

## The big dairy shift

*Although National Dairy Month is seen as a celebration of the industry, it's hard not to talk about the overall decline in Kentucky dairies and the many reasons for it. And as these trends continue, dairy farmers find themselves shifting their focus beyond milk production,, moving into processing, direct marketing and agri-tourism. A dairy marketing specialist and the executive director of the state's dairy council talk about the history of milk in the state, what the plans are to change the decline in dairies and what help is available to those in the industry, or those who want to enter it.*

According to the International Dairy Foods Association, dairy month began in 1937 as "National Milk Month," a way to promote drinking milk — initially created to stabilize the dairy demand when production was at a surplus.

Eunice Schlappi says when she began as Kentucky Department of Agriculture's dairy marketing specialist 21 years ago, "I think we had 2,500 dairies then."

Fast-forward to today, she says that number is now 421.

The number of cows has not seen such a dramatic change, and there are still 48,000 milk cows in the state.

"The cow numbers haven't dropped as much as the dairy farms have," Schlappi said.

Schlappi doesn't believe everything is bad news for the dairy industry, and when she hears someone say that the dairy industry in Kentucky "is dying," she doesn't buy into it.

"I cannot agree with that. It's changing. As the smaller farms go out, the ones remaining get bigger, more efficient. They're doing a better job at managing it as a business, which is what they have to do to survive."

Schlappi said the history of the industry in Kentucky closely follows what has happened in the last 20-30 years throughout the country.

"Smaller farms are exiting and the average herd size is increasing," she said.

But she added that Kentucky has been "a little slower in the progression of smaller herds disbursing and being absorbed into larger in-state herds." Schlappi says the state hasn't seen the influx of large dairies moving in like California, Utah, South Dakota

SEE THE, PAGE 3



Photo by Celeste Harned

The 2021-22 Kentucky FFA Officer Team is (front row, from left) Elijah Brock, Lynn Camp, Kentucky River State Vice President; Tristann Burks, Barren County, Sentinel; Morgynne Lunsford, Harrison County, Northern Kentucky State Vice President; Sarah Lyell, Graves County, Purchase State Vice President; Brady Lawson, Morgan County, Secretary; (back row, from left) Austin Randolph, Muhlenberg County, Treasurer; Lindsey Phillips, Lincoln County, Lake Cumberland State Vice President; Phillip Caldbeck, Daviess County, Green River State Vice President; Kelly Baird, Spencer County, Vice President; Jonathan Pinkston, Mercer County, President; Rickalyn Rayburn, West Carter, Big Sandy State Vice President; Isaiah Pruitt, LaRue County, Reporter.

## 2021-22 Ky. FFA Officer Team

The 92nd annual Kentucky FFA convention was held a little different than normal this year as it took on a "hybrid" model due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Leadership Development Events and Career Development Events were conducted virtually in late May. Award finalists were notified and then invited to attend sessions

in person.

Four convention sessions were held June 8-10 in Lexington and were broadcast live through YouTube. Due to social distancing, attendance was limited to state FFA officers, award winners and other invited guest.

Last year's FFA convention was held completely virtual due to

COVID-19 so this was the first time FFA members from across the state had the opportunity to come together since the beginning of the pandemic.

A recording of this years session can be found at [youtube.com/FFAKentucky](https://youtube.com/FFAKentucky).

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# Agriculture Commissioner marks June as dairy month

When the COVID-19 pandemic shuttered workplaces and left many people out of a job, farmers’ roles became even more pivotal. While navigating hardships and uncertainty of their own, dairy farmers across the state partnered with local food banks and other agencies to donate milk and dairy products to offset hunger in their communities.

To honor this service and the everyday work of the dairy farmer, Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture Dr. Ryan Quarles joined Kentucky dairymen and women in celebrating June as Dairy Month earlier this month at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

“When much of the world’s workforce was on hold last year, Kentucky’s agriculture producers never stopped. Our dairy farms still milked every day and continued to provide residents with fresh, affordable and delicious dairy products,” Quarles said. “Kentucky’s dairy farms adapted to the changing environment and kept products on the shelves. Kentucky’s dairy farmers do so much for Kentucky families and honoring them with their own month is one small way we can acknowledge their ingenuity and dependability.”

“Kentucky’s dairy farmers continue to work diligently every day in producing high quality milk for the consumer and we’re excited about June Dairy Month and the attention it brings to our industry,” said H.H. Barlow, executive director of the Kentucky Dairy Development Council. “We truly appreciate every consumer and encourage them to drink and eat up great tasting nutritious milk and milk products.”

The dairy month celebration at the KDA was open to the public and sponsored by the Kentucky Dairy Development Council, which provided ice cream to attendees.

With more than 47,000 dairy cows in the state, dairy farmers not only produce the official beverage of Kentucky – milk – but also everything from ice cream to artisan cheese, providing Kentucky families with the calcium, protein, vitamins and minerals they need to lead an active and healthy lifestyle.

On average, each of those dairy cows produce 7.2 gallons of milk a day. With more than 90 percent of milk produced consumed in liquid milk form, that’s 109 million gallons each year for the state.

Among all agricultural products, milk ranks eighth in its value in the state. Kentucky producers received more than \$175,406,000 in cash receipts from sales of dairy products in 2020. Barren County was the top county in the state in the number of dairy cows with 6,500, followed by Adair, Logan, Christian, and Todd counties.

In October 2020, Commissioner Quarles helped launch “Kentucky Cheese Cares” in Kroger stores with Kentucky dairy farmers, The Dairy Alliance, Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, Feeding America, and Feeding Kentucky. Kentucky Cheese Cares lets consumers join the fight against hunger by purchasing award-winning Kentucky specialty cheese products at participating Kroger locations. Fifty cents from each unit sold are used to distribute Kentucky dairy products through the Feeding Kentucky food bank network.

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture helps Kentucky dairy farmers and processors find new markets for their products and conducts dairy cattle shows across the state. For more about the department’s services to the dairy industry, go to [www.kyagr.com](http://www.kyagr.com).



June is Dairy Month in Kentucky. Commissioner of Agriculture Dr. Ryan Quarles signed a proclamation declaring the month in honor of dairy producers and their products. Joining the commissioner were dairy producers and members of the Kentucky Dairy Development Council and The Dairy Alliance.

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#### MARKET REPORT: WEEK OF June 8, 2021

##### Farmers Regional Livestock Market of Glasgow, LLC

Total Receipts: 645 Supply included: 9% Feeder Cattle (86% Dairy Steers, 14% Bulls); 73% Slaughter Cattle (80% Cows, 20% Bulls); 19% Replacement Dairy Cattle (7% Fresh/Milking Cows, 2% Bred Heifers, 17% Springer Heifers, 5% Open Heifers, 40% Baby Bull Calves, 29% Baby Heifer Calves).

Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 0%.

**Dairy Steers:** Large 3: 355# 90.00; Large 4: 385# 78.00

**Bulls:** Medium and Large 2-3: 370# 134.00

**Slaughter Cattle:** Cows Breaker 75-80%: 1440-1780# 63.00-71.00; 1345-1855# 72.00-85.00. Boner 80-85% 1080-1410# 62.00-71.00; 1085-1410# 72.00-84.00; 745-1440# 51.00-60.00; Lean 85-90% 740-1070# 53.00-61.00; 730-1065# 62.00-76.00; 735-1250# 40.00-48.00; Bulls 1-2: 1260-2330# 93.00-104.00; 1265-2090# 105.00-120.00; 1150-2430# 75.00-92.00.

