

Wyoming Agriculture

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Bridging the Gap: Wyoming Needs Agriculture engages fans

BY CALLIE HANSON

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation hosted the 12th annual Wyoming Needs Agriculture event on Sept. 13, giving Cowboy fans of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to interact with farmers and ranchers and learn more about agriculture. The event was held during pre-game festivities of the University of Wyoming football game.

The first 400 fans to participate received a Wyoming Cowboys/Wyoming Needs Agriculture t-shirt. To earn their free shirt, fans had three options. They could test their knowledge in the Family Feud-Ag Quiz Bowl, step into the photo booth to take a picture and visit with a farmer, or practice their roping skills on the dummy. Each activity gave participants a fun way to connect with agriculture and visit with farmers and ranchers from around the state.

Fans had the chance to rotate between activities, whether it was stepping into the photo booth to meet Laramie County farmer and WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and Goshen County farmer and WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill, buzzing in with answers during the Family Feud-Ag Quiz Bowl, or trying their hand at roping the dummy. Each station drew steady crowds and created opportunities for conversations about Wyoming agriculture. Senator John Barraso also stopped in during the festivities, adding to the energy of the afternoon and showing his support for Wyoming agriculture.

WYOMING NEEDS AG ... Page 6



WyFB Vice President Cole Coxbill and President Todd Fornstrom chatted with attendees of the annual Wyoming Needs Ag tailgate. WYFB PHOTO

SADDLES TO SOLUTIONS

From saddles to solutions: WyFB annual meeting set for November

BY CALLIE HANSON

From saddles to solutions, Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members know that real-world experiences fuel practical policy. Whether you're working cattle, harvesting crops, or navigating regulations, your voice matters—and the 2025 Annual Meeting is your opportunity to turn challenges into action.

Join us November 13–15, 2025 in Gillette at the CAM-PLEX for the 106th Annual Meeting of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation. This year's theme, "Saddles to Solutions," highlights the grassroots strength that transforms on-the-ground issues into forward-thinking solutions for agriculture in Wyoming.

Thursday Morning Mine Tour

The meeting will kick off with a Thursday morning mine tour on Nov. 13. Hosted by the WyFB Foundation, the tour will be free to attendees of the Annual Meeting. Details about the tour will be shared in the full agenda in the November issue. To participate, please register by emailing bsettlemeyer@wyfb.org.

Meeting Schedule Snapshot

The meeting officially begins at noon on Thursday, Nov. 13 with a luncheon. That afternoon, WyFB's four standing committees will meet to review and refine member-submitted resolutions.

ANNUAL MEETING ... Page 13

Fuel taxes and road maintenance: How Wyoming keeps its roads moving

BY CALLIE HANSON

For farmers and ranchers, good roads are more than a convenience—they are a necessity. From hauling livestock to delivering hay, moving equipment or getting to town, reliable transportation routes keep agriculture running in Wyoming. That is why Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation members have a direct stake in how road maintenance is funded, and why understanding where fuel tax dollars go is important for every rural community.

Fuel taxes remain one of the most important parts of Wyoming's road funding structure. A recent overview from the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), presented to the Joint Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs Committee in August 2025, outlines how dollars collected at the refinery are used to maintain the state's transportation system.

For Fiscal Year 2025, WYDOT anticipates a budget of \$818,227,237. That

amount is divided between Commission Programs such as construction, maintenance, equipment, facilities and traffic, totaling \$690,785,643, and Legislative Programs such as patrol, aeronautics, driver's licenses, motor vehicles and ports of entry, totaling \$127,441,594. Funding comes primarily from federal revenue at \$416,969,115, highway user fees at \$222,867,282 and other state revenue at \$178,390,840. Fuel taxes fall under highway user fees and remain a critical piece of the total budget.

WYDOT projects \$115,997,100 in fuel tax revenue for 2025, which makes up 14.18 percent of anticipated revenue. Gasoline taxes are expected to generate \$47,436,108, while diesel fuel taxes are projected at \$68,560,992. These totals include several components such as 13- and 10-cent tax portions, fees directed toward the leaking underground storage tank (LUST) fund and a 10 percent special fuel sales tax.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

4 Northwest District Meeting
- Thermopolis

6 Southwest District Meeting
- Kemmerer

8-9 Joint Minerals- Cheyenne

9 Southeast District Meeting
- Lusk

15 Regulatory Reduction
- Cheyenne

28-29 Joint Agriculture-Cheyenne

30 Joint Appropriations
- Cheyenne

November

3-4 Joint Corporations-Cheyenne

4-6 Joint Select Water-Casper

6 Joint Travel-Casper

7-8 Joint Judiciary- Casper

13-14 Select Water- Casper

13-15 WyFB 106th Annual Meeting
- Gillette

15 Joint Transportation
- Cheyenne

18-19 Joint Revenue-Cheyenne

19 Regulatory Reduction- Online

December

1-5 Joint Appropriations
- Cheyenne

2 Joint Minerals-Cheyenne

8-12 Joint Appropriations
- Cheyenne

January

9-14 American Farm Bureau
Federation Annual
Convention -Anaheim, CA

February

6-9 Wyoming/Colorado Farm
Bureau Federation YF&R
Conference-Cheyenne

Visit wyfb.org
for event updates

NOTICE

Annual Policyholders' Meeting
December 4, 2025 – 8:00 a.m.
Mountain West Farm Bureau Mutual
Insurance Company
Farm Bureau Center, 931 Boulder Drive
Laramie, Wyoming 82070

Wyoming

Farm Bureau Federation

Wyoming

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MISSION: To represent the voices of
Wyoming farmers and ranchers through
grassroots policy development while
focusing on protecting private property
rights, strengthening agriculture, and
supporting farm and ranch families
through advocacy, education, and
leadership development.

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Unity in the supply chain

Zippy Duvall
American Farm Bureau Federation President



From driving the tractor to cleaning the barns, and from keeping the books to checking the fences, everyone on the farm has an important role to play. It takes teamwork and a shared purpose to keep things running smoothly, and the same holds true across the food system. Every step in our supply chain—from the farm fields to the grocery store shelves—is grounded in the same mission: to keep our food supply safe, sustainable and affordable.

Farmers and the Supply Chain

Farmers and ranchers understand that we are just one part of the supply chain, and that while we may be the starting point, there are many other steps to provide the food on our plates, clothes on our backs and renewable fuel in our vehicles. As part of a larger system, we also know that decisions made downstream often ripple back to our farms. Whether adapting practices for sustainability, adjusting to a changing market or working to do more with less, there are a variety of pressures affecting the supply chain, and we have to work together as partners to achieve the best outcomes for farmers and consumers.

