By Kerin Clark

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Skyler Ellis is a 3rd generation participant at the WyFB Young Farmer & Rancher Conference! His grandparents, Justin and Kristi Ellis, were founding WyFB YF&R Committee Members back in 2002! Take his smile as proof...we have a lot of fun while advocating for agriculture through Farm Bureau! Kerin Clark photo.

2021 Wyoming Legislative Session

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A look at the timeline

The 2021 Wyoming Legislative Session convened (virtually and in-person) on January 12 for one day with the swearing in of new legislators and assignments of bills to committees. The session then adjourned until January 27. During adjournment three days of virtual committee meetings were held from January 19-21.

When the session reconvenes on January 27th the legislature will meet virtually via Zoom for eight days. Following a planned Feb. 5th adjournment, the session is scheduled to reconvene on March 1 and will be held in person if possible. The scheduled final adjournment date is April 2.

Tax and fee increase proposals

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Find a Diamond, Be a Diamond

--2021 Strengthening Our Roots WyFB YF&R Conference

By Kerin Clark

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The Voice of Agriculture in Washington

By Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau Federation President

As our nation’s new leaders were sworn in January 20th and the 117th Congress is underway, they will need to hit the ground running to build on the work of strengthening U.S. agriculture. The American Farm Bureau stands ready to work with all our leaders on the pressing issues facing our farms, ranches and rural communities. Work on the farm never stops, and neither does Farm Bureau’s advocacy work in Washington.

What role should the government play in keeping people safe?

By Ken Hamilton, WyFB Executive Vice President

As people began settling in larger and larger communities the concept of safety was expanded. Those expansions have included issues like standards for building houses, requirements for government to provide clean water to its citizens, and after automobiles became ubiquitous came the necessity for speed limits and driver qualifications. Volunteer fire departments gave way to full time fire departments and traffic laws were established which, in the United States at least, required vehicles to not run over pedestrians.

The concept of what role government should play in keeping people safe is one that continues to evolve with the times.

Calm is contagious: AFBF 2021

By Todd Fornstrom, WyFB President

“Calm is contagious”--simple words from former Navy Seal Commander Rorke Denver. These are valuable words of wisdom that we can count on to keep our businesses running and our food supply secure. Federal agencies and congressional committees work closely with will see a shift in leadership, but we can expect to see some familiar faces in those offices.

Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) spoke at this year’s American Farm Bureau convention.

His message should resonate with farmers and ranchers. As a group of Americans that deal and even plan for natural disasters and hard times, keeping one’s head is one of the basic necessities of daily life. When the rain comes relentlessly during spring planting farmers gear up and wait for the opportunity to get in that muddy field and plant those seeds sometimes only to have the rain quit for a time and their crop dry up. Ranchers work tirelessly through those frozen nights to care for their livestock during calving season.

This simple, straightforward tidbit is just one nugget of advice available for consumption from this year’s American Farm Bureau Virtual Convention.

Calendar of Events

January
27 ........Wyoming Legislature Reconvenes virtually via Zoom for eight days

March
1 ..........WyFB scholarship application deadline
1 ..........Wyoming Legislature Reconvenes (tentatively in person)
1-6 ......Wyoming Agricultural Literacy Week
11-13 ..AFBF Fusion/YF&R Virtual Conference
23 ......National Agriculture Day

April
2 ........... “Ag Books for Kids” county contest deadline
2 ..........Wyoming 2021 General Session Adjourns
20 ...... “Ag Books for Kids” district contest deadline

Visit wyfb.org for calendar updates
WyFB Welcomes Intern Morgan Spiro

By Kerin Clark

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) welcomes Morgan Spiro as an intern. She is a sophomore at the University of Wyoming (UW) studying Communications.

At UW, she is involved as an officer in the Collegiate Farm Bureau. Spiro has also served as the WyFB annual meeting parliamentarian the last two years. She is a Panhellenic Delegate (representative on the College Panhellenic Council) for her sorority Kappa Kappa Gamma.

Spiro shares she is passionate about advocating for agriculture because it is the one thing that affects every person, every day.

“Ever since I was young, I have been surrounded by agriculture. My dad, a seasoned veterinarian, would pack me and my sister up for every emergency call and routine pre-check,” Spiro explained. “Sure, I was raised in town, but I grew up somewhere between the dairies, peaches, and horse ranches.”

“Every year, the Kings County Farm Bureau Federation would hold ‘Farm Day’ for 3rd graders all over the county,” she continued. “I remember my own Farm Day, and even still have the t-shirt somewhere! When I was finally old enough to present my own livestock projects, I remember the pure joy on the kid’s faces while I told them about the history of angus cattle and let them pet my old cow’s pregnant belly.”

According to Spiro, she is looking forward to learning about the policies that affect Wyoming farmers and ranchers and how the Farm Bureau gets involved to directly stimulate change.

“Working with the Farm Bureau opens up those opportunities to educate and inform the public, while also serving the providers of food, fiber, fuel, and flora who make our world spin every single day,” Spiro stated. “I absolutely love Wyoming, being outside, and getting involved with the community in Laramie and the state.”

“If there is one thing I have learned about Wyoming in my short time here, it’s that the people have real grit,” she said. “They like to see things get done and get them done well. Being a transplant to this beautiful state, I hope to have some of that grit and integrity rub off on me in all of the best ways. I am confident I will have the opportunity to foster personal and professional connections, applicable skills, and personal growth that will last a lifetime.”

