

# PERSPECTIVE

June 28, 2024



## OKFB hosts more than fifty high school students for the third-annual Capitol Camp legislative experience at the Oklahoma State Capitol

**M**ore than 50 4-H and FFA students gathered at the Oklahoma state Capitol June 12-13 for Oklahoma Farm Bureau's third-annual Capitol Camp.

Capitol Camp is an immersive two-day experience for high school juniors and seniors to learn about Oklahoma's legislative process and how bills become law through a mock legislature held on the floor of the Oklahoma House of Representatives.

Throughout the event, students in attendance had the opportunity to present a piece of legislation they wrote about an issue important to them and help guide it through the process. Bills were first heard in committees, and

those that advanced were heard and voted upon on the House floor.

"I was able to present a few different bills which gave me the opportunity to present legislation and learn about the legislative process," said Ashlee Purvine of Thomas-Fay-Custer FFA. "I had the opportunity to do research and look through a more analytical perspective that takes all views into account."

Capitol Camp delegates elected both a speaker of the House and a floor leader to oversee the business sessions in the House chamber both days.

"The number one thing I have learned is that I want to be a lobbyist, I want to work in public policy," said Ryne

Crosthwait of Stillwater FFA "This gave me a really cool opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone and work on legislation and mock bills."

Students heard from several guests during the two-day event, including OKFB President Rodd Moesel and House of Representatives members Nick Archer, Steve Bashore, Brian Hill, Dell Kerbs and Anthony Moore.

In addition to the mock legislative activities, Capitol Camp attendees completed a community service project by volunteering at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma where they packed meals to feed children and families across Oklahoma.



## 2024 legislative session dominated by poultry, water-metering legislation

**T**hursday, May 30, marked the end of the 2024 Oklahoma legislative session as state lawmakers adjourned sine die in Oklahoma City.

A legislative session that began with thousands of bills available for consideration became a two-issue session for Oklahoma Farm Bureau when the primary focus turned to poultry growers and groundwater permitting right out of the gate.

### Poultry nutrient management plans

SB 1424 by Sen. Brent Howard and Rep. John Pfeiffer became a prominent conversation at the state Capitol at the beginning of February and crossed the finish line just before session ended in May. The bill protects poultry growers who are following a state-approved nutrient management plan from unnecessary litigation. The measure also increases fines for violating a nutrient management plan from \$200 per violation to \$10,000 per violation, per day.

The bill was a hard-earned victory for poultry growers and agriculturalists

alike, and OKFB is proud to have helped lead the charge in conversations throughout the legislative session. Farm Bureau members' swift response to OKFB's action alerts helped get the measure to the governor's desk.

### Groundwater metering

Oklahoma Farm Bureau worked throughout the 2024 legislative session to gather input from our farm and ranch family members, rural Oklahomans and key stakeholders about several bills introduced in the Oklahoma legislature that focused on water policy, and specifically, water metering.

This year, HB 3194 by Rep. Carl Newton and Sen. Brent Howard sought to require all groundwater permit-holders to have meters or alternative measuring systems and would have implemented a five-year maximum annual yield allocation.

OKFB was actively engaged in conversations with lawmakers and other stakeholders to find a reasonable and workable solution to ensure responsible water usage across the state, but when the measure unexpectedly passed the

House and landed on the governor's desk at the last minute, Farm Bureau played an integral role in getting the legislation vetoed.

OKFB is committed to responsible water use and conservation, and we look forward to working on this shared goal with the legislature in the future.

### 4-H activities

As long-standing supporters of agriculture youth, OKFB members understand the key role that organizations like 4-H and FFA play in the lives of young people.

Until this year, 4-H activities, unlike FFA, were not guaranteed excused absences for students missing school. Thanks to HB 1006 by Rep. Rick West and Sen. Casey Murdock, 4-H activities are now recognized as excused absences beginning at the end of August. OKFB would like to extend a special thanks to Sen. Adam Pugh, who played a crucial role in getting this measure through the Senate this session.

### Farm permit driver's licenses

The state legislature decided in 2023

to allow those as young as 14 to apply for a farm permit driver's license, a move that was applauded by OKFB. This year, the legislature added to this measure with SB 1766 by Sen. Chuck Hall and Rep. Dell Kerbs, which allows those seeking a farm permit license to enroll in driver's education courses.

The measure takes effect this November, and OKFB is hopeful the legislation will help many farm and ranch families across the state.