Unity in the supply chain starts with building relationships. If we want our supply chain partners to understand the realities of farming and ranching, we must be willing to meet them at the table and share our stories. I have said before that the strongest tool in our advocacy toolbox is our personal stories and the same goes for sharing with supply chain partners how their commitments and supplier requirements impact our livelihoods. At the same time, an open dialogue with stakeholders across the supply chain also helps us better understand their pressures, address shared challenges and work together to keep our food supply secure.

The relationships with our food and supply chain partners are especially important as supply chain challenges continue to increase. From rising input costs and increasing global tension to the ongoing labor crisis, there is no shortage of pressures on every level of the supply chain. As partners, we must work together to find solutions that keep farmers and ranchers economically sustainable.

Farm Bureau and the Supply Chain

At Farm Bureau, we take our role as the voice for farmers in supply chain conversations seriously. Just like we do with our lawmakers, we meet with companies across the supply chain to discuss the challenges and opportunities for our farms and rural communities. Whether we are sitting down with company leaders, participating in coalitions or serving as the representative for farmers in a room full of supply chain stakeholders, Farm Bureau is committed to ensuring that the concerns of our farm families are heard. That's why we also continue to look for new partnerships on all levels of the supply chain, including input companies, equipment manufacturers, food processors, retailers and restaurants. We know the more trust and open dialogue we can create across the chain, the more unity we can achieve.

The pressures facing our supply chain are not going away anytime soon, and if anything, they will only continue to grow. That is why the relationships we are building and cultivating are so important. When we work together, we can find common ground, create solutions that work for everyone, and ensure our food supply remains safe, sustainable and affordable. ■

Fall Harvest

Kerin Clark
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Executive Vice President



The weather is cooling off a bit, leaves are changing colors and all around the cowboy state farmers and ranchers are harvesting the fruits of their labor. It's fall in Wyoming and one thing is for sure...fall work on the ranch or farm is in full swing. From sunrise to sunset, Wyoming farmers and ranchers are stewarding the resources to which they have been entrusted while producing food.

Ranchers are working their livestock and farmers are tending their field. While the available minutes are few and far between, many of these ranchers and farmers are also making time to attend their county Farm Bureau Federation resolutions and/or annual meetings to share their voice in the grassroots policy development process. Fall harvest for agriculture includes work on the farm and ranch and policy work at the county Farm Bureau Federation meetings.

Fall harvest for policy development is an essential part of the organization's work to keep agriculture strong here in Wyoming and America. Traveling around the state meeting with members at your county Farm Bureau Federation meetings is a rewarding part of fall work for staff at the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation. We enjoy the opportunity to hear from you and also share the work we do on your behalf.

When you step back and look at the big picture, Wyoming's county Farm Bureau Federations are part of 2,800 county Farm Bureaus across this great nation that meet at the local level to start the annual resolutions process. Your voice and input matter. We value meeting with our members where you are and enjoying fellowship and conversation over dinner. The voice and the stories you share with us provide important information for us to utilize as we

advocate for the policy set by our members each year.

The other aspect of fall agriculture policy work for our organization is the advocacy work to represent you at legislative meetings, on regulatory actions and everywhere in between. Speaking of those minutes that are few and far between for farmers and ranchers, your membership provides representation at a variety of meetings and events and on regulatory proposals that impact agriculture here in Wyoming while you continue with your fall work.

Your membership and participation in this organization not only gives you a voice it gives you an opportunity to join your voice with thousands across the Cowboy State to make an even stronger impact for agriculture. Thank you for being a part of this great organization. May your harvest be blessed and bountiful this fall. ■

U.S. Department of Agriculture jump starts forest health initiatives

BY KELLY CARPENTER, POLICY ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) United States Forest Service (USFS) is having new life breathed into the agency walls. The previous paradigm of the agency that centered around the preservation and recreation economies that rose to popularity in recent decades is incrementally changing. A new administration seeks to disrupt the old paradigm of forest management to revert to the original intent of the Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act of 1960 (MUSYA). This federal act was the guiding document for the USDA USFS since its enactment.

Executive Order to Expand Timber Production

The first example in the paradigm shift was Executive Order 14225, which ordered for immediate expansion of American timber production. This EO is an important catalyst for getting our forest management back to the MUSYA ethos. Domestic timber production can provide

many benefits ranging from local jobs to national security. During the height of the COVID pandemic, timber was a very sought after commodity and very expensive, making it difficult for various industries to complete their work. A domestic supply would enhance reliability of the lumber supply and reinvigorate small communities with additional jobs. In recent months, western states Farm Bureaus have worked together to provide guidance on implementation of this executive orders.

Rescission of the Roadless Rule

In late August, the administration released its Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on the rescission of the Roadless Rule. This rule rescission is a natural next step from the Executive Order to expand timber production. As you may recall, the Roadless Rule has been in place since 2001 and effectively cordoned off millions of forest acres from construction of new forest roads and maintenance of some existing forest roads. This impacted local communities in loss of timber

production but also has had an objectively impacted forest health.

The exclusion of these areas from road construction and maintenance hampered timber production and grazing utilization for decades, essentially making millions of acres unable for use and set aside for conservation purposes, contradicting the guiding principles of the MUSYA. Additionally, the limited use of these designated areas hampered the ability of the USFS to mitigate wildfire risk, as well as active fire suppression activities.

The rescission of the rule, although in its early stages, could prove to be a monumental step toward building back local timber economies, increasing fine fuel reductions through potentially increasing livestock grazing, and through those two actions improve overall forest health. The WyFB has submitted comments on the Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement encouraging the agency to adhere to their multiple use and sustained yield principles to improve forest health and the health of local communities. ■

Balancing agriculture, energy and recreation on federal lands

BY LILY STEWART, AFBF SUMMER INTERN

The Homestead Act is where it all began. To encourage westward expansion in 1862, the federal government offered 160-acre plots of land to the American people for a modest filing fee and commitment to reside on and improve the acreage by cultivating crops or raising live-

stock. However, as homesteaders discovered, much of the land in the west is barren and rocky. It takes a lot of it to sustain a family, and the tools required for farming and ranching were expensive to acquire. That is why it's not surprising that much of the land remained unclaimed by farmers and ranchers when the Homestead Act was

discontinued in 1976 (except in Alaska, where it continued until 1986).

Everything left over remained the property of the government and became what we now know as federal or public lands. These lands are managed by federal agencies including the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service. In western states especially, agencies face the challenge of balancing multiple uses on federal (public) lands.

You might ask, "How are these resources managed in states with substantial public lands?" That is a great ques-

tion. Federal lands in the western U.S. are used for grazing livestock such as cattle and sheep, producing energy and minerals, recreation and so much more.

Ranchers across the west must first obtain grazing permits through federal agencies before their livestock can consume the plentiful grass, a nutritious food source. In Wyoming — where 48% of the land is federally owned — this extensive public land base is managed for multiple uses, including grazing, a pattern echoed across much of the western United States.