Keeping people safe

From page 2

...ment should play in keeping people safe has expanded from those of even 50 years ago. Laws and regulations have been adopted which utilize the concept of safety as the fundamental reason for the law or regulation.

Pesticide regulations were established for a person’s safety. Automobile standards have been developed which added costly automobile features because of safety. Most farmers and ranchers have vehicles sans padded dashboards and fuel tanks nestled behind the seats which were common 50 years ago. Now dashboards are made of softer materials, seat belts are required and cars utilizing air bag technology are standard.

In Wyoming there have been attempts to make it a primary offense for drivers to not wear a seatbelt. In any debate there are studies and statistics which seatbelt proponents say show the need for such a law. Opponents of such laws will agree that seatbelts may indeed provide protection, but they also argue that instituting such a law is government overreach. A few years ago, the Wyoming Legislature adopted a law making it illegal to text and drive and some municipalities have adopted ordinances banning cell phones while driving.

These arguments are not new, nor will they go away, but one theme seems to be occurring with these laws and regulations. As society requires a government entity to move into the protection role, citizens seem to reduce their ability, or need, to think for themselves.

We have warning labels on ladders telling us to be careful. We have warning labels on coffee telling us it’s hot. Meanwhile we have people who have stopped recognizing dangers if they don’t see some type of warning sign.

What the long-term implication will be seems to be a society which stops thinking for themselves and defaults that process to some agency. In a downward spiral, people will do dumb things which will then result in another rule or regulation, which will then result in people using less common sense. Anytime we seek to pass a law or a regulation to protect someone from a self-evident ill we risk creating more and more people who stop thinking for themselves.

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Ag Books for Kids important in sharing agriculture

By Raenell Taylor, WyFB YF&R Committee Member and Crook County Rancher

Believe it or not, but even in a strong agriculture state, like Wyoming, there are still a lot of children who have never even heard of the word “agriculture” before. Because this is the case, the importance of educating children at an early age about agriculture, needs to be a top priority. These children are our future, the future of agriculture. It’s vital that they know and understand what their future would be like without agriculture. One of the best ways for us to share this knowledge with them, is to expose them to interesting agriculturally related books. The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Ag Books for Kids program is designed to place agriculturally related books into elementary schools throughout Wyoming. The purpose is to help educate these Kindergarten through 5th grade students about different aspects within the agricultural world.

Not only is our goal to educate the children about agriculture, but to also bring up conversation between the students and their parents about agriculture when they get home from school. What is the most common question a parent asks their children when they get home from school? “What did you learn at school today?”

Nine times out of ten, when a guest speaker comes into the classroom, it’s brought up in conversation/advertisement that markets something the students can do when they get home from school. What is your child learning about agriculture? Kindergarten and 1st grade students get to creatively color a coloring page that corresponds with something about agriculture from the book. Second and 3rd grade students get to draw and color a picture of their favorite thing they learned about agriculture from the book. Fourth and 5th grade students get to create an advertisement that markets something they learned about agriculture from reading the book.

What we learn from these contests about what the children learn about agriculture or how they interpreted things in agriculture is pretty interesting. How they color a cow; brown cow, black cow, or a black and white cow, sometimes even a colorful cow. Were they more interested in the livestock side or the implement side of agriculture, by drawing a picture focused more on animals or tractors. These contests give us insight to what interests them or how they are interpreting agriculture which helps make this fun for all.

To round out the Ag Books for Kids program, we also integrate an activity that can further connect the students to agriculture. This year’s activity is a livestock ear tag identification activity, allowing the students to learn why and how we tag our livestock to identify who they are and their parents.

In a normal year, county Farm Bureau leaders go into the elementary classrooms and present the book, and present the activity and contests associated with the respective grades. However, with COVID presenting many challenges of getting into some schools, we have put together a virtual book reading option this year. Any Kindergarten through 5th grade class in Wyoming can access our virtual presentation by going to www.wyfb.org/education/ag-books-for-kids/

The contest entries deadline is April 2, 2021. Please encourage any elementary teachers you know to utilize this program in their classroom to help educate our future in agriculture because Wyoming Needs Agriculture.

Raenell Taylor and her husband Josh are members of the Crook County Farm Bureau Federation. They ranch near Hulett, Wy on her family’s ranch with their two boys. She is passionate about sharing agriculture to children because they are the future of agriculture.
WyFB YF&R Conference From page 1

the work the organization does to advocate for agriculture.

South Dakota cattle rancher and BEEF Daily blogger Amanda Radke delivered a virtual keynote presentation on “Shifting our Mindset and Shaping New Opportunities.” Radke shared a message of optimism and thoughts on shifting our mindsets during the face of uncertainties and the tasks of daily life.

“We need to learn to shift our mindset when something derails us and find a way to make lemonade out of lemons,” Radke said. Radke encouraged the audience to stay focused on family and agriculture goals.

Radke’s second virtual presentation focused on “Agriculture Advocacy.”

“Consumers ultimately decide what they will buy, our legislators ultimately decide what measures they might pass and the media is telling our stories and building a narrative that doesn’t represent us in agriculture,” Radke said. “So, we see this narrative building about who we are in agriculture and there are so few of us still involved directly in agriculture. We wear a lot of hats in agriculture and that last hat we must wear to alleviate whatever concern the person has with agriculture and provide them with counter information to help them feel more confident in our product and us as farmers and ranchers.”

Radke challenged everyone to wear an agriculture advocacy hat in some shape. You may be able to help one person understand farming and ranching just a little better. You may be a diamond in someone’s day by sharing what you do in agriculture.