**Fresh/Milking Cows:** Approved 1400.00; Medium 1200.00; Common 750.00-1050.00; Common 775.00.

**Bred Heifers:** Common T1 710.00; Common T2 825.00.

**Springer Heifers:** Approved T3 1100.00-1225.00; Medium T3 900.00-1050.00; Common T3 700.00-750.00; Common T3 650.00.

**Open Heifers:** Approved 475# 330.00; Medium 450# 300.00; Medium 525# 375.00; Medium 625# 420.00.

**Baby Bull Calves:** 14 Head 40.00-80.00; 11 Head 150.00-270.00 Beef Cross; 5 Head 50.00-140.00 Crossbred; 3 Head 50.00-60.00 Jersey.

**Baby Heifer Calves:** 7 Head 30.00-130.00; 10 Head 140.00-260.00 Beef Cross; 6 Head 80.00-120.00 Crossbred; 1 Head 60.00 Jersey.

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# The big dairy shift

FROM PAGE 1

and Indiana have.

“Kentucky lost one third of its dairy herds and cattle in the dairy buyout in the mid 1980s,” she said, with that decline continuing rapidly through the late 90s, at a rate of almost 200 per year. “

From '02-'12, the losses slowed to about 100 farms per year.” In her report from January 2019, Schlappi said that decline had slowed to about 50 a year since 2014.

Statistics at that time showed that as the farms exited, the number of cows didn't decrease at the same rate – many were still being absorbed by existing dairies that were expanding.

“The producers that exited were young producers who had recently entered the business and were carrying very large debt loads during the low milk prices,” Schlappi said. The other segment that decreased was the older producers who were borderline retirement and had no one to carry on the dairy business.

A chart she completed for the 2019 report also shows that production per cow is rising, which she says is due to operations becoming more efficient in management.

“The value of milk produced is every-changing due to the fluctuation of milk prices,” she said.

Milk prices have reached as high as \$28 in the last 10 years, but have gone as low as \$12-\$13.

“The unfortunate fact is that many of our dairies are only functioning at break-even or below, due to increased fuel costs and feed.”

Schlappi says she sent 13 years working with the organic program, but just recently stepped out of the role. She still works in tandem with the Kentucky Dairy Development Council and with dairy regulators on the national level.

She explains that to her, “value-added is anything that can bring a producer more income from a product that they would normally sell another way. I look at it as the folks who are organic – they're doing something that they get more from their milk than everybody else does. Cheese makers, milk bottlers, things like that.”

H.H. Barlow, KDDC's director, said the council is diligently working on some serious concerns with the industry.

“Milk price volatility is a huge issue. We are in weekly conversations with other state organizations, the Farm Bureau, USDA, legislators ...”

But Barlow said feed cost is definitely the biggest challenge facing all dairies.

“Our feed costs are up 25 percent compared to a year ago. COVID may have a small part in that, but it's a variety of things ...”

The availability of container ships going overseas is a



**Eunice Schlappi, dairy marketing specialist at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, is an advocate for Kentucky's dairy producers.**

challenge, too he said.

On a positive note, Barlow said KDDC is starting a MILK 4.0 program, which he explains has four main initiatives.

“Those include improved genetics through genomic testing, improved reproduction through major emphasis on pregnancy rate, a continued emphasis on milk quality, and specific dairy financial analysis,” he said.

If dairy farms meet a “certain performance matrix,” they can sign up for the program, with cost share available for genomic testing.

Another is a brand new and a multi-state program, a collaboration between Kentucky, Tennessee and North Carolina.

“It's to be used for people who want to move on to on-the-farm processing for milk. It can be bottled, they can make cheese, ice cream, butter. It's got some money available for start-up if a person wants to start a new dairy,” he said. The program is just beginning, and interested parties can contact KDDC, which is overseeing the federal grant.

“It has a lot of education parts to it. There are value-added conferences, evaluations – it's pretty involved, actually,” Barlow said.

Coming up at the end of the month, the KDDC Beef on Dairy Summer Tour begins, which Barlow explains is a national initiative.

“As we've gotten into genomics and 'sexing' (sex-specific recombination), most farmers have raised more heifers than they need ...” The initiative is to encourage dairy farmers to only breed the top-half of their herd.

The conference will be June 29-30 at Bluegrass Stockyards in Lexington.

“We're going to do all we can,” Barlow said. “I love the business and fooling with cows. Someone's going to produce milk; you just have to be professional at it and have an excellent manager.”

Schlappi said she believes the industry will “sustain.”

“Dairy is an ever-changing landscape, from the buyers to the farmers, to the price of milk. Our guys have had to adapt, and we do still have people coming into the industry,” she said.

Schlappi says she's not downplaying the fact the state lost a lot of dairies – she knows it's “devastating having to sell the cows. The biggest lesson is that there's life after a dairy farm. It may not be what they've pictured themselves doing, but they have to be able to change.”

She says many are critical of the KDDC, of co-ops, “of me – why aren't we doing more to help the dairy industry. There's only so much we can do – a lot of the prices are controlled on the federal levels. We have to work to help them enhance their quality, with education and other resources — that's not all we can do, but that's a big part of it.”

To find out more about programs available through KDDC, visit [kydairy.org](http://kydairy.org).

**By Bobbie Curd**  
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# Growing up with Pride



GUEST EDITORIAL

Toni (Burton) Humphress

....but in my heart and mind The Farmer's Pride is one of the only constants in my life for as long as I can remember.

As someone who grew up with *The Farmer's Pride*, and the newest hire within the company, it feels fitting to step outside my normal role as general manager and say hello to some of my dearest friends.

It's always been so hard to explain to people the love I have for Kentucky agriculture and my "family" that is spread out throughout the state. Explaining it to an outsider probably never fully makes sense, but in my heart and mind *The Farmer's Pride* is one of the only constants in my life for as long as I can remember.

You see, a few months after my birthday each year, the Pride also celebrates its birthday. It's probably the only company on the planet that I can keep up with the year its celebrating since four months after I was born, *The Farmer's Pride* was born – and the rest is history.

Probably my first "embarrassing memory" stored within my brain, which if I'm honest still sometimes keeps me awake at night, is almost throwing up on the governor of Kentucky while surrounded by reporters standing in the middle of the state Capitol.

Yep, you read that right; had YouTube been a thing then, I assure you I would have been a viral sensation.

Breaking news doesn't stop, even for a stomach virus, and in Mom's defense I was feeling better when we left Columbia that morning, but those TV lights were just so hot that I wasn't sure the small amount of food I kept down that day was going to stay there much longer. It's okay though, Mom threw elbows and grabbed me out of there before I became the girl to go down in history as the one who took the spotlight away from the tobacco buy-out.

Field days were always my favorite. I remember one in Princeton where I probably bugged (ha) the heck out of the UK entomologist all day because all I wanted to do was hold the bugs and learn all about them. I even held a tarantula and a giant centipede, which looking back on it now he had to have been good looking or extremely charming

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# Death tax and WOTUS Déjà vu

During the pandemic, a lot of people said they felt like they were living in the Bill Murray film *Groundhog Day*, in which the comedian has to live out Feb. 2 over and over again. With having to teach kids and work from home for an extended period, many folks felt like their days or weeks were like that movie. As I've watched policy discussions coming out of Washington, D.C. lately, I must admit I feel a bit like Bill Murray on account of the amount of déjà vu I've experienced watching two policy debates come back to the forefront over my years in office: the Death Tax and the waters of the United States rule.

If you haven't heard, some members of Congress are talking with the Biden Administration about a significant change to the tax code involving stepped up basis. Stepped up basis allows people who inherit property and other wealth to be exempt from paying tax on the increased value of the inherited property, not the increase in value since the date it was originally purchased. If you are a family farmer or small business owner who wants to pass your operation on to your kids, this is a good thing: it means that your kids won't be hit with a huge tax bill when the good Lord calls you home. These people in Washington, D.C. would do away with this provision of the tax code and tax those inheritances. Sure sounds like a new Death Tax to me.