FEDERAL LANDS ... Page 13

Cooking with the Modern Ranch Wife

Harvest Cookies

Recipe by Connie Werner

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 eggs
- 2 ¾ cups all purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 cup shredded coconut
- 2 cups old fashioned oats
- 2 medium sized apples, diced

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 360 degrees.
- Cream together butter, sugars, eggs, and vanilla.
- Mix all dry ingredients in a separate bowl.
- Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix well.
- Fold in diced apples until thoroughly incorporated.
- Spoon onto a greased baking sheet placing cookies 2" apart.
- Bake for 17 minutes or until slightly golden brown. Remove and allow to continue baking for 3-4 minutes before removing to a cooling rack.
- Store in an airtight container. Enjoy!

MUST TRY

For more recipes visit www.modernranchwife.com

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A Day in Our Lives

BY SPENCER AXTELL, WYFB YF&R COMMITTEE MEMEBER

It's that time of year again — fall cattle work, preconditioning, sorting, and weaning calves. This month, my wife Hannah Axtell and I (Spencer), along with our family, have gathered and vaccinated our calves to keep them healthy for buyers on weaning and shipping day.

It takes three days to get all the calves vaccinated and back into their pastures, where they stay with their mamas for at least a week before being worked again. Lots of prep work goes into these days: gathering food and supplies, shoeing horses, and keeping trucks and trailers moving to transport it all.

This year's calf crop is wonderful and very healthy so far. Big calves and high prices make life on the ranch much more enjoyable, especially with good help and nice weather.

One of our greatest challenges this season has been the Red Canyon Fire, which burned very close to our cattle — even into the same pasture. Fortunately, none of our livestock or people were harmed, and there is no longer an urgent threat. Thanks to the hard work of my family and neighbors, the Red Canyon Fire is now contained on the west side where we operate in Thermopolis, WY. Thankfully, we are able to get back to being cowboys and working cattle this month.

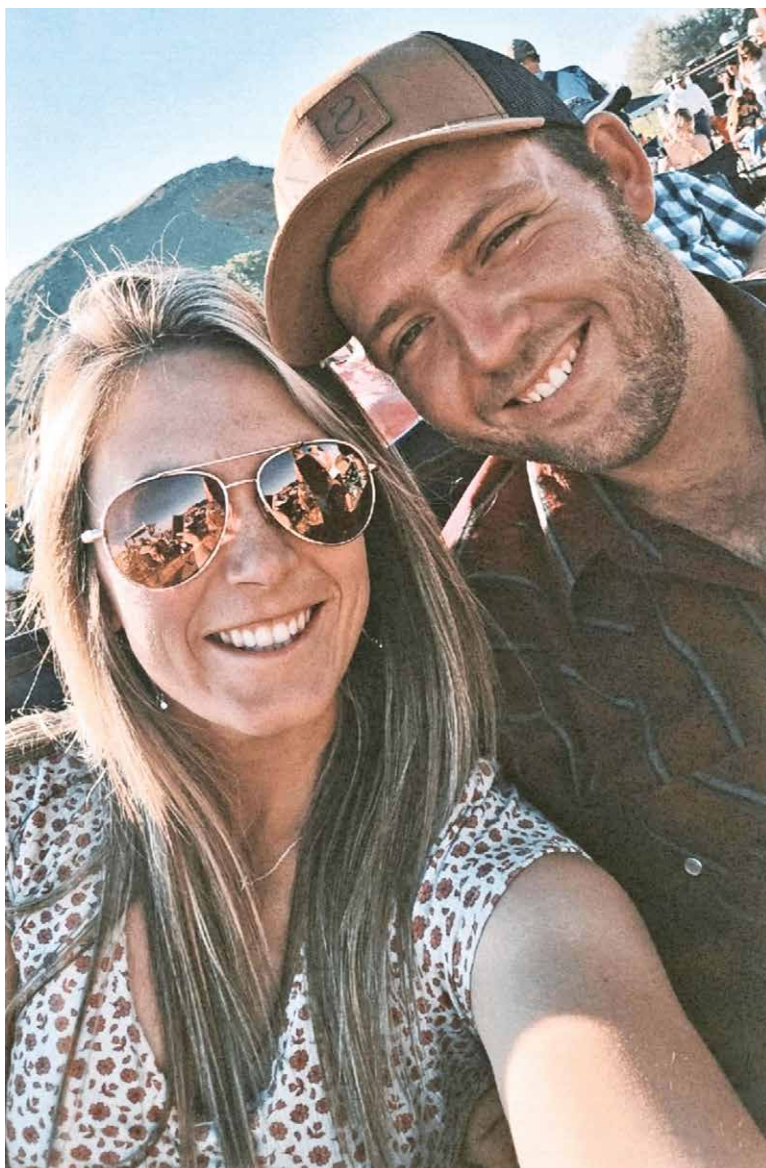
I have grown up on this ranch and know the ins and outs of our operation, which sometimes change year to year. This is Hannah's and my first year being married and living on the family ranch. We built a small place on the ranch and moved into it in December of 2024 — a load of work, but a major blessing as well. It's been a learning curve living and working out here for both of us, but we love it and are slowly starting to get the hang of it.

The ranch's fall work usually begins in the last week of August and wraps up around the first week of October. I would say it's the busiest season of the year because it's the most critical time to make sure things run smoothly. Having enough help is essential so the calves can be shipped healthy and on time. Living on the ranch makes this time of year much easier compared to driving 15 miles out of town early in the morning to start some of these days.

Even though life can be crazy on the ranch, we couldn't imagine it any other way. We are very fortunate to have the success that we do. ■