So, speaking of those diamonds, it was the next speaker that helped us all sit back, relax, laugh and cry a little while she shared her view of the joys and trials of ranching. Peggy DesEnfants revealed how her marriage to a rancher (43 years and counting) fine-tuned her wisdom and sense of humor. Her personality and innate ability to tell a story had the audience laughing and crying at the same time. Peggy’s willingness to share a time in her life when she couldn’t see the joy in everyday ranch and family life set the stage for us all to see the challenges we are facing as diamonds in our lives.

“Hunt for diamonds,” Peggy said. “Your situation might still be the same but when you see diamonds your life will change.”

According to Peggy, one day she realized that rather than seeing snow, work, misery and the hardships across the prairie she was supposed to look at things differently and that is when she saw what she calls “Diamonds on the Prairie.” The glistening of the snow was the vivid illustration she needed to live a joy filled life.

“We need to find some diamonds,” Peggy continued. “What does a diamond look like? It could be finding something to laugh about in your day or maybe wrap your crop in diamonds and start looking for diamonds in everything you do.”

In addition to looking for diamonds, Peggy challenged us to be the diamond that others may be looking to find.

“The world needs diamond hunters, and my hope is it can start with you and me,” she concluded. “People need hope and so let’s find diamonds and let’s be diamonds.”

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Director, Congressional Relations, Scott Bennett, spoke virtually about cell-based protein and other livestock issues. Bennett shared AFBF’s perspective on cell-based protein and the work he does as an AFBF lobbyist. Bennett explained that while cell-based protein is not available for public consumption yet, AFBF has worked to ensure the United States Department of Agriculture has jurisdiction in the inspection process in order to maintain the same standards as meat.

According to Bennett, he feels this product is a long way from reaching the mainstream consumer. He offered this advice on what he would tell a consumer if they thought they were going to consume a cell-based protein for a social cause. “There is nothing more sustainable, efficient and safe as our conventional meat production here in the United States,” Bennett stated. “For example, the cattle in Wyoming are grazing land that can’t be used for anything else.”

Bennett stated it is natural for people to worry about something. “Before this pandemic most people didn’t have something to worry about, so they worried about how the beef was raised or if hormones were added to chicken,” Bennett explained. “When the pandemic came, those words hit the back burner and the worry became just needing to get something in the freezer/fridge to feed their families and that is when they ran back to the meat case.”

Speaking of meat, Saturday morning’s panel discussed meat processing and marketing with WyFB President Todd Fornstrom and Henderson Meat Processing owners Logan and Cassie Watson-Wilson. The panelists discussed the future of the meat industry, how to improve processing and marketing of the industry, and how to increase the number of consumers eating meat.

The WyFB YF&R Conference was a virtual event held on February 18, 2021, and featured keynote speakers, panel discussions, and networking opportunities for young farmers and ranchers. The event was organized by the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation’s Young Farmer and Rancher Committee, and was open to all young farmers and ranchers in the state. The event aimed to provide young farmers and ranchers with resources, tools, and information to help them succeed in the agriculture industry.

Northern Ag Network’s Colter Brown interviews WyFB YF&R Committee Member Lane Hageman during the conference. Kerin Clark photo.
The Voice of Agriculture

From page 2

Mich.), previous chair and ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, will hold the gavel again, and Sen. John Boozman (R-Ark.) will serve as the ranking member. Both have worked with AFBF over the years, and we’re eager to build on those relationships. On the House side, new chair—and a fellow Georgian—Rep. David Scott (D-Ga.), and ranking member, Rep. Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-Pa.), are no strangers to Farm Bureau. These leaders have worked closely with their state Farm Bureaus in looking out for the needs of farmers and ranchers back home and are ready to bring that know-how to benefit all of American agriculture.

Over at USDA, Tom Vilsack has been nominated to return as Secretary of Agriculture, and we are confident he will be ready to lead from day one. After leading USDA for 8 years, Mr. Vilsack brings a deep knowledge of all the ins and outs of running a federal agency and a solid working relationship with Farm Bureau and the Washington ag community.

The American Farm Bureau has a long history of taking a seat at the table on the top issues facing our farms and ranches. If it impacts your farm, we have your back here in Washington. From addressing farm workforce shortages through immigration reform to expanding markets with free trade agreements, your American Farm Bureau team is ready to build on the progress we’ve made and continue to take agriculture forward in the 21st century.

We know your farms, ranches and our rural economy depend on a strong infrastructure. Not only that, it’s a matter of national security. We cannot get our products to market without a reliable system of roads, bridges, railways and waterways. Even with many folks remaining home this past year, these rural routes have kept humming as we continue to move products from the farm to keep our food supply secure.

In these days where so many services, events and businesses have gone virtual, infrastructure funding must also include broadband. If the digital divide wasn’t clear before the pandemic, there’s no denying it over these last 10 months. Broadband isn’t a luxury, it’s a necessity to get essential services like healthcare and education and to help customers, colleagues, friends and family stay connected. Yet, 25% of rural Americans are still without reliable access to broadband.

While I know we’d all love to have this pandemic in the rearview mirror, we’re not there yet, but I am praying the day comes soon. We are seeing glimmers of hope with not one, but two, vaccines available. That is nothing short of a miracle and a reminder of the great things our nation can accomplish when we work together. It will continue to take all of us working together to ensure we have the safety equipment and resources we need to continue to protect our employees and families in the days ahead. And we must prioritize getting the vaccine to those on the frontlines of our farms and across the food supply chain.