Now, I am all for eliminating tax loopholes and making sure we have an even playing field for everybody. However, stepped up basis allows families to pass along farms and businesses to the next generation without being burdened with crushing tax bills. Isn't that what we, as an agriculture community, want? Note, too, that this policy change wouldn't just affect farmers, it would affect small business owners who hope to pass their business onto the next generation as well. With inheritances occurring when family members pass away, the last thing government should do is show up to the funeral with a tax bill.

The second policy to come back for debate involves the regulation of ponds, streams, rivers, and other waters by the Environmental Protection Agency. If you'll recall a few years ago, the farm community successfully defeated the Obama-era "Waters of the United States," or WOTUS, rule, which would have significantly expanded the authority of EPA over waters on farms across the nation. I worked with President Trump's EPA administrators to explain why that rule needed to be withdrawn, and once it was, worked with them on a revised "Navigable Waters Protection" rule that was much more pro-farmer than the previous version. But now, President Biden's administrator has said they are going to withdraw that rule and start the process over again to get something closer to the Obama-era rules. You have my promise that I will monitor this process and vigorously fight for pro-farmer solutions.

What's the best thing you can do to make sure we don't end up like Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*? Contact the members of Congress to let them know that we don't need to repeat these old debates about the Death Tax and WOTUS. Let's move on, and leave our farmers alone so they can do what they do best: produce the food and fiber that everyone else relies on.



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER

Ryan Quarles

However, stepped up basis allows families to pass along farms and businesses to the next generation without being burdened with crushing tax bills.

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# Hardly a peep



## MARKET WATCH

Dewey Strickler

Global stocks are forecast to be up 1.5 million tons to 92.6 million.

Hardly a peep was made by traders about the June Crop Report as their focus is squarely on weather. There were some isolated showers mid-week, but the forecast for the next two weeks is for hot, dry weather in most of the Midwest, which is keeping traders on pins and needles.

Last week, the rating for corn fell 4 points to 72 percent in good-to-excellent condition. According to Ag Watch's yield model, this equates to a national yield of 170.4 bushels per acre versus 172.0 bushels per acre a year ago. Meanwhile, USDA projects 2021-22 ending stocks at 1.357 billion bushels, down 150 million bushels from May. This was below the trade estimate. Global stockpiles are forecast to fall 900,000 tons to 289.4 million. Overall, the report is considered friendly.

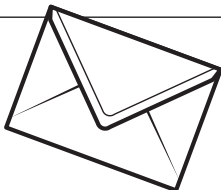
Soybean planting is nearly done with 67 percent of the crop rated in good-to-excellent condition compared to 72 percent a year ago. According to Ag Watch's yield model, the national yield is 49.2 bushels per acre versus 50.2 bushels per acre last year. With stocks extremely tight, each weather forecast will be scrutinized under a microscope. In the June Crop Report, USDA projects 2021-22 ending stocks of soybeans at 155 million bushel, an increase of 15 million bushels from last month. This was above the trade guess. Global stocks are forecast to be up 1.5 million tons to 92.6 million. While the report may be slightly disappointing to the bulls, weather holds the trump card.

Wheat is being supported from strength in corn, but gains will be limited because of the approaching harvest. In the June Crop Report, USDA projects 2021-22 ending stocks to fall 4 million bushels to 770 million bushels which was slightly below the trade guess. Meanwhile, global stockpiles are forecast to rise 1.8 million tons to 296.8 million. All wheat production is up 16 million bushels to 1.898 billion bushels while winter wheat is projected to rise 1.8 million tons to 296.8 million. The report is negative for wheat, but the market will likely be supported by corn.

DEWEY STRICKLER is president of Ag Watch Market Advisors, LLC. Email Strickler at ag-watchdls@comcast.net or go online at www.ag-watch.biz.

## Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Letters must include the author's name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Letters should be no longer than 500 words and will be edited for clarity.



Send letters to:  
Letter to the Editor  
The Farmer's Pride  
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Columbia, Ky. 42728

# Truth in labeling is opposite of 'branding'

If up is up and down is down, it makes sense then that organic food – especially food that carries the U.S. Department of Agriculture's treasured "USDA Organic" label—is organic, right?

Not all the time, maintains Francis Thicke, an Iowa organic dairy farmer introduced here last month. In fact, Thicke and hundreds of other long-time organic farmers maintain that large portions, maybe even a majority, of USDA-labeled "organic" milk, eggs, and hydroponically-grown fruit and vegetables are not truly organic.

At least not organic by USDA standards in place before Big Ag's powerful influence swept into the marketplace a decade ago. After that, farming practices specifically not allowed by the National Organic Standards Board – like hydroponic production of any kind—have taken root.

As noted earlier, established organic farmers fought the moves every step of the way. Thicke and others fought from the inside; he served on the NOSB from 2012 through 2017 when hydroponic peddlers succeeded in winning USDA's approval just seven years after NOSB banned "soiless" organic food production or hydroponics, now often – and, according to him, deceptively – labeled "container grown."

That's the rub, according to the Iowa dairy farmer: "If you're going to change the rules – and, just as importantly, not enforce other rules – to benefit the bigger, corporate farms, then 'real' organic farmers don't stand a chance" in this new game.

To fight the changes, Thicke and nearly 1,000 other organic producers have formed their own "real" organic project called, cleverly, the Real Organic Project, or ROP. It will "certify" that its members follow long-established rules for organic production that hasn't – and won't – bend or break farming rules like food pasture requirements for livestock.

Equally important, since most of ROP's leadership helped to write and implement USDA organic standards, it knows its way around the USDA bureaucracy. That means these hardworking, deeply informed leaders are not going quietly.

Indeed, Thicke and his ROP colleague, Dave Chapman, recently shared a 45-minute conference call with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack to dis-

cuss USDA's weakening organic standards and its failure to enforce required rules for "mega-producers" of organic milk, egg, poultry, fruit and vegetable production.

"The Secretary knew the issues very well," relates Thicke in an early June telephone interview, "and he knew that many organic farmers have real problems with how USDA is administering the program."

Vilsack's biggest concern, however, wasn't what could be done about USDA's increased accommodation of "big operators," relates Thicke. Instead it was how the rise of the Real Organic Project would "confuse consumers in the marketplace."

Vilsack told the farmers that organics needed "one brand" and that the rise of the Real Organic Project and its own label will lead to the rise of the "Real Real Organic Project and then the Real Real Real Organic Project."

"And he might be right," concedes Thicke.

"But what he (Vilsack) gets wrong is that organic is not a 'brand' to most farmers. It's a philosophy, a life, a way to farm that hopes to leave everyone and everything better off—the soil, our health, the animals, our surrounding communities."

That belief, that vision "...can't just be a 'USDA brand' if much of today's 'USDA Organic' milk and eggs and chicken comes from what are, essentially, CAFOs," concentrated animal feeding operations, says Thicke.

Sure, he points out, changes to USDA's organic production standards have "gotten us more food on the shelf that is certified as organic, the big goal of Big Ag. What it hasn't gotten us, however, is better food on the shelf or more organic farmers putting it there."

Thicke and Chapman are hopeful that ROP can gain enough membership to challenge USDA as the go-to source for "real" organic food. It will be a long, tough uphill slog, though.

Still, organic food isn't about "branding" or politics, he says. "It's about how we grow our food. That's as important as what we eat."



## FOOD & FARM FILE

Alan Guebert

To fight the changes, Thicke and nearly 1,000 other organic producers have formed their own "real" organic project called, cleverly, the Real Organic Project, or ROP.

ALAN GUEBERT publishes a weekly column Farm and Food File through the U.S. and Canada. Past columns, events and contact information are posted at farmandfoodfile.com. Contact Alan Guebert by email at agcomm@farmandfoodfile.com.