## Rural Oklahoma

Another notable piece of legislation that passed in late May was HB 1105 by House Speaker Charles McCall and Sen. Julie Daniels. HB 1105 increases the window of time to file objections to an initiative petition from 10 to 90 days, which creates a less expensive and more realistic protest time frame while still allowing Oklahomans an avenue to put measures on the ballot.

Initiative petition reform in the state of Oklahoma has long been a priority issue for Farm Bureau members, making HB 1105 a welcome start to a complex process.

Sen. Brent Howard and Rep. Charles McCall took steps against foreign ownership of land in Oklahoma with SB 1705. The measure prohibits foreign government adversaries designated as hostile from owning land in Oklahoma. The bill, which takes effect November 1, authorizes certain designees to execute affidavits when registering deeds with the county clerk and clarifies when an affidavit is required.

Two bills were passed and signed into law that allocate funds to help rural Oklahoma including HB 2889, which appropriates \$20 million to help with water improvements in Texas County, and HB 2937, which appropriates \$10 million to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board to establish a grant program and match tribal investment in rural water infrastructure projects.

OKFB also tracked SB 453, which would have increased compensation and retirement benefits for volunteer firefighters, but it was vetoed by Gov. Stitt in mid June.

## Eminent Domain

OKFB members have long considered private property rights to be a priority issue, and those rights are rarely more threatened than through matters of eminent domain.

During the 2024 legislative session, OKFB saw the passage of two bills relating to eminent domain, including HB 3159 by Rep. Eric Roberts and

Sen. Todd Gollihare. HB 3159 gives landowners who had property taken via eminent domain the right of first refusal if the land is later sold by the acquiring entity, unless the land is transferred to another state agency.

OKFB also monitored HB 2191 by Rep. Kevin West and Sen. Todd Gollihare, which would have stipulated that land can only be taken by eminent domain in the state for a public use and outlines what is not public use, including an increase in tax base, tax revenues, employment and general economic health. The bill died during legislative session.

## Livestock

OKFB was pleased to see several bills involving livestock advance to the governor, including HB 3196 by Rep. Carl Newton and Sen. Darcy Jech, which removes the maximum number of students accepted into the rural Oklahoma veterinary training program and gives funding preference to students with a focus in large animals. Increasing funding for rural veterinary programs and incentivizing large-animal veterinarians has been a priority issue for Farm Bureau members for many years.

HB 2986 by Rep. John Kane and Sen. Jerry Alvard allows landowners with land on either side of roads that qualify as "open pasture roads" to request the county commissioner erect cattle crossing signage to alert drivers of the presence of cattle on open pasture roads. Through this legislation, neither the property owner nor the livestock owner can be held liable for damages related to collisions with livestock on open pasture roads.

Gov. Stitt also signed HB 3756, which removes the provisions in the Swine Feeding Operations Act that require the implementation of a points system in order to assess points prior to suspension, revocation or non-renewal of a license.

Although official business has come to a close at the state Capitol, OKFB members now turn to policy development season, where Farm Bureau members will begin developing ideas and resolutions for new OKFB policy to benefit agriculture and rural Oklahoma.

**For more information on the upcoming policy development season, contact the OKFB public policy department at (405) 523-2300.**

## YF&R shotgun shoot registration ongoing

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers will host their annual shotgun shoot **Friday, August 9**, at Silverleaf Shotgun Sports near Guthrie.

The sporting-clays-style tournament will award prizes in three categories while raising funds for the OKFB Foundation for Agriculture.

Sponsorships and team registrations are both available.

Register online or learn more today:  
[okfb.news/ShotgunShoot24](https://okfb.news/ShotgunShoot24)

## Upcoming YF&R summer conference

The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers will host their annual summer conference in Tulsa July 26-28.

Registration is ongoing for the conference through the Oklahoma Farm Bureau website through July 10 for Farm Bureau members ages 18-35.

There is no cost to attend the conference, and OKFB will cover hotel room cost for the attendees.

### Conference Schedule:

#### Friday, July 26

- Kickoff dinner in Collinsville at Collinsville Livestock Sales

#### Saturday, July 27

- Morning tour of Port of Catoosa
- Lunch
- Afternoon tours (TBD)
- Dinner

#### Sunday, July 28

- Vespers program and conference wrap-up

Register online by July 10:  
[okfb.news/yfrcon24](https://okfb.news/yfrcon24)

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## OKFB Capitol Camp Students volunteered at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma

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