American Farm Bureau establishes 2023 Policies

JANUARY 10, 2023

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armer and rancher delegates to the American Farm Bureau Federation’s 104th Convention on January 10 adopted policies to guide the organization’s work in 2023. Key topics ranged from expanding risk management programs and improving dairy pricing transparency to battling hunger.

Delegates were polled regarding their farms at the beginning of the voting session. The results show almost 99% (334 delegates) of those who cast votes operate family farms and almost 65% represent small- to mid-size farms as defined by USDA.

“Delegates demonstrated the strength of Farm Bureau by coming together to represent hard-working farm families from all 50 states and Puerto Rico,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “There’s a lot of work to do in 2023 as Congress drafts the next farm bill, and the policies set forth will guide AFBF as we work to ensure farmers and ranchers can continue to meet the growing needs of families in America and around the world.”

Delegates to the American Farm Bureau business meeting voted to modernize the farm bill by expanding baseline funding, developing more flexible disaster relief programs and extending protection to more specialty crops.

New water rule will create uncertainty and disruption

BY KERIN CLARK

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he administration’s December 30, 2022 announcement to replace the Navigable Waters Protection Rule with yet another Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule, will create uncertainty and disruption in the management of natural resources, according to the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB).

“As farmers and ranchers, we share the goal of protecting the nation’s water,” said Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) President Todd Fornstrom. “Reverting to a rule that was unreasonable and unworkable is a threat to the nation’s water.”

The 2015 Rule made management programs and improving dairy pricing transparency to battling hunger.

A look at the 104th AFBF Convention through Wyoming eyes

BY KERIN CLARK

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eing part of this grassroots organization is empowering because it gives us the knowledge to understand agricultural issues and adversities and gives us a tool to help drive policies which affect all farmers and ranchers,” said Kathy and Russ Austin of Albany County.

“Attending the AFBF Convention in Puerto Rico allowed us to see the whole picture. We would love it if all members could experience this opportunity.”

The 104th Annual Convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation was January 6-11, 2023 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. (l to r) Chad and Nicole Ziehl, Natrona County; Cole, Connor, Carlee, Emmett and Sammie Cox, Goshen County; Stacy, Kyle and Bastian Berger, Carbon County; Kathy and Russ Austin, Albany County; Laura and Todd Fornstrom, Laramie County; and Ken Hamilton, WyFB, and son Ian Hamilton.

Wyoming members and staff at the 2023 American Farm Bureau Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico. (l to r) Chad and Nicole Ziehl, Natrona County; Cole, Connor, Carlee, Emmett and Sammie Cox, Goshen County; Stacy, Kyle and Bastian Berger, Carbon County; Kathy and Russ Austin, Albany County; Laura and Todd Fornstrom, Laramie County; and Ken Hamilton, WyFB, and son Ian Hamilton.

A look at the 104th AFBF Convention through Wyoming eyes

Building Our Future at the WyFB YF&R Conference

The 2023 WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher (YF&R) Conference was full of networking, great speakers and fun! The WyFB YF&R Committee is shown here with AFBF YF&R Committee Members. More conference photos will be available in the March issue of Wyoming Agriculture. (l to r): Shawn Choinnard, Park County; Seth Allen, Niobrara County; Kelli Choinnard, Park County; Kalley Barlow, Subietae County; Hannah and Zack Guild, Uinta County; Cody Alps, Goshen County; Quade Palm, Carbon County; and Jessica and Kyle Wade, AFBF YF&R Committee Members.

KADRA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY/KADRA CLARK PHOTO.

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Published by Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

www.wyfb.org
What happens when a media story is wrong?

Ken Hamilton
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President

Several years ago, there was a resolution which came through the policy development process advocating that a “truth in media” type of an agency should be established to police, or regulate, or do something with the media. One of our members who does media work reached out to the Wyoming Press Association and let them know about this resolution and during the committee process both the member and the representative from the press association argued against the defeat of the policy. Their efforts were successful in part because the cure in this case was worse than the disease. We all recognize that a regulatory agency, however it is designed by Congress, will ultimately run into problems. Many of these problems would most likely be ones we in agriculture have experienced when we must deal with regulators who have a rule book and know how to use it to fit their agenda.

The press continually reminds us they are the “fourth estate” and they are guaranteed, by the U.S. Constitution, to be protected from government interference. The benefits of free speech were recognized by the framers of the Constitution. Prior to our break from England if you were to take out the elimination of the Press Association advocate for new regulations it is no surprise that the press agencies would reject efforts to put government in charge of speech.