# June is a time to recognize the dairy cow and producer



**KENTUCKY  
DAIRY  
DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL**  
EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR

**HH  
Barlow**

Once again, we have the honor of celebrating June Dairy Month, an event that started in 1939. While we have fewer dairymen in Kentucky than in the past, our dairy farmers still produced 940 million pounds of milk worth \$175 million in 2020.

Dairymen work every day to produce the delicious, nutritious milk that we consider nature's most complete food.

Just think about it – where else can you find a food that tastes so good in a glass or on your cereal and also can be made into cheese, cottage cheese, butter, sour cream, coffee creamer, yogurt and best of all, ice cream. Furthermore, we export milk powder to underdeveloped countries all over the world for infant formula and whole milk powder for their protein needs. Even baby pigs need milk that is made into whey powder for their starter feeds.

Let us take a moment to acknowledge the dairy cow. I was born and

raised on a dairy farm and have worked with milk cows my entire life. I cannot put a dollar figure on all that I owe a cow. Dairy cows are a tremendous asset to the human race. Think about a 12-to 1,400-pound animal who eats 120 pounds of feed per day, drinks 40-50 gallons of water per day, maintains her body, grows a baby calf inside her and above all else, produces 10 gallons of milk every day. I consider her amazing, and she does this by eating feeds that we humans cannot eat and digest.

Needless to say, I love milk products and cows, but today, I want to also highlight the people who bring us this wonderful food product.

Dairy people are producers. Thank goodness for all the folks in the service world, but we are producers, and our profession is one we should always be proud of. I used to meet people who would say, I am just a dairyman, but the truth is they are a professional food producer, using the latest technology,

science and management practices. We not only manage the check-book, furnish jobs, contribute in a big way to the local economy, but we have to be a husbandry expert in taking care of our cows and heifers. People often ask me why I love cows so much and I have an easy answer...They respond to the care you give them and best of all, they do not talk back to you, they just do their job.

The cow is special, but dairy farmers are more special. Just think about Covid last year when everything shut down, the dairyman never stopped working. We went to the barn every day and did our chores. Our offices never closed. No stopping for holidays, no weather interruptions, just good clean hard work 24/7, 365.

I would be remiss if I did not show my appreciation for the people who work alongside us. This includes our farm help, milk truck drivers, feed company employees, the veterinarian, the AI technician

and all other support industries who worked every day as well.

Lastly, I must thank our consumers. Thank you to the milk processors, the grocers, restaurants and everyone who brings our products to the consumer. We must have folks buy our products, so it is a circle that involves so many. During this June Dairy Month, we are proud of our profession, producing a wonderfully nutritious food. The times are challenging. We face low milk prices, constant price volatility, high feed costs, lack of competition among available markets to buy our milk, farm to market hauling issues, capital expense and labor issues. We face these issues, but through it all, dairy farmers persevere and deserve our support, honor and respect.

Once again, thank you consumers. We will continue this worthy endeavor of producing milk. Join me in raising a glass of milk to celebrate June Dairy Month.

## Growing up with Pride

FROM PAGE 4

because I'm not sure adult me would EVER.

I missed my first National Farm Machinery Show this year because of Covid. I refuse to count it as being missed though, because it didn't occur, so therefore, I can proudly claim I haven't missed a Farm Show since birth. Some girls look forward to spring break or summer vacation, this girl looks forward to Farm Show and tractor pulls (and let's be honest, that fact hasn't changed).

There is Rae Wagoner, who likes to remind my mother she (Mom) didn't like her when she first met her (Rae – Mom loves her now!), and anyone who is going to give my Mom as hard a time about things as I do is always going to be one of my favorites.

Thanks for always picking up right where we left off, sister, thanks for the hilarious Facebook posts that make me smile on rough days and for the encouraging ones you always seem to post on days when I'm down. And let's not forget our shared love of Dachshunds. Anyone

who loves those dogs as much as me is good people in my book.

There is Allison Shepherd, who sometimes feels like a second mom when she is reminding me to behave while out at places. It's okay though, I probably need the reminder and she always gives the very best hugs. Thank you for my very first tractor pull tickets ever. If not for you and Doug I wouldn't have known just what I was missing.

And of course, last but certainly not least, is Dale Dobson. Imagine my first impression when he said, "Is this the kid I'm going to be throwing under a tractor and getting bloody?"

Turns out Mom failed to tell me she had volunteered me for a Dobson project, so he made quite the first impression. Now I proudly claim the title "rent-a-kid" and wouldn't trade my time with Dale for the world. It shaped me; it gave me more experiences than I can ever begin to explain and led me down a career path I will forever be thankful for.

It's crazy to think of the ways *The Farmer's Pride* has impacted my life choices. After the first time Dale threw

me under a tractor I caught a bug that led me to becoming an EMT. After becoming an EMT I decided to get a part-time job as a 911 dispatcher and eventually decided to do that full time. I became a supervisor of a neighboring 911 center and put my heart and soul into my job, but life changes came and it was time to come home.

That's what *The Farmer's Pride* has always been to me – home. It's where my friends are, it's where my family is, it's what I know. And it is so very nice to be home.

Happy 32nd birthday to *The Farmer's Pride*. Thank you for always being there, thank you for the experiences, thank you for the love shown and felt growing up.

And to all of the supporters I have met along the way, thank you. You shaped my childhood, you gave me experiences that most will never be able to claim. I love each and every one of you. I look forward to seeing you at trade shows and catching up when it's been a year. I love hearing about your families and seeing all of the changes that have oc-



**Dale Dobson and me at my first "rent-a-kid" endeavor.**

curred since the last time we met.

I have cried with you over family dairies being shut down, I have smiled with you over new babies and grandbabies, I have mourned the loss of your family members when I hear they have gone and I have celebrated weddings and anniversaries.

I will never be able to fully thank you for the impact you have had and I will never be able to fully explain what each and everyone of you mean, so all I can say, is thank you.



# Dream blossoms with strong strawberry season

Ever since Brandt Roddy received a red tricycle peddle tractor from his grandmother, he has wanted to farm. Growing up, his parents talked about “buying some land,” but it never happened. As a teenager, he worked on farms, which fueled his passion for farming.

Roddy went to college in engineering and became a road and bridge construction inspector for the state of Kentucky. He settled in his hometown of Frankfort and started his family.

But as his wife, Debbie noted, “His desire to farm was always present.”

In 2004, he and Debbie bought 75 acres of a dairy farm on Benson Pike in Shelby County and named it Morgan Rae after their daughters. They raised one crop of tobacco.

“We finally settled on strawberries,” Brandt explained, “because no one else had strawberries.”

The Morgan Rae farming operation is a shared passion. Debbie doesn’t have a farm background either but explained their strawberry operation in tandem with her husband. Their philosophy is doing and learning.

The Roddys didn’t know anything about raising strawberries but read a great deal and joined the Kentucky Strawberry Growers Association. They learned about commercial strawberry production and made lifelong friends.

They sold their first strawberry harvest at a Frankfort farmers’ market in 2006 and soon learned from other growers there were better production methods.

They quickly moved away from growing “matted strawberries,” allowing runners to branch out and fill the rows, which made weed control virtually impossible. They moved to plastic culture with a drip irrigation system and increased their plants from 500 to 1500.

Brandt and Debbie and their daughters commuted 17 miles to the farm every afternoon. They found it challenging to farm long distance and considered moving to the farm, but because their daughters were in middle and high school at the time, they didn’t want to relocate them to new schools.

“See those rows of strawberries?” Debbie said as she pointed to the current strawberry patch. “That’s where our house was to be built.”