At the American Farm Bureau Virtual Convention in January, we focused on how we are Stronger Together. I hope that will continue to be the theme not only for our Farm Bureau family and across agriculture, but for our nation. It’s time for us to put partisanship aside and move forward together as Americans.

Our nation’s leaders finish their oath of office with the words, “So help me God.” May we echo that prayer, and work with our leaders to press on together in the strength God provides.

What partners with the United States Meat Export Federation and Japanese influencers to host live cooking seminars that reach over 50,000 Japanese consumers?

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increases funding to promote diverse farmland ownership.

Delegates updated labor policy, emphasizing the importance of reforming the H-2A program by expanding the program to provide visa workers for both seasonal and year-round employment. An expanded program would address workforce shortages and extend the program to operations that do not currently qualify to employ guest workers, like dairy farms.

The Holcomb plant fire and the COVID-19 pandemic caused meat prices to skyrocket while the price paid to farmers dropped. AFBF delegates voted to provide stability in markets by supporting efforts to increase negotiated sales in fed cattle markets. Delegates also called for increased transparency in livestock pricing.

Milk price volatility was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in financial damage to dairy farmers in excess of $2.5 billion. Delegates updated dairy policy to call for re-examining the 2018 farm bill’s modification to the milk price formula, improving equity in USDA’s Federal Milk Marketing Order revenue sharing pools, and reaffirmed their support for allowing dairy farmers the opportunity to cast an individual and confidential ballot during milk order referendums.

There are new policies on crop insurance. Delegates called on the Risk Management Agency to improve hurricane protection coverage, including but not limited to, providing protection against both hurricane-force winds and excessive precipitation. Delegates also supported modifying specialty crop insurance to minimize food waste.

Beyond policy changes, delegates also elected members to serve on the AFBF board of directors and national program committees.

Fourteen state Farm Bureau presidents were re-elected to two-year terms to represent their regions on the AFBF board of directors and five were elected to the board for the first time.

**Midwest Region**
- Richard Felts, Kansas
- Rich Guebert Jr., Illinois
- Craig Hill, Iowa
- Kevin Krentz,* Wisconsin
- Randy Kron, Indiana
- Mark McHargue,* Nebraska
- Kevin Paap, Minnesota

**Northeast Region**
- David Fisher, New York
- Joseph Tisbert,* Vermont

**Southern Region**
- Jeff Aiken, Tennessee
- Russell Boening, Texas
- Shawn Harding, North Carolina
- Jim Harper, Louisiana
- Tom McCall,* Georgia
- Mike McCormick, Mississippi
- Rodd Moesel, Oklahoma

**Western Region**
- Todd Fornstrom, Wyoming
- Jamie Johansson,* California
- Stefanie Smallhouse, Arizona

*Denotes state Farm Bureau president elected to the board for the first time.

AFBF thanks the more than 50 speakers and 8,200 attendees who helped make the 2021 Virtual Convention such a success. Registered attendees may view workshops and sessions on-demand on the convention website for the next 90 days. For those who did not attend the convention, select sessions and workshops can be found on the AFBF webpage.

Planning for the American Farm Bureau’s 2022 Annual Convention and Trade Show has already begun. Mark your calendar to meet us January 7-12, 2022, in Atlanta, Georgia.

2021 Wyoming Legislative Session

From page 1

tax increases or fee increase bills,” said Brett Moline, WyFB Director of Public and Governmental Affairs. “We (Wyoming) are so reliant on the mineral industry that the legislature is looking at other tax revenues, but according to WyFB policy there is not a tax or fee increase we can support.”

“Our members feel the state needs to look at making cuts before we look at increasing any taxes or fees,” he continued.

**Agriculture issues**

Invasive species control and meat packing facilities are two hot issues for agriculture. According to Moline, Farm Bureau will support legislation for additional funds to fight invasive species. “Mudasahed is a concern in Sheridan County right now,” he explained. “The weed can be spread by birds and wildlife so we want to get on it early so we don’t end up with a larger problem across the state.”

Regarding meat packing facilities, Moline explained there might be legislation to support small and mid-size meat processors. “We’re looking at having legislation that will help facilitate getting more meat packing facilities in Wyoming to capitalize on the desire to buy local which is such a hot topic right now,” Moline said. “While we recognize getting the facility up and running is a challenge to address, we also understand that a labor force to work once the facility is open is still a large problem for the packing facilities.”

No WyFB legislative meeting

Due to the virtual schedule and timing, the WyFB Legislative Meeting will not be held in 2021. WyFB will miss meeting with our members in-person during the Legislative session. “We encourage our members to still reach out to your legislators and explain how WyFB establishes policy that the lobbyists adhere to,” Moline concluded. “Legislators hearing from the people they represent is very effective.”

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February 2021
WyFB YF&R Conference

From page 5

Kesly Ellis. Labor, the demand for local beef, facility expansion and many more issues facing the meat processing industry were discussed. The pandemic increased the demand for local meat and thus the demand for processing appointments. The Ellis’ pointed out the additional challenge is determining if this will be the new normal of needing more capacity to process meat or if the demand will return to pre-pandemic where they were busy nine months out of the year rather than 12 months.

Cheryl Schwartzkopf, Converse County Weed and Pest Supervisor, transitioned our focus to taking care of the pastures and meadows livestock utilize. She shared her insight of “Ranching Out Invasive Species” with visuals and tips on how to manage and attack invasive species before they take over your land. The participants were able to ask specific weed questions and get guidance on how to persevere in the fight against invasive species.