Just because we don’t want the government to regulate the press, doesn’t mean that people don’t feel the press doesn’t abuse their power.

Many people probably don’t remember when there were two wire services. There was United Press International orUPI and Associated Press or AP. UPI went out of business leaving AP as the only wire service provider to the news media. With this background, it is no surprise that the framers would reject efforts to put government in charge of speech.

What happens when a media story is wrong?

What happens when a media story is wrong?
WyFB Legislative Meeting Feb. 22-23

The 2023 Legislative Meeting of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation will be held at the Blue Community Events Center at World Headquarters in Cheyenne (2401 E. Pershing Blvd) on February 22-23. The Legislative Meeting begins with registration at 11 a.m. and a noon luncheon to follow on Wednesday, February 22. If their schedules permit, the House Agriculture Committee Chair and the Senate Agriculture Committee Chair will address the members during the noon luncheon. Tuesday afternoon activities include state legislative briefings from WyFB lobbyists and membership awards. The guest speaker will be Meteorologist Don Day with his presentation “It's Weather, Not Climate.”

Tuesday evening provides the one-on-one visits with the legislators and elected officials during a Legislative Mixer produced by the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation and the Wyoming Rural Electric Association. This event will be held off-site at the Cheyenne Frontier Days Multi-Purpose Building at Frontier Park. A speaker’s forum on Thursday morning, February 23 will wrap-up the Legislative Meeting. One of the speaker’s forum topics will be transportation issues from the trucking industry perspective presented by Sheila Foerstch with the Wyoming Trucking Association. Check www.wyfb.org for an agenda as the meeting date gets closer.

Pre-Registration: Please email registration forms by February 3 to Brooke Roes at broes@wyfb.org.

Hotel Reservations: The room block deadline expired prior to this issue printing. Room reservations from this point forward will be based on availability. Call the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott Cheyenne Southwest Downtown at 307.634.0400 or Townplace Suites by Marriott at 307.634.0400.

Visit wyfb.org and click on the “Benefits” tab for a complete listing of value-added benefits.

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation believes constitutional government, the competitive enterprise system, property rights and individual freedom are necessary components for a strong agriculture, a strong Wyoming and a strong America. We are a centennial grassroots organization that cares about your future. Whether you are a farmer, rancher or a consumer of food...membership is a good investment to secure stability of agriculture here in Wyoming. As a member, WyFB provides you with exclusive benefits as a way to say thank you. These benefits may pay your annual membership fee many times over.

Member-CENTS

Current members may access member benefits at www.wyfb.org and click on the “Benefits” tab. You may also utilize the Farm Bureau Member Benefits app on your phone to access your benefits.

Questions: email broes@wyfb.org or call 307-721-7723.

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Ninth Circuit win for MSLF prevents environmental power grab

MOUNTAIN STATES LEGAL FOUNDATION
JANUARY 19, 2023

In yet another victory for property rights, the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, based in San Francisco, has ruled in favor of reason and the interests of Mountain States Legal Foundation’s clients.

In the case of CBD v. Haaland, Judge Hurwit’s opinion holds that the federal courts have no jurisdiction to entertain the Center for Biological Diversity’s (CBD) claims. The Court firmly held that the “decision not to amend the Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan, like adoption of the Plan itself,” is not reviewable by the court.

This case centers around the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Area grizzly bear. Back in the early 1990s, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) developed a recovery plan for the bear, which had been placed on the endangered species list. A recovery plan is like a roadmap for how the FWS will engage in species recovery. They are not binding and can be supplemented as necessary.

CBD’s ultimate goal was to gain the ability to ask for changes to the recovery plan and then sue when the changes weren’t made, forcing agencies like the FWS to waste taxpayers’ time and money defending every aspect of a recovery plan that is not even binding. The result, as MSLF General Counsel William Trachman said, could have been unending years of countless lawsuits, putting “the FWS in a choice: give in to the whims of environmental advocates, or litigate a thousand cases.”

Recovery plans are supposed to be flexible, enabling the FWS to adjust their actions or make entirely new plans to recover and conserve endangered species. The Center for Biological Diversity instead wanted to implement their own plans for expanding the grizzly bear population to places where they have not lived in generations. If CBD had won this case, it would have opened wide the floodgates for judicial review of every change CBD ever wanted to propose to this and many other recovery plans.