Spencer talking to the neighbor John Baird after fighting fire.
COURTESY PHOTO



Hannah and Spencer Axtell. COURTESY PHOTO



Preconditioning calves in one of the mountain corrals.
COURTESY PHOTO



Moving yearlings in the cool of the evening. COURTESY PHOTO

Cowboy Poetry

BY BAYLA BERGER



The cow two sixty-five was a devil at heart,
If you gave her the chance, she'd tear you apart.
It was a chilly day in March, early in the spring
When my dad, who does the tagging, left for town, my two brothers he would bring.
He left me, my sister and my pregnant mom to ourselves,
To tag the calves alone and deal with their mothers from H-E-double L.
I'd been tagging for a while and knew it almost as well as he,
But when he left, it felt the ranch was dependent all on me.
The chores, the feeding and the tagging too,
Were all left for me, my sister and my pregnant mother to do.
I thought I was ready and prepared for what was ahead,
But people, I'm telling you, I should have stayed in bed.
My mom hit the cow with a stick, while I tagged the calf,
And my little sister wrote in the record book with her nice handwriting and math.
It worked pretty well with every single mom,
'Till we met number two sixty-five, then everything went wrong.
I thought it would be normal, I wrote the tag and everything,
Not at knowing the trouble that this devil cow would bring.
When we got out of the Ranger, the cow perked her head and ran,
You'd think a newborn calf couldn't run... But I'm telling you, they can.
We were trying to catch up, and I was trying not to cuss,
When we went to get back in the Ranger, but my little sister had driven off without us!
We waved our arms around to try and get her to look in our direction,
Until finally, her eyes and ourselves met in connection.
She turned the cab around and we resumed our chase,
Hoping the calf would be a sickly thing, so we could sell it and end her awful race.
We met 'em at a corner, where we split the two apart,
She thought another calf was hers, but when she found out it wasn't, it must have broke her heart.
We had the calf pinned down and were ready to tag its ear,
When a blood-curdling bellow was heard that anyone could hear.
The cow began to run at us, as I heard my mom proclaim,
"Hurry up!" She grabbed a stick and prepared to take aim.
The cow came closer! Mom stood her ground, ready to throw the stick at the cow's head.
I clamped the tagger, but it slipped and I had to try again.
The cow charged forward! Mom threw the stick and yelled, "Hurry, run! I'm getting outa here!"
And just before the cow hit me, I clamped the calf's ear.
I got out of there just seconds before my life was taken by the cow!
How I got out of there? Don't ask me, I don't even know how!
And to this day I'm still surprised that I'm actually alive,
To tell the tale of tagging, the calf of two sixty-five.



THE GRASSROOTS PROCESS STARTS WITH YOU!

How your idea becomes a Farm Bureau Federation policy

STEP 1: You Have an Idea

- Speak up about a farming or ranching challenge or opportunity at your county meeting to start the process.
- Draft a clear resolution—include background, but focus on a concise "Be it resolved" clause

STEP 2: Advocate at the County Level

- Attend your county annual or resolutions meeting to present your resolution. *Some counties may have separate annual/resolutions meetings. Please contact your county president with questions.*
- County delegates vote, and if passed, your resolution moves to the district stage.

STEP 3: WE ARE HERE

Advocate at the District Level

- Bring your resolution to the district meeting, where voting delegates vote on resolutions.
- If approved, your resolution advances to the state annual meeting.

STEP 4: Advocate at the State Level

- The resolutions committee and voting delegates will consider policy recommendations, and a majority vote adopts it as state policy.

STEP 5: Beyond the State Level

- If your resolution addresses a national issue, it will be forwarded to the AFBF.
- If approved by majority vote, it becomes official AFBF policy.
- Once adopted, FB staff work to turn your policy into real-world change—through legislation, partnerships, and/or public outreach.

District Meetings

- Northwest: Oct. 4, Thermopolis
- Southwest: Oct. 6, Kemmerer
- Southeast: Oct. 9, Lusk

Northeast and Central district meetings were held in late September.



Wyoming Farm Bureau® Federation

SADDLES TO SOLUTIONS

106th Annual Meeting • November 13-15, 2025 • Gillette, Wyoming



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WYOMING NEEDS AG... From Page 1

“Events like this give us the chance to talk directly with people about what we do every day,” Fornstrom said. “It’s important for farmers and ranchers to share our story, answer questions and build those personal connections with the public.”

That message carried into the stadium itself when the “Wyoming Needs Agriculture” video played on the scoreboard at halftime, reaching

an even larger audience of Cowboy fans. Whether through a quick game, a photo, or a simple conversation, the event reminded attendees that agriculture is at the heart of Wyoming’s communities and economy.

The Wyoming Needs Agriculture event once again showed the value of connecting directly with consumers, leaving fans with a stronger understanding of the role agriculture plays in their daily lives. ■

FUEL TAX... From Page 1

Gasoline tax revenues are projected at \$83,091,126 in 2025. At the 24-cent rate, 57.5 percent, or \$44,069,814, will go to the State Highway Fund. Cities will receive 15 percent, or \$11,496,481, while the County Road Fund will receive 14 percent, or \$10,730,006. Counties will collect 13.5 percent, or \$10,346,848. Smaller amounts are also directed toward the leaking underground storage tank program at \$3,366,294 and state parks for snowmobile, off-road vehicle and motor boat programs totaling just over \$3 million combined.

Diesel taxes are projected to reach \$88,470,152 in 2025. Of that total, 75 percent, or \$61,177,858, will go to the State Highway Fund. Counties will receive 20 percent, or \$16,314,095, while cities will receive 5 percent, or \$4,078,524. The leaking underground storage tank program will receive \$5,967,031 from diesel collections.

The Wyoming Constitution, Article 15, Section 16, directs that money derived from fees, excises or license taxes on vehicles or fuels cannot be spent on anything other than road-related purposes. Allowable uses include administering those laws, paying highway obligations, construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of highways, county roads, bridges and municipal streets, and the enforcement of traffic laws. This constitutional protection ensures fuel tax dollars remain dedicated to transportation.

Despite the importance of fuel taxes, WYDOT data shows the buying power of these dollars has steadily eroded over time. To equal 2010 buying power, state revenue would need to reach \$464,830,493 annually. To equal 1996 buying power, the state would need \$414,668,947. Anticipated

state revenue for 2025 is \$318,731,430, a figure well below either benchmark.

The agency also notes the impacts of de-earmarking, which refers to the redirection of mineral royalties and severance taxes that once went to transportation. Since 2002, WYDOT has experienced a net loss of \$1.336 billion in highway funding due to de-earmarking. If the policy had not been implemented, the department estimates it would have received more than \$2.1 billion in additional funding over the same period.

Fuel taxes are part of a larger category of highway user fees that also include vehicle registrations and driver's licenses. Vehicle registrations are projected to generate \$88,571,376 in 2025, while driver's license revenues are expected to bring in \$6,322,873. As of July 31, 2024, Wyoming had 990,689 registered vehicles, including 387,863 passenger cars, 276,888 trucks and 27,579 motorcycles.

For Farm Bureau members, the way these dollars are collected and distributed carries a direct impact. Rural roads and county bridges are essential for moving cattle, hauling hay and transporting equipment. The County Road Fund's share of gasoline taxes, projected at \$10.7 million for 2025, and the 20 percent of diesel taxes distributed to counties, more than \$16 million, go directly to the roads most heavily traveled by farmers and ranchers. These county-level allocations, combined with the constitutionally protected State Highway Fund, help ensure that Wyoming's agricultural products can reach markets safely and efficiently.

If you are interested in reading the full report, visit <https://wyoleg.gov/InterimCommittee/2025/08-202508187-01August2025JTCPacket.pdf>. ■

County Roads Matter

In 2025, the County Road Fund will receive more than \$10.7 million from gasoline taxes, and counties will see an additional \$16.3 million from diesel revenues. These dollars are critical for maintaining rural infrastructure.