Brandt and Debbie realized they couldn’t “get it done” on the farm and

work full time, and both retired in 2016. Debbie was a civil engineer. As Brandt put it, the farm became their “full-time job,” and they concentrated on producing for the Frankfort farmers’ market.

Since 2016 they have increased their plants from 1500 to 3000. In 2020, customers wanted more strawberries than Morgan Rae could produce.

“I said okay, and we planted more, and this has been the best season ever,” Brandt said, as they increased their plants to 5000 for the 2021 season.

Why has this year been so much better?

“We don’t do things perfectly but have just done a lot of things right,” Debbie said.

That “doing things right” begins in the fall. Commercial producers do not use current beds a second year. Around the second week of September, new plants are set using a commercial planter, not unlike a tobacco setter.

Next comes what some might call “just knowing when” management. The strawberries must be covered when they go dormant in the winter. As Debbie pointed out, last fall was warm and dry, and they didn’t want to cover in November, which is typical. Waiting until later proved to be an excellent management decision.

“Of course, when we did decide to cover in December, it was cold with 30 miles per hour wind,” she laughed.

Strawberries are very temperature sensitive and when to uncover is another one of those management decisions.

Debbie said strawberry plants themselves could withstand temperatures as low as zero degrees, but buds, blooms, and berries each have a different low temperature, critical to the production.

“Blooms are the most delicate and can only survive at 30 degrees, while berries at okay at 28 degrees, and buds survive at a much colder temperature. In early spring, plants may have blooms and buds at the same time,” Debbie said.

Once the beds are uncovered in early spring, a spring cold snap brings the row covers back over the rows. The 2021 row cover investment provides 3-5 degrees above outside temperatures.

Bird netting was another 2021 investment that proved to be a good decision. Brandt said that predominately Robins were sitting on the fence licking their chops just waiting to peck one hole in a ripe berry.



**Roddy family members fill buckets that are going to the Frankfort Farmers Market the next day.**

While Morgan Rae Farm has had a bumper crop of large juicy strawberries, their biggest management issue has been labor.

“No one wants to work,” Debbie said. “It’s been very hard for three people to pick the 5000 plants, and some have gone to waste because we can’t get them picked as fast as we need to.”

As Brandt rounded up his picking crew made up of family members, he

showed off a huge ripe strawberry. He remarked again about the successful year they were completing, harvesting at least a quart of berries per plant.

While good management practices are important, Brandt emphasized the farm’s soil.

“This is great soil. We have never fertilized – things grow,” he said.

**By Toni Riley**  
**Field Reporter**



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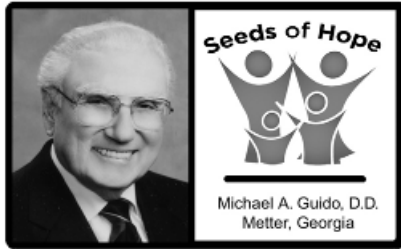
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# Birthday Cake Batter Ice Cream



## The Triumphant Tongue

A Greek philosopher asked his attendant to prepare a dinner for his closest friends. He advised him to “prepare your best meal for my distinguished guests.”

On the day before the banquet, he asked, “What are you going to serve my friends?”

“Tongue,” he replied.

With curiosity he asked, “Why tongue?”

“Well, my lord, tongue is my best meal.

With it we may bring happiness, dispel sorrow, remove despair and inspire others,” he said quietly.

A few days later the philosopher went again to his attendant and said, “I want you to prepare your worst meal for my guests next week.”

On the day before the banquet, he asked the same question, “What are you going to serve my guests?”

“Tongue,” was the reply.

“Tongue?” he asked in amazement. “You said that tongue was your best meal. Now it’s your worst.”

“Yes,” said the attendant. “With the tongue we break hearts, destroy reputations, promote discord and begin wars.”

David said, “The righteous will ‘use their tongues’ to rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in Him. All the upright in heart will glory in Him.”

James said, “No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.”

The tongue: It can be used to honor, praise, and glorify God or used to destroy others.

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2 cups heavy whipping cream  
1 cup whole milk  
1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk  
1 1/2 tablespoons cake batter extract  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 cup sprinkles of choice  
4 store bought vanilla cupcakes, frosting removed and crumbled

Whisk heavy whipping cream, milk and sweetened condensed milk, stirring until well combined. Stir in extracts. Pour mixture into freezer canister of ice cream maker according to your ice maker’s instructions. Before transferring out of freezer canister, pour in sprinkles and let mix for another 2 minutes. Transfer the ice cream to a freezer-safe container with lid, gently stir in crumbled cupcakes. Cover, place in freezer and allow it to harden for at least 4 hours or overnight.



# Summer Berry Cobbler



4 cups mixed berries  
2 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon lemon zest  
1 cup milk  
1/2 cup butter, melted  
1 1/2 cups sugar, divided  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 cups heavy whipping cream  
1 tablespoon confectioners’ sugar  
1 tablespoon ground cardamom

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Place berries in a large mixing bowl. Add 1/2 cup sugar, lemon juice and zest. Stir until well combined. Set aside to rest for about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, place milk and butter in a microwave-safe container and cook on HIGH just until butter is melted, about 1 minute. Stir until well combined. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together flour, remaining 1 cup sugar, baking powder and salt. Gradually pour in milk and butter mixture, whisking until smooth.

Pour batter into a 13-x 9-inch baking dish, then spoon berries evenly on top. If desired, sprinkle top with about 2 tablespoons of sugar. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until crust is golden brown. While cobbler is baking, pour the heavy cream into a non-reactive metal or glass bowl. Add confectioners’ sugar and whip on medium speed with electric mixer until soft peaks form. Sprinkle in cardamom and whip again until stiff peaks form. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serve cobbler warm or at room temperature with the spiced whipped cream.

Recipes courtesy of The Dairy Alliance

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**Thank a Dairy Farmer!**



# Ky. soybean, corn, grain farmers host environmental tour



Barry Alexander, farm manager for Cundiff Farms, showed off many of his conservation and energy-efficient practices. Cabinet for Energy and the Environment Secretary Rebecca Goodman was particularly impressed with Alexander's use of solar panels to power his grain handling system, as well as employee housing and selling excess power back to the grid.

Farmers are the original conservationists. They are stewards of the land, striving for continuous improvement and endeavoring to leave the land better than they found it.

Unfortunately, farmers are also some of the most modest people around. They go about their chosen path without a great deal of fanfare, and some might say that, in doing so, the agriculture community doesn't always do a great job of telling its story.

Farmers representing the Kentucky Soybean Board and Association, Kentucky Corn Growers and the Kentucky Small Grain Growers Association hosted a two-day "show and tell" farm tour for guests from the Kentucky Cabinet for Energy and the Environment earlier this week. Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Goodman was accompanied on the tour by Deputy Secretary John Lyons, Deputy Commissioner of the Department for Environmental Protection Amanda Lefever, and Executive Advisor Anne Marie Franklin.

Tour stop hosts included Commonwealth Agri-Energy, which manufactures ethanol in Hopkinsville, Joseph Sisk of Sisk Farms in Hopkinsville, Barry Alexander of Cundiff Farms in Cadiz, Josh Lancaster of Hust Farms in Sebree, Ryan Bivens of Fresh Start Farms in Hodgenville, Caleb Ragland of Shady Rest Farms in Magnolia, and Richard Preston of Preston Farms in Glendale. Numerous other farmer-leaders joined the group at the various stops.

The Secretary and her traveling companions were impressed by the in-depth understanding and implementation of complex conservation best management practices used by the farmers. The advanced technology employed by farmers was also of great interest. While Secretary Goodman was raised on a small farm in Scott County, she said that she now realizes that her family farmed to feed the children, and "what I saw

today was on a completely different scale, and it boggles the mind."