The Court’s ruling ensures that will not happen. Mountain States’ direct involvement in this case has kept recovery plans flexible, and defended them against unwarranted litigation from organizations like CBD. Our attorneys worked diligently to protect the rights and interests of farmers and ranchers, shielding them from the radical agenda of anti-growth environmentalists.

Trachman, who is lead counsel on the case, stated, “The Ninth Circuit’s ruling in favor of our clients is a clear win for property rights and sound, principled policy. Our work here will deter future nuisance litigation from environmental extremists.”

Editor’s Note: The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation, Utah Farm Bureau Federation and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association are intervenor defendants represented by MSLF.

Succession coordinators work with families and operations to navigate the transition of the ag operation to the next generation. The coordinators work in tandem with attorneys and accountants to make sure that the succession plan is feasible.

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• Where do you want it to be?
• How do you get there?

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For more information, contact Lucy Pauley at 307-771-8788 or email lucy.pauley@wyo.gov.

Young Farmer & Rancher News

Education is an investment in knowledge

BY ZACK GUILD,
WyFB YPR COMMITTEE MEMBER
and Uinta County Rancher

My name is Zack Guild. I was born and raised in the Southwestern corner of Wyoming where my family has been ranching since the 1800s. Recently my wife, son, and I moved back to the ranch after I finished my diesel mechanic certification from Bridgerland Technical College in Logan, Utah.

Since I was little it was always my dream to come back with my family and raise my kids the way that I was raised. There are so many valuable life lessons to learn from the ranching lifestyle. I loved ranching so much that I had no plans of leaving at all for any secondary education. However, my father made it clear if I wanted to come back to work on the ranch, I needed to get some type of secondary education.

I thought a lot about what I wanted to do and what I would enjoy doing as a profession if my original plan of moving back to the ranch did not work out. I also considered what I could go into that could be beneficial to the ranch when I came back. As I looked around at all of the equipment it takes to keep things going on the ranch, and all of the cost associated with paying someone to work on it, I realized that I could potentially save the ranch a lot of money doing the higher skilled maintenance work. I enjoyed fixing things and getting to see them work again so I decided it would be worthwhile to get a certification in diesel mechanics. Since my time back I have had the opportunity to utilize the skills and knowledge gained from my education. One of our most recent projects was to split our 8475 Massey Ferguson tractor in half and rebuild the whole engine.

I know a lot of my friends have similar feelings about getting more education as I did, however there are a myriad of degrees and certification opportunities out there that can greatly benefit a ranch from animal processing to range management. As Benjamin Franklin once said, “An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”

Zack and his wife, Hannah, along with their son ranch with the Guild family in southwestern Wyoming. Zack and Hannah serve on the WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Committee representing the Southwest District.

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Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship opportunities

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship deadline is March 1, 2023. Nine college scholarships are offered each year. Scholarships are available for high school graduates and for those students who are continuing their college education. Applications are available at www.wyfb.org; click on the education tab. Applications are also available at county Farm Bureau offices. For questions, contact Diane “Dee” Brewer at 307/721.7719 or dbrewer1@wyfb.org.

MEDIA STORIES... From Page 2

We are already seeing this happen in newsprint as people seek their information from other sources. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people have to learn who they can trust and who they can't trust. So, what do we do?

We keep doing what we've been doing. Looking for those information sources which are still trying to be unbiased. Looking for those information sources that they can trust and who they can't trust. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people seek their information from other sources. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people have to learn who they can trust and who they can't trust. So, what do we do?

The saying “perception is reality” isn't the case. If it was, we would not have had to deal with the reality of inflation. We keep doing what we've been doing. We are already seeing this happen in newsprint as people seek their information from other sources. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people have to learn who they can trust and who they can't trust. So, what do we do? We keep doing what we've been doing. Looking for those information sources which are still trying to be unbiased. Supporting those sources over the ones which are still trying to be unbiased. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people seek their information from other sources. This also has resulted in a lot of misinformation being put out there as people have to learn who they can trust and who they can't trust. So, what do we do?
Wyoming Agriculture

Cooking with the Modern Ranch Wife

Sausage Cheese Dip

By Connie Werner

Ingredients
- 1 lb breakfast sausage
- 1 (8oz) pkg cream cheese
- 1 (10oz) can Rotel original

Directions
In a medium sized pan, sauté the sausage over medium heat until brown. Drain grease. Add the can of Rotel and cream cheese. Stir until the cream cheese is melted. Serve with tortilla chips.