Learning more about Farm Bureau’s policy development process and WyFB YF&R opportunities were the focus of the WyFB YF&R Committee led breakout sessions.

The interactive policy development session led by WyFB YF&R State Chair Chelsea Baars found participants picking a topic and learning how to write a resolution and participate in Farm Bureau’s grassroots policy development.

The WyFB YF&R programs session was led by WyFB YF&R Subcommittee Chairs Raenell Taylor and Ariel Guild. Taylor and Guild shared programs like “Ag Books for Kids” and the competitive events such as the discussion meet. A mock Discussion Meet followed the breakout sessions.

The conference concluded with a tour of Back Country Super Cubs where we learned how the planes are built for flying at speeds as low as 20 mph.

Meals, card games and networking breaks provided great opportunities for fellowship with our fellow agriculturalists. As Peggy taught us on the opening day, we looked for and found many diamonds during the conference to take back and apply to our lives as we “Strengthen Our Roots” in agriculture.

Thank you to the YF&R Conference sponsors

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Morgan Spiro photo.

The 2021 WyFB YF&R Committee. Front row (l to r): Aletta Ziehl, Natrona County; Kailey Barlow, Sublette County; Chelsea Baars, Niobrara County; Kelli Hamilton, Park County; Toni Swartz, Campbell County. Back row (l to r): Raenell and Josh Taylor, Crook County; Tucker Hamilton, Weston County; Quade Palm, Carbon County; Lane Hageman, Goshen County; and Caleb and Ariel Guild, Uinta County. Not pictured: Tyler and Elizabeth Foxworthy, Fremont County. Kerin Clark photo.

A group photo at the conclusion of the “Strengthening our Roots” conference. Kerin Clark, WyFB YF&R Coordinator; Tucker Hamilton; Kailey Barlow, WyFB YF&R Conference Sub-Committee Chair; Lane Hageman; Quade Palm; Aletta Ziehl; Kelli Hamilton; Raenell and Josh Taylor; Chelsea Baars; Todd Fornstrom, WyFB President; and Elizabeth Foxworthy. Morgan Spiro photo.

Some of the tour participants look up to the manufacturing deck for a photo by one of the Back Country Super Cubs planes during the conference tour. Kerin Clark photo.
County Farm Bureau Federation Scholarships

- **Albany**: March 31 deadline; One $1,500 scholarship; open to high school seniors and college students; available at county Farm Bureau office; county Extension office; and Rock River and Laramie High Schools. Farm Bureau member children preferred but not a requirement; Ag majors preferred, but not a requirement

- **Big Horn**: April 13 deadline; Up to four $400 scholarships; available to high school seniors or any continuing students working for a degree in an Ag-related area; available at all county High Schools or by contacting Farm Bureau office in Greybull

- **Campbell**: March 1 deadline; Two $2,500 scholarships; available at FB offices, schools and wyfb.org

- **Carbon**: April 15 deadline -- Up to five regular $300 scholarships open to all county seniors who meet requirements; and one member $300 scholarship open to only members children who meet requirements. Applications available at county FB offices, high schools or contact Kyle Berger at 760.8018

- **Converse**: April 1 deadline; Three $1,000 scholarships; open to members’ children for graduating seniors and college students. Available at either county Farm Bureau office; at Douglas and Glenrock High School Guidance offices; and at www.wyfb.org/converse

- **Crook**: March 19 deadline; Three merit-based scholarships of $1500, $1300, and $800 for first, second, and third place respectively. Scholarship applications may be picked up at the Farm Bureau office at 109 N 3rd St, Sundance, Wyoming 82729 and also from the high school counselors or wyfb.org/crook

- **Fremont**: Fremont County Farm Bureau offers one $1,000 scholarship. In order to be eligible, the student must be a Fremont County High School senior whose parents are current paid Farm Bureau members. It is preferred that applicants are entering an Agriculture field. Applications will be reviewed by the Fremont County Farm Bureau Board and a recipient will be chosen. Please submit a letter of application about yourself and your future plans to: Fremont County Farm Bureau Federation-115 North 5th Street East., Riverton, WY 82501. Questions call 544-2296. Deadline June 1st.

- **Goshen**: April 1 deadline; at least one $500 scholarship; open to high school seniors or continuing college students who meet the requirements which include Farm Bureau Federation regular membership by family or individual; preference given to applicants pursuing Ag-related degrees; and new this year, the Chuck Curry Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $500 to be awarded to a continuing college student having completed one or more years who meets the requirements which includes Farm Bureau Federation regular membership by family or individual and demonstrate an agriculture focused career path. Applications available at county FB office and online at wyfb.org/goshen

- **Hot Springs**: April 9 deadline; One $1,500 scholarship; may be divided into multiple scholarships at discretion of board; available to students pursuing ag-related course; preference to Farm Bureau families; available at Hot Springs County Farm Bureau office, at the HSCHS Counselors’ office and from the HSCHS Ag Instructor.

- **Johnson**: April 1 deadline; A minimum of two $500 scholarships; open to children of Farm Bureau members (graduating seniors or college students); available at county FB offices and schools and at www.wyfb.org/johnson

- **Laramie**: Offering 3 scholarships in the amounts of $1,500; $1,000; and $500. Open to graduating seniors whose parents are regular Laramie County Farm Bureau Federation members. The applications are due to the county Farm Bureau by May 1. Applications available at www.wyfb.org/laramie. Additionally, offering continuing education scholarships of $500 throughout the year.