"The people I met today are smart, they are committed, and they are doing a good job," she said, in comments made to numerous University of Kentucky research and extension personnel during an evening meeting at the Hardin County Extension Office. "We learned a lot today, and our minds are blown."

Secretary Goodman said that she heard a lot about water, runoff, water quality, and sustainability, and that it was easy to see that the agriculture organizations work very well together.

Deputy Secretary Lyons was just as impressed with the farmers themselves as he was with the massive equipment and advanced precision ag technology.

"Hearing terms like carbon sequestration, stewardship and sustainability being talked about by these farmers in everyday conversation was exciting to me," Lyons said.

He has been with the Cabinet for more than 30 years and said that he didn't know if those terms were even being talked about at the farm level 15 years ago.

From "show and tell" about water quality sampling projects to solar panels powering grain systems to nutrient management of manure from a large-scale commercial hog operation, the secretary and her team were able to see for themselves not only the science but the personal stories behind these farming operations and their practices.

Secretary Goodman said that her takeaway from the tour was that, "our goals are the same. We have learned so much, and we appreciate this behind-the-scenes look at what you do, and we know that what we do in Frankfort affects real people."

The host organizations were pleased with the results of the tour, and especially with the relationships that were established. Relationships open doors to conversations, and having the Secretary of Energy and the Environment on these family farms, seeing the practices and technology that are being used to raise food, feed, and fuel in environmentally responsible ways is one of the best conversations that could result from such an event.

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# Taking hay to a new level

## The Forage Doctor

By Jimmy Henning



Recently I had the chance to learn from one of the best hay producers in Kentucky when I spent a morning on the Gerald's Farm, owned and operated by Clayton Gerald's, his son Chris and their family. Clayton started farming with a few dairy cows after growing up on a dairy and tobacco farm. After some tough years ('nearly starving to death' Clayton says), he started growing and marketing high quality hay.

Success was not instantaneous. Initially, Clayton sold hay that would work for nearby dairies. "They were the people I knew," he said. After making some particularly good hay one year, Clayton decided he wanted to 'go to Lexington' and try his hand at marketing to horse farms. So he took four of his best bales and made stops at different horse farms. After a few stops, he saw that he was not producing the kind of hay that would work in the horse market. So he took his bales back home and started doing homework on how to 'do things better.' Which is a phrase Clayton uses a lot.

Clayton is a quick study. He started going to the Kentucky Alfalfa Conference in 1983 and has missed few since. He has been on hay farms in almost every western state and has been a long-time member of the National Hay Association and the Kentucky and American Forage and Grassland Councils.

Clayton sure makes growing hay seem easy. The more you know about all he does to harvest high quality hay in Kentucky's variable weather you realize it is anything but easy. In all Clayton has about 1000 acres of alfalfa, alfalfa-orchardgrass and timothy, all for hay production. Last year (a bad year), Clayton and his family put up 137,000 square bales of hay, all targeted to the Southeastern horse market. And they almost never touch a bale.

You read that right, they almost never touch a bale. When Clayton tells you that, you start to realize that he has taken hay production to a level like few others. Here are a few examples of his systemic approach to hay making. Claytons family and crew run seven balers, which he calls the most important part

of his operation. Each baler has a different color twine so if they start having problems with bales, they know immediately which baler needs attention. Running a baler is the top job on the Gerald's Farm.

Clayton has the bale process down to a science. Actually more like a mathematical equation. Clayton makes his bales 35 inches long plus or minus one inch. To do this, he adjusts his baler speed and windrow density so that there are 14 to 16 plunger strokes per bale.

Because each bale is nearly identical in size, each bale wagon load of hay has identical dimensions and they stand up well in the barn. Even better, those bale wagon loads of 108 bales fit perfectly in a homemade pusher/loader that scoots six stacks into enclosed van trailers for shipping.

Clayton's system for trailer loading is so refined that for the last 300 loads they have shipped, they put exactly 648 bales on the trailer. That is six stacks of 108 bales. 648. Exactly. 300 times in a row. And they did not touch a bale. I just find that amazing.

Clayton is open about his past mistakes.

"In 2020 we did not cut the first field until June" Clayton said, "because it was raining every day."

He admits that what he should have done was to cut anyway, and roll it and wrap it for round bale silage. Cutting anyway would have set have set up a better second cutting. Instead Clayton says they made a lot of hay that was 'just not very good.'

This year, he cut down 150 acres in April and rolled it and wrapped it to set up a good (and early) cutting. He was even able to square bale some of that April cutting, and it would compare well to almost anybody's best. And those early cut fields looked great when I was on the farm in late May and should make a great second cutting.

Clayton is quick to help others. He is helping his son Chris grow his own farming operation. He hires locally, both young and old. He helps young producers get started in the hay business. I wanted to know more about this, so I challenged him that what he was doing (helping others get started etc.) did not advance Gerald's Farms. Clayton was quick to disagree.

"I think we are all in this together, and we should help each other," Clayton said. And that is what he does.



Two balers making alfalfa hay on the Gerald's Farm in Hart County. Clayton and his family have developed a highly mechanized haying operation that focuses on producing high quality alfalfa and alfalfa-orchardgrass hay for the horse market.

Clayton answers most questions with a story. Clayton is a big believer in good soil fertility, applying 60 pounds of nitrogen, 80 pounds of phosphorus and 300 pounds of potassium annually for a cost of \$150 per acre. When asked about how he could afford to fertilize his hay fields so much, he says at his level of fertilization he only needs 25 extra bales to pay

for the fertilizer. "You can't make me believe that fertilizer won't make me a whole lot more than 25 extra bales per acre," he says.

Clayton makes haymaking look deceptively easy. Maybe, if I really work at it, I could land a spot on his hay crew and work my way up to 'baler.' Maybe.

Happy Foraging.

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<u>Deadlines for Entries to the Fair</u>		
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General (with late fee)		July 10
Open and 4-H/		
FFA Youth Livestock		July 10
Pigeon and Poultry		July 19
Rabbit		July 19
Open Livestock (with late fee)		July 25
Extra Late Open Livestock (with late fee)		Aug. 3
For additional information about entries, fees, categories, prizes and more, refer to the Kentucky State Fair premium book online <a href="http://atkystatefair.org/participate/compete">atkystatefair.org/participate/compete</a> .		

The 2021 Kentucky State Fair is Aug. 19-29 at the Kentucky Exposition Center. For more information, visit [www.kystatefair.org](http://www.kystatefair.org).

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Terms- 10% buyers premium will be added to bid price to determine contract sale price. A \$3000 down payment will be required for each parcel upon signing of the sales and purchase agreement upon conclusion of the sale with the balance due on or before 30 days at closing.



# New state laws go into effect June 29

Most new laws approved during the Kentucky General Assembly's 2021 session will go into effect on Tuesday, June 29.

The Kentucky Constitution specifies that new laws take effect 90 days after the adjournment of the legislature unless they have a special effective date, are general appropriations measures, or include an emergency clause that makes them effective immediately upon becoming law. Final adjournment of the 2021 Regular Session occurred on March 30, making June 29 the effective date for most bills.

Laws taking effect that day include measures on the following topics:

Kentucky-grown products. Senate Bill 102 will include Asian Carp, paddlefish, or sturgeon in the definition of "Kentucky-grown agricultural product".

- **Livestock.** House Bill 229 will

make someone guilty of criminal mischief for intentionally or wantonly causing damage to livestock.

- **Illegal dumping.** Senate Bill 86 will designate 100 percent of a new open dumping fine to be paid to the county where the violation occurred.

- **U.S. Senators.** Senate Bill 228 will change the way vacancies are filled for a U.S. senator from Kentucky. The bill will require the governor to select a replacement from a list of three nominees selected by the same political party of the departing senator.