For more recipes, visit www.modernranchwife.com

National News Updates

By Kelly Carpenter

WOTUS rule update
The end of 2022 came and went quickly. I hope you all spent time with your family and friends marking the end of another monumental year. While we were busy enjoying the holidays, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) couldn’t let us fully ring-in the New Year without some heartburn with their pre-publication of the new regulatory definition of WOTUS (Waters of the United States). The confusion surrounding the federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act has been incredibly difficult for farmers and ranchers to navigate over the past several decades. The forthcoming rule does not improve clarity for agriculture at all. The expansion of the regulatory interpretation and implementation of the rule could become costly for farmers and ranchers. This version of the rule is a clear step back and we stand with American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) in their analysis of this publication. Ideally the EPA and USACE would have waited until the decision of Sackett v EPA is made later this year, so the rule may be overturned by the Supreme Court. Stay tuned as the situation continues to develop.

Inclusivity in the Market USDA AMS Update
Both AFBF and the WyFB submitted comments in agreement with ensuring fairness in the marketplace but removing the definition of “market vulnerable individual”. The Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921 should apply to all participants of the livestock supply chain. The proposed rule would essentially carve out protections against deceptive practices for only small groups of farmers and ranchers. Generally, our policy indicates support for the strengthening of the Act, especially in recent years with notable action in the judicial system for price-fixing in the packers sector, along with a host of other infractions, of the livestock marketplace.

Colorado River Authority Bill
Representative Albert Sommers and Senator Larry Hicks have joined forces during the 67th Wyoming Legislature to introduce a bill to establish the Colorado River Authority (the Authority). If passed, the bill would create the Authority within the Interstate Streams Division of the Office of State Engineer. It would be comprised of appointed members within the Colorado River System of Wyoming. The Authority would work to provide a mechanism to safeguard Wyoming’s interests in the Colorado River system.

West Fork Dam Proposal
Recently, news has been released on the proposed West Fork Dam in southern Carbon County. The goal of the proposed dam would be to provide more water to the area for agricultural use, in addition to potential for recreation uses. There are several layers to this proposal. The first being a land swap between the state and federal government to have an appropriately sized management area with good access. The next layer would be funding with officials hoping to find NRCS monies and possibly including Colorado in the funding request. The first public meetings were held in early January in Baggs, Saratoga, and Craig, Colorado. As the dam proposal is in its infancy, we’ll continue to monitor and report back as developments occur.
Estate Planning Workshop March 1

Crook County NRD and Crook County Farm Bureau Federation are hosting an estate planning workshop on March 1st in Sundance. For more information contact Jessica Halverson at 307-283-2870 or halverson.ccnrd@gmail.com.

2023 Lincoln County Annual Growers Meeting

Presented by Lincoln County Farm Bureau Federation, Lincoln County Conservation District, University of Wyoming Extension and the Lincoln County Weed & Pest.

When: March 22, 2023 @ 4-8pm

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The Summer Grilling Campaign had over 10.9 million impressions, resulting in over 8.6 million engagements in the top 5 most populated states.
2023 POLICIES... From Page 1

They also voted to bring more transparency to the federal milk pricing system. Several changes to policy include support for more USDA audits of processing costs to ensure data remains accurate, and a Federal Milk Marketing Orders voting procedure that requires co-operators to communicate more clearly with members regarding proposed changes. The results of an FMMO forum hosted by AFBF in October served as a guidepost for policy changes.

Recognizing growing food insecurity in the United States, delegates approved new policy to support access to nutrition programs including connecting farms directly with food banks, increasing the number of SNAP-approved food sales outlets, and other efforts to make produce available to families living in food deserts.

On trade, delegates added policy for USDA to continue working with the Mexican government to drop a proposed ban on imports of biotech corn. The new policy also encourages USDA to urge the Mexican government to accept established science on the safety of U.S. biotech products.

Voting delegates also formalized Farm Bureau’s position opposing the 2022 Waters of the U.S. rule and a proposed ban on imports of biotech corn. The new policy also encourages USDA to urge the Mexican government to accept established science on the safety of U.S. biotech products.

WyFB Voting Delegates Cole Coxbill and Todd Fornstrom at the 2023 AFBF Voting Delegate Session. REBECCA COLNAR, MONTANA FBF PHOTO.