- **Lincoln**: March 5 deadline; Three $500 scholarships; seniors who are children of Farm Bureau members; available at Farm Bureau Insurance and School Counselor Offices

- **Niobrara**: April 1 deadline; Two $500 scholarships; available to children of Niobrara County Farm Bureau Federation members; graduating seniors and college students are eligible; available at the county FB office

- **Park**: April 1 deadline. One $650 scholarship. Must attend a Wyoming College or University; preference will be given to Northwest College. Renewable if grades are kept above 2.5 semester average. Open to any Park County Farm Bureau Federation Member or children of members. Application available at all Park County high schools as well as the financial aid office at NW College and the Powell Farm Bureau office.

- **Platte**: April 1 deadline; Amount varies; available at schools; open to children of Platte County Farm Bureau members who are first year students or continuing education students

- **Sheridan**: March 1 deadline; 2-3 $1,000 scholarships depending upon number of applications; available at county FB offices and schools

- **Sublette**: March 1 deadline. Two $500 scholarships for seniors; one for each high school (Big Piney and Pinedale). Given to children of FB members; preference is given to those seeking agriculture major. Applications available at high schools

- **Sweetwater**: T S Taliaferro Scholarship. March 15 deadline; One $500 scholarship; open to children of Farm Bureau regular members; available at schools as well as the financial aid office at NW College and the Powell Farm Bureau office

- **Uinta**: April 15 deadline; return to either county FB office; One $500 scholarship; available at county FB offices, schools or contact Kristi Ellis at 307.782.7659

- **Washakie**: April 1 deadline; Amount varies, generally three $500 scholarships; FB member children preferred but not a requirement; Ag majors preferred, but not a requirement. Applications available at the high school and the County Farm Bureau office.

- **Weston**: May 1 deadline; Three $750 scholarships; applicant parents or applicant must be current members of Weston County Farm Bureau. Applicant must have graduated in Weston County, hold a High School or equivalent degree, or be in a graduating class at the time of application, or be a resident (6 months or more) of Weston County.

Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship opportunities

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation scholarship deadline is **March 1, 2021**. 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.
Wyoming Classifieds

NOTICE

CLASSIFIED POLICY:
1) Wyoming Farm Bureau members are entitled to free classified advertising in this publication for the purpose of selling items they grow or make themselves, selling used machinery or household items, for posting wanted advertising. Real estate sales not included. Each member family is entitled to two (2) free ads per month, for 3 months, of up to 40 words each. Member ads will be accepted by mail or e-mail after running three months. Ads for which there is payment due will run according to agreement between Wyoming Farm Bureau and the advertiser. Advance payment is preferred for first-time advertisers.

NOTE:
The appearance of any ad in Wyoming Agriculture does not constitute an endorsement or approval of the product or service offered. The advertiser is liable for content of the advertisement and any claims arising therefrom against this publication. The Wyoming Farm Bureau reserves the right to refuse any advertising not considered in keeping with its publication’s standards.

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CONVERSE
Keely & Kyle Haar, Douglas; Tanner Miller, Douglas; Elizabeth Smith, Glenrock

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Antonio Cabrera, Torrington; Brandt Herbst (REG), Torrington; Brandon & Jamie McFarlin, Fort Laramie

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Danny Coryell, Casper; Tara Gunyan, Reliance; Tammy LaFave, Diamondville; Tyler & Allyson Lux, Rock Springs; Stacey & David Neilson, Kemmerer; Kaden Robinson, Afton

NATRONA
Susan Asbell Martin & Richard Martin (REG), Casper; Tina & Russell Barnes, Casper; Kyle Below, Casper; Cassan & Patrick Beverage, Casper; Jim Birkle, Evansville; Daniel Casados, Casper; Patricia Dameron, Casper, Nicole & Van Harris, Casper; Joel Hennings, Casper; Genae & Davian Herbig, Bar Nunn; Holli & Kelsey Knight (REG), Casper; Heather Waterman & Taylor Motensen, Casper; Chastidy Raines, Evansville; Josh Wheeler, Casper

PARK
Kee Bubbnmeyer, Allentown; Katie & West Hernandez, Powell; Christine & Rock Hull, Powell; Lydia & Dave McCracken (REG), Powell; Megan & Tony Rutherford, Cody; Forrest Wichern, Cody

SHERIDAN
Vicky & John Holgerson, Sheridan; Kathy McCarthy & Gary Stewart, Sheridan; Seth Phillips, Sheridan; Susan & Tyson Schilz (REG), Sheridan

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Obituaries

January 2, 1930 ~ December 18, 2020
Funeral liturgy for Glenn Eugene “Gene” Hardy, 90, was held December 23, 2020 at the Saint James Catholic Church in Douglas, Wyoming with Father Lucas Kaziemior Simango as the Celebrant. Interment is in the Douglas Park Cemetery with military honors accorded by Samuel Mares American Legion Post #8 and Wyoming Army National Guard Military Funeral Honors.

Gene Hardy was born in Douglas, Wyoming on Wednesday, February 19, 1930 and passed quietly in Casper, Wyoming at the Wyoming Medical Center on Friday, December 18, 2020 from a short and sudden illness. He was surrounded by his family and supported by all the well wishes of his many friends.

Gene was born to Marion Glenn “Mick” and Grace Virginia (Elbourne) Hardy of Bear Creek, Wyoming in 1930 and spent most of his upbringing on the ranch five miles northeast of Bear Creek or 45 miles northwest of Douglas. He rode his horse four miles to the North Point School, at a neighboring ranch, for the first few years of school before being farmed out for a short time to a family in Douglas, so he could attend school in town. He used to laugh at the fact that he was a little too wild for the family from town!