Wyoming Fuel Taxes at a Glance (FY 2025)

- **Total fuel tax revenue:** \$116 million (14.2% of WYDOT budget)
- **Gasoline taxes:** \$47.4 million
 - 57.5% → State Highway Fund (\$44 million)
 - 15% → Cities (\$11.5 million)
 - 14% → County Road Fund (\$10.7 million)
 - 13.5% → Counties (\$10.3 million)
 - Remainder → Parks and LUST programs
- **Diesel taxes:** \$68.6 million
 - 75% → State Highway Fund (\$61.2 million)
 - 20% → Counties (\$16.3 million)
 - 5% → Cities (\$4.1 million)
 - \$6 million → LUST program
- **Big picture numbers:**
 - WYDOT total budget: \$818.2 million
 - Federal revenue: \$417 million (51%)
 - Registered vehicles in Wyoming: 990,689
 - Lost revenue from de-earmarking since 2002: \$1.336 billion

(Source: WYDOT Funding Overview, August 2025)



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- Equipment leases
- Lease timeline
- And more!
- Communication
- Landlord/Tenant
- Payments

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ELRP expands to support livestock after floods and fires

BY DANIEL MUNCH, AFBF ECONOMIST

Livestock producers hit by wildfires on non-federal land and floods in 2023 and 2024 now have access to a new source of relief. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has opened the application window for the Emergency Livestock Relief Program (ELRP) 2023 and 2024 Flood and Wildfire (FW), with applications due Oct. 31, 2025. Unlike the drought and federal lands wildfire assistance announced earlier this year, this program requires farmers to file directly to apply. Payments will help offset the sharp rise in supplemental feed costs that followed widespread flooding, flash storms and destructive wildfires that upended cattle and dairy operations across much of the country.

Authorized under the American Relief Act of 2025, the FW program deploys roughly \$940 million, which is the remaining balance of Congress's \$2 billion livestock disaster assistance directive. While no program can fully cover losses tied to disasters of this magnitude, ELRP-FW provides critical support for ranchers and farmers struggling with damaged grazing land, higher transportation costs and reduced livestock productivity.

Storms, Fires and Economic Fallout

Severe floods and wildfires in 2023 and 2024 created major obstacles for livestock growers across the country. These disasters upended forage conditions, damaged infrastructure and sharply raised feed costs, leaving farmers and ranchers with mounting expenses at a time of already pressured margins.

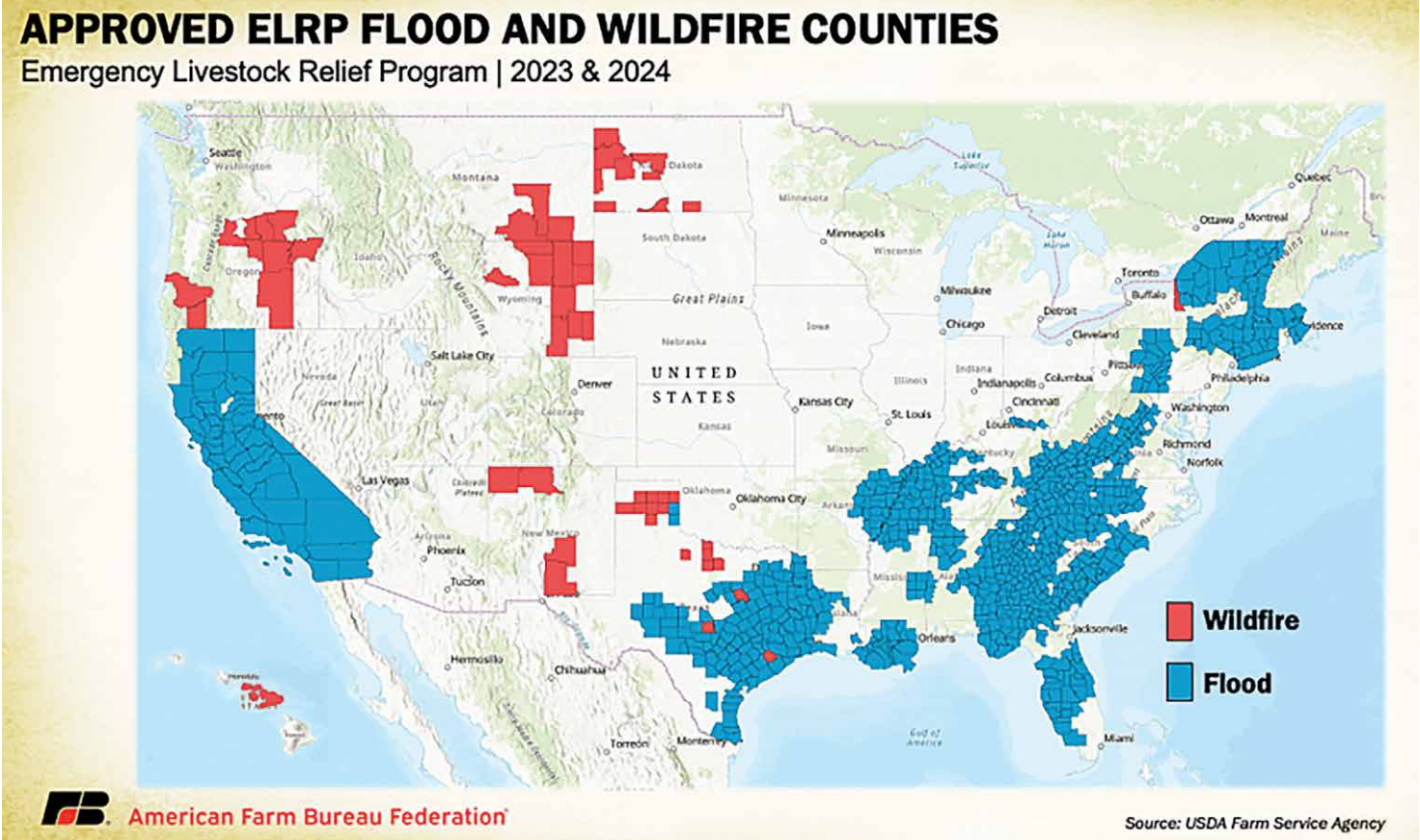


Figure 1

In both years, wildfire activity scorched nearly 11.5 million acres nationwide. The most severe event came in March 2024, when five fires tore through the Texas Panhandle where over 1.1 million acres were burned, hundreds of structures and fences destroyed and more than 7,000 head of cattle killed.

At the same time, unprecedented floods swept across much of the country. In 2023, California was hit hard by atmospheric rivers, while in 2024 hurricanes Helene and Milton inundated the Southeast. Persistent rains also flooded the Northeast and Midwest, washing out roads, cutting off feed supplies and damaging cropland.