AFBF CONVENTION... From Page 1

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation President Todd Fornstrom appreciated seeing the complete picture with everybody from all over the nation in a concentrated spot at convention. “It is the reward at the end of the year and so nice to have each different group of Farm Bureau members getting recharged,” he said. “The national convention is a great place to watch members finding new inspiration for the work that is completed back home in their counties for Farm Bureau and agriculture.”

The convention theme “Mi Familia” matched the love of family that resonates with Farm Bureau Federation members. Whether it is your immediate family, the board of directors family you serve with or your fellow Farm Bureau member family, there is a strong connection to serve agriculture and to make it even stronger for future generations.

The Austins enjoyed meeting so many like-minded people. “As stated many times at the convention, it really is like one large family,” Kathy said. “It was an honor and a privilege to attend the AFBF convention. We were also able to spend some quality time with other members and officers from Wyoming.”

“Families grow up in Farm Bureau and share family time with meeting travel. Our kids have always talked about the experiences at Farm Bureau events,” Coxbill agreed that having family at the national convention was very special.

“Finding new friendships is a favorite part of national convention. “I enjoyed talking to old friends and catching up,” Coxbill said.

Coxbill said the feeling of sitting on the national voting delegate floor with hundreds of delegates from across the nation is hard to put into just a few words. “It’s cool to be an individual Farm Bureau Federation member sitting on the floor of the voting delegates knowing that other individual members back in Wyoming have developed policy locally in Wyoming,” he explained.

“His message ties with the resiliency of people in agriculture,” Fornstrom continued. “You are better off to look for the good in every day then to focus on the bad; such a great reminder during hard and good times.”

The Ziehls shared the location of the convention was their favorite. “Puerto Rico was incredible and relaxing,” said the Ziehls. “We also loved riding the shuttle buses because we could visit with other Farm Bureau attendees.”

“We enjoyed comparing lives with people from other states,” they shared. “We found commonality and comradery with others battling weather, drought, commodity prices, and other struggles. Chad had fun connecting with people from Minnesota and Georgia who know and work with some of his family members.”

Another highlight of convention is the keynote speeches that provide inspiration. Fornstrom noted the “Life is Good” speaker Bert Jacobs shared a good story about the American Dream. “His mother looked for others battling weather, drought, commodity prices, and other struggles. Chad had fun connecting with people from Minnesota and Georgia who know and work with some of his family members.”

WyFB has two voting delegates; WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill.

The AFBF Annual Voting Delegate Session wraps up the AFBF Convention each year. WyFB has two voting delegates; WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill.

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AFBF CONVENTION... Page 10

Ranching in the West

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February 16: Managing Human Resources on the Ranch, 4–7:30 p.m., Sheridan
March 2: Technology and Innovation, 4–7:30 p.m., Torrington
March 30: Revenue Diversification, 4–7:30 p.m., Powell
April 20: Leadership Symposium & Luncheon, all day, Laramie

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CONVERSE
Matt Hoenstink, Glenrock; Jacob Hamm, Glenrock; Sam Meinhardt, Glenrock

CROOK
Genell Bagley (REG), Auburn; Michelle Simons, Beulah

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Pery Laramee, Crowheart; Zack Wilbourn/Wilbourn Cattle Company LLC (REG), Shoshoni; Kevin McIvien, Lander

JOHNSON
Katrina & Kevin Thomas, Buffalo; Dennis Eastman, Buffalo

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Leigh Dvarishkis & Glen Gresly (REG); Cody, Judy & Joseph Childers (REG), Powell; Ryan Muecke (REG), Powell; Tracey Dowling, Cody; Sondra & Brian Cahnman, Powell

PLATTE
James McBryant (REG), Chugwater

SHERIDAN
Mary & Matt Jolovich, Sheridan; Molly Steel, Sheridan; Armand Enslin, Riverton; John Guinotte, Sheridan; Breanna & Jeff Ingram, Ranchester; Jackie Newman, Sheridan; Bonnie & Mike Ellenwood (REG), Banner; Sandy Kassen, Sheridan; Terry White, Sheridan; Olivia Price, Sheridan;

AMBER EGGERGS, BUFFALO; JORDAN SMITH (REG), BUFFALO

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WILLIAM SORENSEN, LARAMIE

WILLIAM LINDSAY, SUBLETTE

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AFFB CONVENTION... From Page 9

"Discussing resolutions at the national level and knowing each resolution started with a single member taking the issue to their county meeting is rewarding. It is so neat to see the culmination of the year’s work.”