It wasn’t long before his folks bought a house in town in order for him to further his education. Gene graduated valedictorian of his class and received a full scholarship to play football at the University of Wyoming. However, football and schooling weren’t to be for Gene. A horse wreck and injury inflicted upon his dad kept Gene at the family ranch to keep it going. A stint in the United States Army, serving his time in Germany and then the National Guard was something that Gene shared many memories and stories of. Gene was a fierce patriot and was proud to be an American.

When Gene returned from the Army, he began a seven-year courtship with his future wife, Joy Ann Falkenburg, of Douglas. Joy was from a ranching family herself, south of town, and was at the time nursing in Denver, Colorado. After their marriage, Joy moved to the Hardy Ranch and she and Gene began their life together raising their daughter, Michelle. As with most ranches, there was a generational change and the ranch continued to grow. Gene was truly proud of the family ranch and was known to have what would be considered a reputable herd of cattle and flock of sheep. If there was a livestock sale, you could count on the Hardy Ranch buying the top of the sale. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the ranch and Gene was truly proud of the fact that it had continued to the next generation.

Gene was to get more involved with what was to be his true love, Ag politics. Gene had always been proud of being involved as much as possible with the community such as Jaycees, American Legion, Moose Lodge, Farm Bureau, and local politics. However, when he became involved with Wyoming Stock Growers and Wyoming Wool Growers, he found his true calling. For the rest of his life, Gene was to be an industry leader in the movement of Wyoming Agriculture in all aspects. He became known as a staunch supporter of ranchers, farmers, veterinary medicine, the brand program, and his favorite, the predator program.

Gene served as vice-president of the Wyoming Stock Growers, president of the Wyoming Wool Growers, president of the Wyoming State Animal Damage Management Board, as well as multiple committees and chairmen positions. He served on the Wyoming Board of Agriculture and the Wyoming Livestock Board, serving on many committees within them as well. Gene was voted into the Wyoming Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2012. He was influential as a lobbyist to a great number of politicians that he had met while serving in all these positions and served the Ag community well as a champion for them all.

While serving on the State Predator Board, he and the board fought long and hard against the federal government for the rights of the state of Wyoming to have control of the wolves within the state. To the very last day, he was still on the phone with officials trying to maintain the control that had been so fiercely fought for to acquire.

As a director on the board of the National High School Rodeo Association, Gene could be found at nearly all the high school rodeos within the state along with running the timer in the barrel racing event at the National High School Rodeo finals. He was glad to be helping the kids and was always there for them when needed.

An avid pilot, Gene was always eager to help someone out when they had lost something and needed to find it with an airplane: people, livestock, an occasional dog or just checking the ranch. He was a member of the Flying Farmers and won many trophies at various fly-ins with his great piloting skills. Gene could almost always be found in his plane. He could sit and mesmerize a crowd for hours with some of the hair-raising stories of how he survived with any one of his many airplanes.

As with all folks that grow up and live their entire life in the same area, Gene was a great historian. He could sit at a gathering of any sort and tell the history of the area and keep everyone in the room on the edge of their seat. He could tell you about your grandparents and then their parents as well. He had a great memory and was vivid in his descriptions as the story was told and if you closed your eyes it was as if you were there.

Of all his accomplishments, he was most proud of his family. The fact that one is perfect never crossed his mind as he would fondly reminisce of the people in his life.

He is survived by his daughter, Michelle Musselman and her husband, Shaun and their children, Hardy and Haley. His many nephews, nieces, in-laws, and friends were thought of and talked about regularly.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Joy, on December 23, 2003; father, Mick, on May 12, 1967; and mother, Grace, on September 21, 2003.

He will be sorely missed, as all of the old guard are and the torch will be passed down to the next generation to fill the shoes of the greatest generation. The shoes are big ones to fill and the trek is a long and arduous one to take. But, to respect and honor the generation before, reflections of where we come from is the first order. People leave us far too soon and Gene was no exception to the rule. He will be sorely missed by all of those that he touched.

Gene, God be with you.
A Gene and Joy Hardy Memorial Scholarship Fund has been established at the Converse County Bank, P.O. Box 689, Douglas, Wyoming 82633. Condolences may be sent to the family at www.gormanfh.com
Mark Your Calendar for the 2021 Virtual AFBF FUSION Conference

January 26, 2021--AFBF’s Promotion & Education, Women’s Leadership and Young Farmers & Ranchers committees are planning the first-ever virtual AFBF FUSION Conference, slated for mid-March. This reimagined event, with the theme “Agriculture Converges,” will begin the evening of Thursday, March 11, and conclude the evening of Saturday, March 13. Pre-conference events will include state chair training and the opening rounds of the Collegiate Discussion Meet. Information on how to register and other details will be released in the next few weeks. Check the calendar at wyfb.org as the dates get closer or read about it in the March issue of Wyoming Agriculture.

Century Club Membership Challenge Drawing

In celebration of the Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WyFB) Centennial year, the WyFB Membership Committee held a drawing last November from all Century Club members for 2020. The winner received a piece of WyFB Centennial apparel. Jim Gibbs, of Sheridan County, was the drawing winner.

The Century Club Membership level is for both associate and regular members who wish to increase their level of support to help Farm Bureau conduct its programs and activities. One of the additional benefits is a weekly legislative update about important agriculture issues during the Wyoming Legislature.

Thank you to Mr. Jim Gibbs and all the Century Club members across the state for your additional support for the Federation!