- **Worker safety regulations.** House Bill 475 will prohibit, starting on July 1, the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board from adopting or enforcing occupational safety and health administrative regulations that

SEE **NEW**, PAGE 14



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# New state laws go into effect June 29

FROM PAGE 13

are more stringent than the corresponding federal provisions.

- **Elections.** House Bill 574 will make permanent some of the election procedures implemented last year to accommodate voting during the pandemic. The measure will offer Kentuckians three days – including a Saturday – leading up to an election day for early, in-person voting. It will allow county clerks to continue to offer ballot drop boxes for those who do not wish to send their ballots back by mail. It will also allow counties to offer voting centers where any registered voter in the county could vote.

- **Ethics.** Senate Bill 6 will create standards for ethical conduct for transition team members of all newly elected statewide officeholders. The standards include identifying any team member who is or has been a lobbyist. It will require disclosure of current employment, board member appointments and any non-state sources of money received for their services. It will also prohibit the receipt of nonpublic information that could benefit a transition team member financially.

- **Late fees.** House Bill 272 will allow water districts to impose a 10 percent late fee and cut off service for nonpayment of bills. Customers who receive financial assistance for their bills are exempt.

- **Adoption.** House Bill 210 will ensure that employers offer parents adopting a child under the age of ten the same amount of time off as birth parents.

- **Asthma.** Senate Bill 127 encourages schools to keep bronchodilator rescue inhalers in at least two locations and will require schools with inhalers to have policies regarding their use.

- **Child and new mother fatalities.** House Bill 212 will require data in an annual state report on fatalities among children and new mothers to include information on demographics, race, income and geography associated with the fatalities.

- **Child protection.** House Bill 254 will raise the penalty for possession or viewing of matter portraying a sexual performance by a minor under the age of 12 years to a Class C felony. It will also raise the penalty for the distribution of matter portraying a sexual performance of a minor under the age of 12 years to a Class C felony for the first offense and a Class B felony for each subsequent offense.

sequent offense.

- **Child support.** House Bill 402 will revise child support laws to increase the amount considered flagrant nonsupport from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

- **Education.** House Bill 563 will give families more options when deciding where to send kids to school and will assist families with the cost of educational expenses. The bill will allow the use of education opportunity accounts, a type of scholarship, for students to attend out-of-district public schools or obtain educational materials and supplies. For students in some of the state's largest counties, the scholarship funds could be used for private school tuition. Individuals or businesses who donate to organizations that issue education opportunity accounts will be eligible for a tax credit. The legislation will also require a board of education to adopt a nonresident pupil policy by July 1, 2022 to govern terms under which the district allows enrollment of nonresident pupils and includes those pupils in calculating the district's state funding.

- **Inmate care.** Senate Bill 84 will ban jails, penitentiaries, local and state correctional facilities, residential centers and reentry centers from placing inmates who are pregnant or within the immediate postpartum period in restrictive housing, administrative segregation, or solitary confinement. It will grant an inmate who gives birth 72 hours with a newborn before returning to the correctional facility and will offer six weeks of postpartum care. It also mandates that incarcerated pregnant women have access to social workers and any community-based programs to facilitate the placement and possible reunification of their child.

- **Living organ donors.** House Bill 75 will prohibit certain insurance coverage determinations based upon the status of an individual as a living organ donor. It will also encourage the Cabinet for Health and Family Services to develop educational materials relating to living organ donation.

- **Medicaid.** Senate Bill 55 will prohibit copays for Medicaid beneficiaries.

- **Newborn safety.** House Bill 155 will allow the use of a "newborn safety device" when a newborn is being anonymously surrendered by a parent at a participating staffed police station, fire station, or hospital. The device allows a parent surrendering an infant to do so

safely using a receptacle that triggers an alarm once a newborn is placed inside so that medical care providers can immediately respond and provide care to the child.

- **Police standards.** Senate Bill 80 expands the number of acts considered professional wrongdoing by police officers. Such acts include unjustified use of excessive or deadly force and engaging in a sexual relationship with a victim. The bill also will require an officer to intervene when another officer is engaging in the use of unlawful and unjustified excessive or deadly force. It will also set up a system for an officer's automatic decertification under certain circumstances and will prevent an officer from avoiding decertification by resigning before an internal investigation is complete.

- **Public records.** House Bill 312 will revise the states open records laws. It will limit the ability of people who do not live, work or conduct business in Kentucky to obtain records through open records laws. These restrictions do not

apply to out-of-state journalists. The legislation specifies that open records requests can be made via email. It also calls for a standardized form to be developed for open records request but does not require its use. It will allow the legislative branch to make final decisions that can't be appealed regarding decisions on open records requests it receives. The bill will allow government agencies up to five days to respond to open records requests.

- **Sexual abuse.** Senate Bill 52 will amend third-degree rape, third-degree sodomy and second-degree sexual abuse statutes so law enforcement officers could be charged with those crimes if they engage in sexual acts with a person under investigation, in custody or under arrest.

- **Theft.** House Bill 126 will increase the threshold of felony theft from \$500 to \$1,000. It will also allow law enforcement to charge members of organized shoplifting rings with a felony if a member steals a total of \$1,000 worth of merchandise over 90 days.

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# USDA announces dates for CRP general and grasslands signups

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has set a July 23, deadline for agricultural producers and landowners to apply for the Conservation Reserve Program General signup 56. Additionally, USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept applications for CRP Grasslands from July 12 to August 20.

This year, USDA updated both signup options to provide great incentives for producers and increase its conservation benefits, including reducing the impacts of climate change.

Both signups are competitive and will provide for annual rental payments for land devoted to conservation purposes.

"We are excited to roll out our new and improved CRP General and Grass-

lands signups," said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux. "Bottom line, CRP now makes more financial sense for producers while also providing a bigger return on investment in terms of natural resource benefits. The General and Grasslands signups are part of a broader suite of tools available through CRP to integrate key conservation practices on our nation's working lands."

## General Signup

Through CRP, producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. Lands enrolled in CRP also play a key

role in mitigating impacts from climate change, and FSA has added a new Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for practices that sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

FSA is also adding a one-time "inflationary" adjustment for payment rates, as well as having more flexibility on adjusting soil rental rates.

FSA opened the General Signup in January 2021 and extended the original deadline to July 23, 2021, to enable producers to consider FSA's new improvements to the program.

## Grasslands Signup

CRP Grasslands helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of

plant and animal populations, and improves environmental quality.

FSA has updated the Grasslands Signup to establish a minimum rental rate of \$15 per acre, as well as new National Grassland Priority Zones.

## How to Sign Up

To enroll in the CRP General signup, producers and landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center by the July 23 deadline. To enroll in the CRP Grasslands signup, contact USDA by the Aug. 20 deadline. While USDA offices may have limited visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. To work with FSA, producers and landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center. Contact information can be found at [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).

# KAFC approves almost \$1 in loans

The Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation approved \$967,643.50 in seven agricultural loans for projects across the commonwealth at its board meeting June 11.

"The investments made by the KAFC today cover a wide array of projects as well as many regions of Kentucky," Commissioner of Agriculture Dr. Ryan Quarles said. "In particular, critical investments were made for the future of Kentucky agriculture through the Beginning Farmer Loan Program which helps build a strong pipeline of agriculture leaders for the Commonwealth. I appreciate all the work done by KAFC board members to review these applications."

Agricultural Infrastructure Loan Program

Two Agricultural Infrastructure loans totaling \$150,000 were approved for recipients in Allen (\$100,000) and Laurel (\$50,000) counties. KAFC participates with lenders to provide financing to producers making capital expenditures for agricultural projects through the AILP. Eligible projects include permanent farm structures with attached equipment that improves the profitability of farming operations. Producers may be eligible for up to \$150,000 not to exceed 50 percent of the project.