For livestock producers, the economic consequences were swift and severe. Transportation costs soared as washed-out infrastructure delayed feed shipments. Replacement feed was more expensive and harder to find, with crop failures adding to shortages. Dairy and beef operations alike saw reduced performance: lower milk yields, lighter calf weaning weights and ration imbalances caused by sudden shifts in feed quality. These cascading effects underscore why Congress carved out specific funding for disasters that fall outside the reach of the Livestock Forage Program (LFP).

on non-federally managed land. Unlike the drought portion of ELRP, which used existing LFP records to automatically deliver payments, this program requires farmers to apply directly using form FSA-970.

Payments are based on USDA's standard monthly feed cost estimates per animal unit. For flood-related losses, assistance covers 60% of three months of feed costs. For wildfires on non-federal land, assistance equals 60% of one month of feed costs. These rates reflect the longer recovery needed for flood-damaged land compared to land burned by fire.

Eligibility

Eligibility is broad but clearly defined. To be eligible, farmers must have owned, leased, purchased or been under contract to raise eligible livestock on the start date of the qualifying disaster. They must also demonstrate that the disaster event led to increased supplemental feed costs.

Covered livestock include beef and dairy cattle, beefalo, buffalo, bison, sheep, goats, alpacas, llamas, deer, reindeer, elk,

How the Program Works

ELRP-FW provides compensation for increased supplemental feed costs caused by qualifying floods or wildfires occurring

DISASTER AID ... Page 9

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DISASTER AID... From Page 8

equine, ostriches and emus. Livestock in commercial feedlots, auction facilities or operations that buy and resell animals without sharing in the production risk are not eligible.

FSA has already confirmed qualifying floods and wildfires in many counties using disaster declarations, weather data and economic reports. In these counties, growers will not need to supply event documentation. For counties not pre-approved, farmers can still qualify by providing acceptable evidence such as photos, insurance documents or local/state emergency declarations.
(See Figure 1)

Application Process

Because USDA cannot rely on LFP records for this track, producers must submit a new application by October 31, 2025. Applicants will need to file:

- FSA-970 (ELRP-FW application form) for each program year affected.
- Livestock inventory records as of the disaster date.
- Disaster event documentation, if not in a pre-approved county.
- Farm record updates to verify physical location of livestock, if necessary.
- Contract grower agreements, if applicable.

Supporting eligibility forms (CCC-901: Farm Operating Plan, CCC-902: Member Information for Legal Entities, AD-1026: Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Certification, and FSA-510: Exemption to the \$125,000 payment limit if seeking higher limits) must be on file by November 2, 2026. Producers impacted in both 2023 and 2024 must apply separately for each year.

This structure ensures that those who bore the costs of buying extra feed are documented and compensated, even when the disaster event was outside of LFP’s scope.

Payment Calculation

Payments are built on the same animal unit (AU) framework as LFP. One base AU is defined as a mature 1,000-pound cow with or without a calf. Conversion rates adjust feed costs for other livestock types, such as 2.6 AUs for a dairy cow or 0.25 AUs for sheep or goats.
(See Figure 2)

USDA calculates ELRP-FW payments by multiplying the number of eligible livestock by the AU conversion rate, then by the relevant monthly feed cost, then by the disaster factor (three months for floods, one month for wildfire), applying the fixed 60% rate and finally applying a national payment factor if demand exceeds the \$940 million available (to be determined).
(See Figure 3)

For example, a rancher with 250 beef cows in Alleghany County, North Carolina, directly impacted by Hurricane Helene’s flooding in 2024 would start with USDA’s monthly feed cost of \$52.56 per AU. Three months equals \$157.68, and applying the 60% rate produces \$94.62 per head. Across 250 cows, the gross payment equals \$23,655, before additional factoring. Likewise, a dairy farmer with 500 dairy cows in Sonoma County, California, directly impacted by atmospheric river flooding in 2023 would start with USDA’s monthly feed cost of \$58.12 times 2.6 AU for dairy cows (\$151.12). Three months equals \$453.36, and applying the 60% rate produces \$272.01 per head. Across

Standard Animal Unit Conversion Used for LFP & ELRP Programs	
Animal Type	Animal Unit Equivalency
Dairy Cow or Bull	2.60
Beef, Buffalo or Beefalo Adult Cow or Bull	1.00
Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle, Buffalo or Beefalo 500 lbs. or more	0.75
Equine	0.74
Ostrich	0.55
Elk	0.54
Emu	0.51
Dairy Cattle, Beef Cattle, Buffalo or Beefalo less than 500 lbs.	0.50
Llama	0.36
Deer	0.25
Sheep or Goats	0.25
Reindeer	0.22
Alpaca	0.22

Figure 2

Example of FSA Established Monthly Feed Costs for Adult Beef & Dairy Cattle and ELRP				
FW Payment Rate (before any additional factoring)				
Program Year	Livestock Type (AU)	Monthly LFP Feed Cost	ELRP FW Wildfire Payment Rate (60% of 1 Month)	ELRP FW Flood Payment Rate (60% of 3 Months)
2023	Beef Cow (1 AU)	\$58.12	\$34.87	\$104.61
2023	Dairy Cow (2.6 AU)	\$151.12	\$90.67	\$272.01
2024	Beef Cow (1 AU)	\$52.56	\$31.54	\$94.62
2024	Dairy Cow (2.6 AU)	\$136.66	\$82.00	\$246.00

Figure 3

Gross ELRP 2024 FW (Flood) Payment Calculation Example			
Livestock Kind	Number of Livestock in Inventory at Beginning of Disaster Event	x ELRP 2024 FW (Flood) Payment Rate	Gross ELRP 2024 FW payment before factoring
Beef Cattle, Adult Cows and Bulls	250	\$94.62	\$23,655.00
Dairy Cows	500	\$272.00	\$136,000.00*
* \$136,000 exceeds the \$125,000 payment limit unless at least 75% of AGI is from farming, ranching, or forestry.			

Figure 4

500 cows the gross payment equals \$136,000 before any additional factoring.

ELRP-FW applies the same payment limitation structure as the drought/federal wildfire track of ELRP. For each program year (2023 and 2024), total assistance across both ELRP components is capped at \$125,000 per producer. Producers who derive at least 75% of their adjusted gross income from farming, ranching or forestry may qualify for a higher cap of \$250,000, provided they submit Form FSA-510 with supporting documentation. So, unless this dairy farmer certifies that at least 75% of their adjusted gross income comes from farming, their payment would be capped at the standard \$125,000 limit once factoring is applied.
(See Figure 4)

This formula ensures that payments are tied to standardized feed cost benchmarks rather than requiring producers to reconstruct receipts months or years after the event. It is also intended to balance fairness across regions, livestock types and disaster types.

