoma.

Cohort members have participated in multiple training sessions that connect entrepreneurs with Oklahoma-focused business resources and curriculum.



## OKFB to host winter Generation Bridge event in Stillwater Feb. 15

Oklahoma Farm Bureau will host a winter Generation Bridge event for agriculturalists ages 35-55 Saturday, Feb. 15, at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater.

The event will kick off at 11 a.m. with a tour of the new Agricultural Hall on the Oklahoma State University campus. Lunch will be provided at 12 p.m. at the original Hideaway Pizza. During lunch, members will receive a legislative update and outlook from the OKFB public policy team as the 2025 Oklahoma legislative session ramps up.

The event will wrap up with a basketball game featuring the OSU Cowboys taking on the Texas Tech Red Raiders at 2 p.m. at Gallagher-Iba arena.

Interested participants can complete the online RSVP at [okfb.news/winterbridge25](https://okfb.news/winterbridge25). This event is provided at no cost for Farm Bureau members who wish to attend. For questions or more information about the event, please email Holly Carroll at [holly.carroll@okfb.org](mailto:holly.carroll@okfb.org).

## OKFB accelerators partners with Generation Food Rural Partners Fund to create rural investment fund



Generation Food Rural Partners Fund has committed to fund OKFB's Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business accelerators program, with plans to invest in start-up companies based in Oklahoma.

The partnership is funded by Oklahoma Ag Credit, Bancfirst and the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology.

"This collaboration will provide capital infusions through an Oklahoma-centric, Oklahoma-guided funding opportunity into the Oklahoma Grassroots Rural & Ag Business Accelerators' startup companies and other rural businesses we work with across Oklahoma who are creating rural jobs and shaping ag innovation," said Rodd Moesel, OKFB president.



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**(Above)** There's no need to invest in new pots to grow plants indoors. Up-cycle items you already have at home.



**(Above)** A bright, south-facing

## Gardening in the winter? Yes, you can!

By Trisha Gedon

*For gardeners who want to bring the joy of cultivating plants into their homes throughout the winter months, OSU Extension provides numerous ideas for year-round growing.*

**W**hile traditional outdoor gardening activities are on hold this time of year, gardeners can keep their green thumb active and enjoy the benefits of gardening indoors.

There are lots of fun activities to keep gardeners busy during the winter while biding their time until spring gardening begins, said David Hillock, Oklahoma State University extension consumer horticulturist.

“When it comes to indoor winter gardening, an herb garden is a great place to start,” Hillock said. “Herbs are easy to grow and they’re tasty. Fresh herbs add another layer of flavor to just about any kitchen creation. Basil, thyme, dill, rosemary, mint and oregano are a few of the easiest herbs to grow.”

Herb window garden kits are available at the local garden center or online. Another tasty option for indoor winter garden is growing microgreens. There are multiple varieties available that add a punch of

flavor and nutrients to soups, salads and sandwiches. With a little luck, gardeners can harvest microgreens in a few weeks.

“Research shows microgreens contain up to 40% more beneficial nutrients than their full-grown counterparts,” Hillock said. “Microgreens can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol and support good health. Options include chard, carrots, lettuce, radicchio, arugula, chickpeas, spinach and more.”

Other edible options for indoor winter gardening include cherry tomatoes, chili peppers, sprouts and dwarf citrus.

If gardeners have some vegetable scraps, do not toss them in the trash, plant them instead. Kitchen scrap gardening is a unique way to recycle.

Plant small potatoes in a container filled with well-drained potting mix and wait for them to sprout. A new bunch of potatoes should be ready for harvest in a few months.

To slice green onions, cut off the root end and plant it with the root end facing down. Place the container in a sunny windowsill and watch it grow. The concept is the same for growing romaine lettuce. Cut off the base of the lettuce and place it in water. New leaves will begin to grow from the center. As new leaves sprout from the center, remove the outer leaves. When the weather gets warm enough, plant it in the garden.

Other kitchen scrap garden ideas include garlic, ginger, sweet potato, cabbages and even pineapple.

“This is another fun activity to do with children because they’ll quickly be able to see the plant growing,” Hillock said.

Get creative with containers but ensure they have proper drainage to help with avoiding root rot. Look around the home to find ways to up-cycle jars, tin cans, old pots or any type of container that can hold soil or another potting medium.



g window is the perfect location for indoor plants.

Another option while waiting for spring to arrive is to germinate seeds for planting. Beat the crowds at the garden store and stock up on needed materials such as seed trays, potting mix and seed markers.

“Germinating seeds can be a fun family activity. It’s never too early to get children involved in gardening,” Hillock said.

If indoor gardening is not up your alley, go ahead and get a jump start on planning your spring garden.

“Cuddle up with a cup of hot chocolate and the many seed catalogs that will soon be appearing in mailboxes,” Hillock said. “Think about what aspects of your 2024 garden were successful and make a list of new plants you might like to try. Also, use this time of year to consider testing out some new gardening methods and do some research to see what might work for you. We’re gaining a few minutes of daylight each day and it won’t be long until you’re back in the garden.” **FB**



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