Fornstrom explained the national resolutions process is similar to the state level where there is a resolutions committee and then the delegate session. “People are very passionate when they talk about what is on their mind,” he said. “It is always an honor to represent Wyoming policy on the national level.”

According to Fornstrom, three Wyoming policies were passed and added to the national policy book. The policy topic: federal and private land trades; doi policy; and oritizing and simplifying land trades for landowners looking to establish contiguous blocks of private land thus improving access to public land and eliminating corner crossing issues.

Regarding domestic sheep grazing, voting delegates added wording to livestock grazing policy to note that any agency decisions to remove domestic sheep grazing from federal lands must be based on sound peer reviewed science.

Regarding fiscal policy, many states brought concern regarding Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) scores. The national voting delegates supported the Wyoming resolution opposing the implementation of ESG scores.

“We appreciated seeing the issues discussed at our state meetings being reviewed nationally,” Nicole Ziehl said. “Whether you are a plantain grower in north central Wyoming or growing coffee with us. Please contact our offering and have a hot cup of coffee with us. Please contact us at 307-856-4268 or 307-709-4200 to inquire directly, or find us on Facebook. Thank you for your interest in Stoll Limousin.

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**Hattie (Harriet) Jones Geesey**

April 4, 1956 – January 14, 2023

Hattie (Harriet) Jones Geesey passed on January 14, 2023, after a battle with lung cancer at the age of 66. She was a non-smoker. Born April 4, 1956, in Reynolds, Georgia, she was the fourth daughter of five children of Roy and Ruth Jones. Growing up on the farm was an instrumental factor in her upbringing. In 1970 she began her high school years as a member of the newly integrated Taylor County High School. This experience was a pivotal factor in broadening all horizons in front of her. That—coupled with the extraordinary experience of being a member of the nation-record-setting Taylor County Lady Vikings basketball team—led to opportunities later in life. After high school, she received a B.S. from Georgia College, a B.S. from Georgia Tech, and a member of the Georgia Tech women’s basketball program.

She worked in the semi-conductor industry in supervisory positions with companies in Dallas, Texas; Melbourne, Florida; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Pocatello, Idaho. Although not a pioneer, she was very proud that she helped pave the way for more women in the management realm of this industry. In Colorado Springs she met Jim Geesey, who became her best friend. They married on October 6, 1984, and established their first home in Kemmerer, Wyoming, where Jim had opened a real-estate business. He was vital in encouraging Hattie to utilize her business background in starting a title insurance business, which became a successful entity.

The births of their sons, Robert and Paul, in 1987 and 1989 were the true highlights of their lives. Jim’s transition to the insurance industry gave them the opportunity to move to Cody, Wyoming, for three years and then to Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998. Hattie was able to enjoy raising their sons and experience the benefits of volunteering for various organizations while also enjoying the activities that living in Laramie provided.

Hattie is survived by her husband Jim, her son Robert, her daughter-in-law Jackie Toomey, and her son Paul. She is also survived by her sisters, Priscilla Jordahl, Beth Collins, Jean Cooper, and Ronny Jones. Their spouses, along with Jim’s family, have been an important part of her life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be considered to two of Hattie’s favorite groups, the Albany County Public Library Foundation and the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus, Lung Cancer Research Fund. Donations can be made at the following:

Albany County Public Library Foundation
https://foundation.acplwy.org/

CU Foundation
https://giving.cu.edu/fund/

In memory of Hattie Jones Geesey, the family requests that donations be made to the Lung Cancer Research Fund.

AFBF Signs Right to Repair Memorandum of Understanding with John Deere

JANUARY 8, 2023

The American Farm Bureau Federation and John Deere signed a memorandum of understanding January 8, 2023, that ensures farmers’ and ranchers’ right to repair their own farm equipment. The MOU, signed at the 2023 AFBF Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, is the culmination of several years of discussions between AFBF and John Deere.

“AFBF is pleased to announce this agreement with John Deere. It addresses a long-running issue for farmers and ranchers when it comes to accessing tools, information and resources, while protecting John Deere’s intellectual property rights and ensuring equipment safety,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “A piece of equipment is a major investment. Farmers must have the freedom to choose where equipment is repaired, or to repair it themselves, to help control costs. The MOU commits John Deere to ensuring farmers and independent repair facilities have access to many of the tools and software needed to grow the food, fuel and fiber America’s families rely on.”