Looking Ahead

FSA projects potential program demand of \$2.45 billion, nearly three times the available funds (about \$1.01 billion for 2023 floods, \$1.08 billion for 2024 floods,

\$17 million for 2023 wildfires, and \$120 million for 2024 wildfires). With such a gap, factoring is inevitable. USDA expects most payments to be issued in fiscal year 2026, after the close of the application window and the establishment of a national payment factor.

While ELRP-FW will not make producers whole, it represents a meaningful step toward stabilizing ranches and dair-

ies hit hardest by floods and non-federal wildfires. By covering a share of supplemental feed costs, the single largest expense category for most operations during a disaster, the program offers critical breathing room. For ranchers staring at destroyed hay reserves, impassable roads or scorched pastures, that bridge can mean the difference between rebuilding and liquidation. ■



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Darlene & Joseph Reddick, Douglas; Shawna Cowden, Douglas; Chase Garretson, Douglas

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NEW MEMBERS ... Page 11



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Karen Guidice (REG), Chugwater

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Jeffrey & Lynda Green (REG), Dayton; Patricia Saunders, Sheridan; Sharon & Greg Kobold, Big Horn; Single Family Revocable Living Trust (REG), Sheridan; Graham Hurley, Sheridan; Jeff Hinton, Sheridan; Esther & Esther Endecott, Riverton; Van Wright, Sheridan; Jennifer Hardesty, Dayton; James Doubet (REG), Ranchester; Jack Scruggs, Sheridan; Bruce Sullivan, Sheridan; Justine & Robert Adney, Dayton; Lance Hodgson, Sheridan; Deborah Paterakis, Sheridan; Caitlin &

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SUBLETTE

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Snowden, Pinedale; Barbara & Dan Henry, Big Piney; GENE PEARSON/PEARSON LIVESTOCK LLC (REG), Pinedale; William IV, Bondurant

SWEETWATER

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TETON

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UINTA

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WASHAKIE

Jarrold Glanz (REG), Worland

WESTON

Pete MacFarland/McFarland Land And Livestock LLC (REG), Newcastle; Michael Fowler, Newcastle; George Miles, Newcastle; Josh Drost, Newcastle ■

Farm Bureau applauds proposed rescission of misguided land rule

FROM AFBF

American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall commented recently on a Bureau of Land Management proposal to rescind the 2024 Conservation and Landscape Health Rule which threatened the future of ranching in the U.S. by destabilizing a decades-old tradition of grazing on federal lands.

“Farm Bureau applauds the administration and Secretary Burgum for recognizing that the 2024 Conservation and Landscape Health Rule would do the opposite of its stated goal by limiting ranchers’ efforts in the stewardship of public lands. Farmers and ranchers care for the resources they’ve been entrusted with, and grazing on public lands helps clear

brush that can fuel wildfires, controls invasive species and brings overall health benefits to the land.

“AFBF challenged the Biden administration in court because the rule exceeds the Bureau of Land Management’s authority and would have unfairly impact-

ed America’s ranchers by limiting their ability to deliver safe and affordable protein to America’s families. We appreciate the current administration for hearing our concerns, and we now urge them to move forward quickly to rescind this misguided rule.” ■

Mexico confirms case of new world screwworm in Nuevo Leon

FROM USDA

On September 21, Mexico’s National Service of Agro-Alimentary Health, Safety, and Quality (SENASICA) confirmed a new case of New World screwworm (NWS) in Sabinas Hidalgo, located in the state of Nuevo León, less than 70 miles from the U.S.-Mexico border.

This is now the northernmost detection of NWS during this outbreak, and the one most threatening to the American cattle and livestock industry. Sabinas Hidalgo is located near the major highway from Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, to Laredo, Texas, which is one of the most heavily trafficked commercial thoroughfares in the world.

“Protecting the United States from NWS is non-negotiable and a top priority of the Trump Administration,” said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. “This is a national security priority. We have given Mexico every opportunity and every resource necessary to counter NWS since announcing the NWS Bold Plan in June 2025. Nevertheless, American ranchers and families should know that we will not rely on Mexico to defend our industry, our food supply, or our way of life. We are firmly executing our five-pronged plan and will take decisive action to protect our borders, even in the absence of cooperation. Furthermore, we will pursue aggressive measures against anyone who harms American livestock.”

The previous northernmost detection was reported on July 9, 2025, in Veracruz, approximately 370 miles farther south. Preliminary reports from SENASICA indicate that the affected animal—an 8-month-old cow—had recently been moved to a certified feedlot in Nuevo León from a region in southern Mexico with known active NWS cases. The potential link to animal movement underscores the non-negotiable need for Mexico to fully implement and comply with the U.S.–Mexico Joint Action Plan for NWS in Mexico.

Currently, U.S. ports remain closed to imports of cattle, bison, and horses from Mexico.

Since July, USDA alongside Mexico, has been actively monitoring nearly 8,000 traps across Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. To date, more than 13,000 screening samples have been submitted, with no NWS flies detected. USDA is analyzing all new information related to the recent case in Nuevo León and will pursue all options to release sterile flies in this region as necessary.

In addition, USDA will soon release a significant plan to help rebuild the American cattle supply, incentivizing our great ranchers, and driving a full-scale revitalization of the American beef industry. This is only the beginning with many more announcements coming this week as USDA restores American strength, protects food security, and supports America’s ranchers and farmers. ■



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WyFB engages with members at the Wyoming State Fair

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation had a strong presence at the 2025 Wyoming State Fair, celebrating the best of Wyoming agriculture and connecting with members from across the state.

One highlight of the week was the Agriculture Hall of Fame picnic, where Farm Bureau members joined in recognizing outstanding leaders in agriculture. The event also featured remarks from state leaders and members of Wyoming's congressional delegation.

Each year, WyFB is proud to sponsor the Champion Breeding Sheep and Champion Breeding

Beef awards. Supporting youth exhibitors and showcasing the quality of Wyoming livestock reflects Farm Bureau's ongoing commitment to the future of agriculture.

In addition to events, the fair provided an opportunity for WyFB to visit with members at the organization's booth. "It was great to see so many of our members throughout the week," said WyFB Executive Vice President Kerin Clark. "The fair is a wonderful way to celebrate our industry while strengthening connections with the people who make agriculture possible."



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TRUE BLUE.

ANNUAL MEETING... From Page 1

- These committees include:
- Natural and Environmental Resources (NER)
 - State Government Affairs (SGA)
 - Agriculture Tax
 - General Issues

Each committee includes one representative per county, as well as the state chair and vice-chair. This process is a key part of how member input becomes organizational direction.