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Century Club Challenge Drawing

A Recipe by Connie Werner

Mandy’s Shepard’s Pie

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small bag frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 can tomato soup
- 5-8 medium potatoes, cubed
- cream or milk
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Brown the ground beef and onion. Drain and season with salt and pepper.
2. Add the mixed vegetables and can of Tomato Soup. Cook on low until combined and warmed through.
3. Pour into a casserole or other oven safe dish.
4. Mash the potatoes using milk or cream and season with salt and pepper. Drop by large spoonfuls on top of the ground beef mixture. Then spread together and season with salt and pepper. Top with cheddar cheese.
5. Bake at 350° until hot and bubbly.

SOURCE: MANDY H Orr
It’s your future. Let’s protect it.
Together we’ll create a plan to protect what matters most to you.
USDA Offers Additional Assistance for Certain Producers Through Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

(Washington, D.C., January 15, 2021) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will provide additional assistance through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP), expanding eligibility for some agricultural producers and commodities as well as updating payments to accurately compensate some producers who already applied for the program. Producers who are now eligible and those who need to modify existing applications due to these updates can contact USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) between Jan. 19 and Feb. 26. Some of these changes are being made to align with the recently enacted Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.

The Intersection of Agricultural Innovation and the Development of COVID-19 Vaccines in Europe’s Regulatory Hypocrisy

By Graham Brookes

January 6, 2021, AFBF Focus on Agriculture Series—The recent announcement that Astra-Zeneca had developed the third coronavirus vaccine to show promise was welcomed news. It uses a harmless virus that has been genetically modified to include coronavirus genes, which when injected into human cells makes coronavirus proteins that stimulate the immune system to fight any future coronavirus infections. That follows on from two other vaccines, which also use the GM advance, called mRNA vaccines.

“These are fantastic results,” UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson enthused, as politicians across Europe queued up to praise the breakthroughs and to re-assure citizens of the robust, science-based regulatory approval systems that are in place to ensure their safety as the vaccines are fast-tracked through the approval process. This is the right thing to do.

However, isn’t this stance inconsistent and hypocritical? These vaccines use the very same techniques of genetic modification or gene editing that many European politicians have spent the last 25 years preventing their citizens and farmers from having access to for the production and consumption of food, feed and fibre crops and which some environmental advocacy groups have opposed unequivocally.

If these politicians and advocacy groups were being consistent with their past behaviour, they would be campaigning against their approval.

Robust science-based regulatory frameworks for GMOs have been in place since the 1990s and over 4,300 such science-based regulatory assessments have been conducted in 70 countries by 2019 (ISAAA, 2019). These have facilitated the widespread adoption of GM crops, largely outside Europe.

To date, there has been no credible evidence of negative impacts on human health, there is a broad consensus amongst the vast majority of scientists and regulators that these products are safe to consume and there is now a substantial body of evidence that GM crop technology has made important contributions to improving global food security, to reducing the environmental footprint of agriculture and to helping to cut global greenhouse gas emissions (eg, Brookes and Barfoot, 2020).

Despite all this, most European politicians have continued to apply a non-science and non-evidence based approach to regulating these technologies, largely denying European farmers and citizens access to the benefits referred to above. As a result, 18 Member States have banned GM crop cultivation for non-scientific reasons, approvals for the importation and use of GM crops and their derivatives are often subject to long delays, causing disruption to supply chains of raw materials and the European GMO regulatory approval system has been acknowledged as failing to operate as intended (European Commission, 2015) and has been ruled to be mal-administered (European Ombudsman, 2016).

Moving forward, if Europe is to be consistent in the way scientific developments in medicine and agriculture are regulated, the main choices are:

- Apply the current rigorous and solely science-based approval approach currently being applied to covid-19 vaccines to the regulation of crop and livestock innovations derived from the same technologies, or;
- Apply the current non-science and non-evidence based approval approach applied to crop innovations that use GM or GE techniques to covid-19 vaccines. If this approach is instituted, the “best case scenario” for Europe is its citizens might get access to the vaccines in about five years’ time, or possibly not at all.

Let’s hope that European politicians take the opportunity that the tremendous development of GM/GE derived covid-19 vaccines offers to re-set, re-boot and revise the regulatory approval systems for these technologies so that we can all benefit from their potential in all sectors, including agriculture and food production.

Graham Brookes is an agricultural economist with PG Economics, UK. He has more than 30 years experience of analyzing the impact of technology use in agriculture and has authored many papers in peer reviewed journals on the impact of GM crop technology.

References


ISAAA (2019) Biotech crops continue to help meet the challenges of increased population and climate change. ISAAA Brief 54.
I know you say I need life insurance, but do I really?

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WyFB receives AFBF awards of excellence

January 10, 2021--The American Farm Bureau Federation presented awards to state Farm Bureaus at the organization’s Virtual Convention held Jan. 10-13. The awards recognize excellence in implementation of outstanding member programs and membership achievement in 2020.

The Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation received Awards of Excellence in the categories of: Engagement & Outreach; and Leadership & Business Development.

Here is a summary of a recent Market Intel article:

On January 15, USDA announced additional assistance through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program. This new assistance will include expanded eligibility for certain commodities and producers established in the recently passed relief package, as well as updated payments for producers who were eligible under previous iterations of the program. Producers have from January 19 through February 26 to submit new applications or modify existing applications if they have participated in the program already.

WyFB President Todd Fornstrom virtually accepting the two AFBF Awards of Excellence during the 2021 AFBF Virtual Convention.