David Gilmore, John Deere Senior Vice President, Ag & Turf Sales & Marketing said, “This agreement re-affirms the long-standing commitment Deere has made to ensure our customers have the diagnostic tools and information they need to make many repairs to their machines. We look forward to working alongside the American Farm Bureau and our customers in the months and years ahead to ensure farmers continue to have the tools and resources to diagnose, maintain and repair their equipment.”

The MOU sets parameters and creates a mechanism to address farmers’ concerns. John Deere commits to engaging with farmers and dealers to resolve issues when they arise and agrees to meet with AFBF at least twice per year to evaluate progress.

The agreement formalizes farmers’ access to diagnostic and repair codes, as well as manuals (operator, parts, service) and product guides. It also ensures farmers will be able to purchase diagnostic tools directly from John Deere and receive assistance from the manufacturer when ordering parts and products.

The MOU has the potential to serve as a model for other manufacturers and AFBF has already begun those discussions.
It’s your future. Let’s protect it.
Together we’ll create a plan to protect what matters most to you.

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Wyoming Agriculture

It’s your future. Let’s protect it.
Together we’ll create a plan to protect what matters most to you.
Getting Started in Ag: Ag Tax Management Resources from RuralTax.org

The subject of tax management can be overwhelming for a variety of reasons, especially from a production agriculture standpoint. The massive size of the federal tax code and its accompanying regulations, along with the number of hours required for compliance can seem staggering, especially to new and beginning producers. Although tempting to hand it off to an accountant, tax management should be an integral part of your farm management and overall risk management planning.

Accounting for federal income and self-employment taxes is important for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the outcome of tax planning should be to maximize after-tax income. Proper planning and understanding can help you work more effectively with your accountant or financial advisor. Planning can also help address production and financial issues before they become major problems. Federal farm programs, including some crop insurance programs, are increasingly linked to information found on farm/ranch tax returns.

RuralTax.org was developed by academic professionals from several universities as part of the National Farm Income Tax Extension Committee, with an emphasis on providing current information on taxes (income and self-employment) for farmers, ranchers, extension educators, and others. The site includes informative articles and links to several agricultural tax topics, an in-depth tax guide for small and medium size farms, tribal tax information, and resources on other pertinent issues.

### Tax Information for New Farmers

RuralTax.org includes a section dedicated to topics important to new and beginning farmers and ranchers. This section provides fact-sheets on subjects including the definitions of a farmer and a farm for tax purposes, self-employment taxes and methods for paying them, Form 1099s, and more. For example, defining a farm for tax purposes may seem simple at face value—one would assume that simply raising agricultural commodities makes one a farmer. However, the issue of how to define a farm operation becomes more complex for tax purposes. Many factors such as off-farm income are considered; many new farm operators rely on off-farm income. This highlights why it is important to educate yourself on the most up-to-date information, as well as rely on the counsel of a trusted tax professional.

A tax estimator tool is included in this section. The tool is based in Excel and includes instructions on what tax information to include (a YouTube-based presentation is also available). The tool is intended for informational purposes only; however, it can be extremely helpful in estimating farm taxable income. Users select their filing type and state income tax information, enter estimated farm income (revenue minus expenses), off-farm income (W-2 wages), rental income, short-term and long-term capital gains, and depreciation recapture values. The tool then provides an estimate for tax liability.

### Sample Tax Returns

RuralTax.org includes a section with example tax returns for various farming situations, including new and part-time farmers and ranchers. For example, one highlighted return features a producer who raises cattle while his wife works off the farm. The description of how his expenses are structured demonstrates how his tax liability could change and identifies areas for reducing his total tax bill. Many of the example returns are specific to previous tax years, yet offer a basis for understanding how business taxes are estimated for a farm or ranch.

### Small Farm Tax Guide

Taxes may not be your foremost concern when you are new to the record-keeping side of production agriculture. However, chances are good that most of your production decisions will have tax implications. It is important to account for uncertainty when making decisions about taxes, from a risk management perspective, which can also help maximize after-tax income.

One of the resources available from RuralTax.org is the Small Farm Tax Guide (SFTG). This comprehensive publication covers many aspects of income and self-employment taxes as they apply to production agriculture. The two most common mistakes farm and ranch managers make, according to the SFTG, are ignoring the tax consequences of their decisions entirely (reducing after-tax income by not taking advantage of tax reduction opportunities) and focusing so much on reducing business taxes that after-tax income suffers.

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**Figure 1:** RuralTax.org offers resources specific to farmers and ranchers.