Trivia Night and Social

On Thursday evening at 7 p.m., members can gather for a social hour followed by Trivia Night at the Railyard in Gillette. Trivia will be hosted by Northern Ag Network's Andy Schwab. This event is open to all and offers a great opportunity to relax and socialize.

Annual Meeting Business Sessions

The core of the Annual Meeting takes place on Friday, Nov. 14, beginning with a county presidents and vice presidents

meeting. At 8:30 a.m., the general and business sessions begin with reports from WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and Executive Vice President Kerin Clark.

Voting delegates will then take up the business of shaping the organization's policy for the coming year. These sessions turn local concerns into statewide action—and uphold the grassroots strength of the Federation.

Guest speakers from the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) will include Austin Large, Senior Director of Membership & Organization Development, who will share strategies for strengthening member engagement, and Daniel Munch, Economist, who will provide insights on the national agricultural outlook.

Friday Evening Banquet and Awards

Friday evening's Awards Banquet will recognize this year's recipients of the Distinguished Service Award and the Farm Bureau Leadership Award. The banquet concludes with live entertainment and a chance to celebrate the strength of Wyoming agriculture together.

Saturday Final Sessions

The meeting wraps up on Saturday, Nov. 15 with continued resolutions discussion, elections, and a report from the WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Committee.

Foundation Auction

The WyFB Foundation will host its annual live and silent auction during the Friday evening banquet. All proceeds support agricultural education, leadership development, and service efforts across the state. Members and counties are encouraged to donate auction items.

"Harvest for All" Fundraiser

The WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Committee will conduct their 22nd annual "Harvest for All" fund drive during the meeting. Monetary donations only will be accepted and will benefit the Food Bank of Wyoming. Donations can be made at the registration desk.

YF&R members will also be selling playing card raffle tickets, offering another way to support the fundraiser—and win great prizes.

Hotel Reservations

A hotel block was secured at Candlewood Suites (904 Country Club Rd, \$89/night); however, the Sept. 12 deadline has passed and reservations there are now subject to availability. An additional block is available at Home2 Suites (1120 E Boxelder Rd) for \$124/night with a deadline of Oct. 13, 2025. Call 307-257-7040 to make reservations. To receive the group discount, reservations must be made by phone and reference "Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation."

Registration

Pre-registration is requested by October 24, 2025. To register, contact Brooke Settlemeyer at bsettlemeyer@wyfb.org or 307-721-7723. You can also connect with your county Farm Bureau president for assistance.

The full meeting agenda will be published in the November 2025 issue of Wyoming Agriculture and posted at www.wyfb.org as the event approaches. ■

FEDERAL LANDS... From Page 3

Benefits of grazing on public lands include thriving rangelands, reducing vegetation that can fuel wildland fires, and reduced input costs for farmers and ranchers.

Federal lands also play a role in supporting energy production across the United States. New Mexico is the largest producer of crude oil and natural gas on federal lands with Wyoming as a close second. Nationally, these lands account

for about a quarter of the oil, natural gas and coal production in the U.S.

People from all corners of the world are drawn to the spirit and lifestyle of the American west.

Whether the attraction is seeing an elk in Yellowstone National Park or hiking to see cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, western federal lands are known for the opportunities they offer to recreation enthusiasts. Outdoor recreation like hiking, fishing, hunting, rock climbing and mountain

biking are all drivers for the states' economies. On the high end, we can observe outdoor recreation accounting for 4.1% and 4.6% of gross domestic product in Wyoming and Montana, respectively. With this growing pastime, more people are traveling west to experience the great outdoors firsthand.

It is clear that federal lands, which are woven into the daily lives of millions of Americans, are a special characteristic of the western U.S. By wisely

managing them, we preserve our natural resources, maximize revenue, bring new sources of income into local economies and produce a substantial amount of fuel and food for our nation and the world. ■

Lilly Stewart is a summer 2025 intern in the American Farm Bureau Federation's Communications and Executive departments. She is a rising senior in agricultural business at the University of Wyoming.



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County meetings anchor the grassroots process

Across Wyoming, county Farm Bureau Federations have been gathering this fall to conduct annual business, hear reports, and set policy through grassroots resolutions. From honoring local members to passing policy ideas on state and national issues, the meetings highlight the strength of Farm Bureau's county-to-county involvement.

At their annual meetings, members recognized the contributions of fellow producers, supported local students through scholarships, and heard from speakers on timely topics affecting agriculture. Just as importantly, members discussed and adopted policy proposals to bring forward for consideration at the state level.

While the specific issues vary from county to county, the process remains the same: neighbors coming together, raising concerns, and deciding on policy directions that represent the voice of grassroots agriculture. These county meetings continue a tradition that has guided Farm Bureau for more than a century — ensuring that the policies of today are rooted in the experiences of local farmers and ranchers. ■



Speaker of the Wyoming House of Representatives Chip Nieman served as a guest speaker for the Weston County Annual Meeting. WYFB PHOTO



Members of the Johnson County Farm Bureau Federation board discuss resolutions to bring to the upcoming northeast district meeting. WYFB PHOTO



Executive Vice President Kerin Clark addresses members of the Carbon County Ranch and Farm Bureau. WYFB PHOTO



Weston County President Tucker Hamilton addresses members and guests. WYFB PHOTO

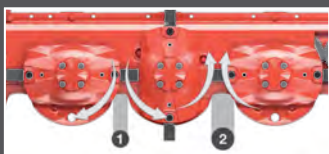


Sheridan County President Andy Walker visits with Sheridan College collegiate members prior to the county annual meeting. WYFB PHOTO

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Sheridan College Collegiate Farm Bureau marks first year of growth and opportunity

BY CALLIE HANSON

One year ago, a small group of students at Sheridan College decided to take on something new. With energy, ambition, and a deep love of agriculture, they formed the Sheridan College Collegiate Farm Bureau chapter. What began with just a handful of students has grown into a club that is shaping leaders, creating opportunities, and making a lasting impact on campus and beyond.

For co-founders and officers Becka Nutting and Megan Sagner, the first year has been nothing short of extraordinary.

"I started the team in 2024 after competing in the 2023 Wyoming Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet," Nutting explained. "I came back with these big dreams of starting a club and getting it off the ground. Looking back now, it's exploded. I would have never thought a year ago we'd have a club like this."

Getting Started

Nutting, a business and animal science major from Montana, served as the club's first president. Sagner, an animal science, biology, and farrier science major, took on the secretary role before becoming president this fall. Together with their officer team, they worked to build the foundation of a chapter that quickly became known for its enthusiasm and commitment.

Their first major activity was a fundraiser close to home. The students helped with Sheridan College's annual "pint night," where the hops grown by agriculture students are brewed into a specialty beer called Generals Pale Ale. "That was our first thing," Nutting said. "It brought in quite a bit of money for the department and gave us a place to start."

SHERIDAN COLLEGE ... Page 15

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