**Figure 2:** RuralTax.org provides a tax estimator tool.

**Figure 3:** Example tax return.

---

**Getting Started in Ag**

**Tax Management Resources from RuralTax.org**
I know I need life insurance, but I also need to save for retirement.

You might think you have to choose between protecting your loved ones with life insurance or saving for your future, but you don’t have to. You can do both, and it’s easy when you work with your Farm Bureau agent. Let’s talk about life insurance and ensure you’re prepared for the future.

Figure 3: Small Farm Tax Guide, RuralTax.org

Taxes For Agricultural Enterprises:
An Interactive Course from RightRisk.org

- Free online self-study course designed to increase understanding of taxes and tax issues for agricultural enterprises
- Visit RightRisk.org, select Taxes for Agriculture from the Courses tab

James Sedman is a consultant to the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics in the University of Wyoming College of Agriculture, Life Sciences and Natural Resources, and John Hewlett is a farm and ranch management specialist in the department. Hewlett may be reached at (307) 766-2166 or hewlett@uwyo.edu.

Final notice for Brand Renewal

Attention Livestock Brand Owners:

the Wyoming Livestock Board is sending out final notices for brand owners whose brands are scheduled for renewal. If you are not sure of when your brand is scheduled for renewal, or are not sure if the Wyoming Livestock Board has your current address, please contact the Wyoming Livestock Board via phone, mail, email, or fax at following address:

Wyoming Livestock Board
1934 Wyott Drive, Cheyenne, WY 82002-0051
Office phone 307-777-7515 Fax 307-777-6561 or brands@wyo.gov

Every two years a certain percentage of brands expire December 31st and are flagged for renewal. The next renewal grace period began January 1, 2023 and runs through March 1, 2023.
The American Farm Bureau Federation presented awards to state Farm Bureaus at the organization’s 104th Convention Jan. 6-11, 2023 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The awards recognize excellence in implementation of outstanding member programs and membership achievement in 2022. The Awards of Excellence recognize state Farm Bureaus that demonstrated outstanding achievements in four program areas: Advocacy, Coalitions & Partnerships, Engagement & Outreach, and Leadership & Business Development.

Wyoming was recognized with all four Awards of Excellence.

Fornstrom, a Laramie County farmer, emphasized Farm Bureau Federation members have a deep interest in water quality.

“We deeply value protecting water resources; our farms and ranches are water-dependent enterprises,” he said. “Water quality is also a deep family value; my wife and I raised our family drinking from a well on our farm.”

Fornstrom said it is essential to preserve the Clean Water Act’s partnership among federal, state and local regulators.

“The CWA requires the federal government to work hand-in-hand with states, because the federal government cannot and should not regulate every single wet feature in every community,” he said. “Unfortunately, this new rule will revert to the old significant nexus test which creates regulatory uncertainty on private land miles from the nearest navigable water.”

Fornstrom said this new rule puts property rights at risk and does nothing to benefit water. “We know the importance of clean water, and farmers and ranchers work hard to protect our natural resources every day,” Fornstrom said. “Farm Bureau cannot overstate the concern we have with a rule that complicates the lines of jurisdiction so deeply that farmers and ranchers will need to hire an army of consultants and lawyers to use their land.”

According to WyFB, the timing of this announcement is even more puzzling as the Supreme Court will be issuing a decision on the scope of the Clean Water Act. “A ruling in the Sackett case could send WOTUS back to the drawing board, so it makes no sense for EPA to issue a rule that will only cause more disruption and uncertainty,” Fornstrom explained.

AFBF Files Legal Challenge

On January 19, 2023, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) joined 17 other organizations representing agriculture, infrastructure and housing, as well as county and state Farm Bureaus in filing suit challenging the new WOTUS rule.

“Farmers and ranchers share the goal of protecting the resources we’re entrusted with. Clean water is important to all of us,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. “Unfortunately, the new WOTUS rule once again gives the federal government sweeping authority over private lands. This isn’t what clean water regulations were intended to do. Farmers and ranchers should not have to hire a team of lawyers and consultants to determine how we can farm our land.”

“The new rule is vague and creates uncertainty for America’s farmers, even if they’re miles from the nearest navigable water,” he continued.

“We believe a judge will recognize these regulations exceed the scope of the Clean Water Act, and direct EPA to develop rules that enable farmers to protect natural resources while ensuring they can continue stocking America’s pantries,” Duvall concluded.