Agricultural Processing Loan Program (APLP)

An Agricultural Processing loan totaling \$200,000 was approved for an operation in Caldwell County. APLP is designed to provide loan opportunities to companies and individuals in Kentucky interested in adding value to Kentucky-grown agricultural commodities through further processing. Agricultural processors may qualify for financing for acquisition of equipment, construction of new facilities, renovation/expansion of existing facilities and permanent working capital up to 50 percent of the project cost.

Beginning Farmer Loan Program (BFLP)

Four Beginning Farmer loans totaling \$617,643.50 were approved for recipients in Lincoln (\$250,000), Mercer (\$130,000), Warren (\$100,000), and Wayne (\$137,643.50) counties. BFLP is designed to assist individuals with some farming experience who desire to develop, expand or buy into a farming operation. Beginning farmers may qualify for financing to purchase livestock, equipment or agriculture facilities; to secure permanent working capital; for the purchase of farm real estate; or to invest in a partnership or LLC.

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AUCTION/MARKET

<b>Blue Grass South</b> Stanford, KY June 3, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 40 hd. 808# 134.75 blk-charx 72 hd. 812# 137.90 blk 117 hd. 855# 137.50 blk 61 hd. 876# 132.90 blk 59 hd. 924# 128.70 blk 59 hd. 925# 127.85 blk 59 hd. 926# 128.90 blk 58 hd. 931# 127.20 mixed 113 hd. 970# 126.90 blk <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 77 hd. 646# 137.50 blk-charx 78 hd. 697# 131.90 mixed 72 hd. 724# 132.00 blk 56 hd. 779# 129.95 blk-charx 70 hd. 793# 125.75 blk 133 hd. 809# 126.80 blk-charx	<b>KY-TN Livestock Auction</b> Guthrie, KY June 3, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 30 hd. 526# 165.00 bbwf 32 hd. 630# 148.00 bbwf <b>Feeder Bulls:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 20 hd. 547# 156.00 bbwf 30 hd. 626# 136.50 bbwf <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 34 hd. 551# 141.50 bbwf 20 hd. 626# 125.00 bbwf	<b>Blue Grass Stockyards</b> Lexington, KY June 1, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 43 hd. 616# 159.50 blk 21 hd. 661# 158.50 blk 68 hd. 717# 152.10 blk 68 hd. 771# 140.00 blk 121 hd. 857# 131.75 blk-mixed 129 hd. 892# 128.00 blk 55 hd. 897# 125.80 blk-charx 21 hd. 708# 145.00 blk 47 hd. 923# 124.00 blk <b>Holstein Steers:</b> Large 3 76 hd. 558# 107.50 25 hd. 647# 106.90 <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 47 hd. 621# 140.75 blk 62 hd. 882# 116.00 blk-charx 61 hd. 817# 122.00 blk	<b>Paris Stockyards</b> Paris, KY June 3, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 21 hd. 577# 155.00 blk
	<b>Blue Grass of Richmond</b> Richmond, KY June 4, 2021 <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 24 hd. 674# 126.00 blk 74 hd. 724# 131.60 mixed		<b>Russell County Stockyards</b> Russell Springs, KY June 2, 2021 <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 28 hd. 587# 137.00 blk
	<b>Blue Grass of Campbellsville</b> Campbellsville, KY June 2 & 5, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 75 hd. 671# 147.50 blk 40 hd. 858# 122.50 blk <b>Holstein Steers:</b> Large 3 131 hd. 496# 120.50 22 hd. 653# 107.50 52 hd. 969# 96.00 <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & large 1-2 20 hd. 778# 114.00 blk	<b>Blue Grass East</b> Mt. Sterling, KY June 2, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 60 hd. 866# 130.00 blk-mixed	<b>Lake Cumberland Livestock</b> Somerset, KY June 5, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 49 hd. 897# 129.50 blk 24 hd. 971# 122.75 blk 46 hd.1082#118.00 blk <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 92 hd. 587# 141.75 mixed 32 hd. 883# 117.50 mixed
<b>Mid-KY Livestock Market</b> Upton, KY June 1, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 20 hd. 692# 137.00 mixed 56 hd. 857# 128.20 blk <b>Feeder Heifers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 20 hd. 574# 129.50 mixed			<b>United Producers Owenton</b> Owenton, KY June 2, 2021 <b>Feeder Steers:</b> Medium & Large 1-2 57 hd. 884# 127.75 blk-charx

USDA ESTIMATED DAILY LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER				
	CATTLE	CALVES	HOGS	SHEEP
Friday 06/04/2021 (est)	119,000	1,000	478,000	6,000
Week Ago (est)	117,000	1,000	425,000	3,000
Year Ago (act)	113,000	2,000	443,000	6,000
Week to Date (est)	440,000	4,000	1,779,000	31,000
Same Pd Lt Week (est)	595,000	6,000	2,356,000	36,000
Same Pd Lt Yr (act)	566,000	8,000	2,133,000	36,000

**National Daily Direct Slaughter Cattle**  
**Negotiated Purchases 06/04/2021**  
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**Steers:**  
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AUCTION/MARKET

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<b>06/04/2021 4:00 pm est</b> <b>Bids for next day</b> <b>Cash Bids</b> Corn #2 Yellow Corn #2 White Soybeans #1 Y Wheat #2 SRW Barley	<b>Louisville</b>	<b>Pennyrile</b>	<b>Purchase</b>	<b>Bluegrass</b>	<b>Green River</b>	<b>Northern KY</b>		
	7.12-7.24  15.51 6.55	7.13-7.23  15.74-15.89 6.53-6.73	7.03-7.08 7.08 15.99-16.02 6.83-6.98	7.17  15.96 6.63	7.28  15.96 6.73	7.13  16.00 6.97		
<b>New Crop Delivery Contract</b>  Corn #2 Yellow Corn #2 White Soybeans #1 Y Wheat #2 SRW Barley	5.85  13.73 NA	5.87-5.92  13.96-14.26 NA	5.82-6.02 5.97-6.17 14.36-14.41 NA	5.67  13.91 NA	6.02  14.16 NA	5.89  14.26 NA		
<b>Weekly Feed Ingredient Price</b> Wholesale prices, \$ per ton Rail or Truck FOB Location	<b>Owensboro Grain</b>  <b>06/07/2021</b>	<b>Commonwealth Agri-Energy Hopkinsville</b>  <b>06/07/2021</b>	<b>St. Louis Weekly Feed Prices</b>  <b>06/01/2021</b>	<b>Memphis Weekly Feed Report</b>  <b>05/25/2021</b>	<b>Corn Belt Feedstuffs Report</b>  <b>06/01/2021</b>	<b>Daily Direct Hog Prices LM_HG218 06/07/2021</b> Barrows & Gilts Purchased Swine Receipts: 8,005 Base Price: \$99.84-\$118.50  Wt. Avg. \$110.10  Compared to prior day, wt. avg. base prices were 1.50 higher.  5 Day Rolling Average: \$109.21	<b>FOR DAILY LIVESTOCK AND GRAIN MARKET REPORTS</b>   <b>CALL FARMLOT</b>  <b>1-800-327-6568</b>  <b>1-502-573-0553</b>	
Soybean Meal 48% Sol Soybean Hulls Corn Distillers Grain Dried Distillers Grain Modified Distillers Grain Wet Corn Condensed Solubles Corn Gluten Feed 20-21 pct Corn Gluten Meal 60 pct Cottonseed Meal 41 pct Whole Cottonseed Wheat Middlings	410.90 200.00 — — — — — — — — —	— — 253.00 141.00 87.00 NA — — — — —	406.00-411.00 — — — — — 257.00 665.00 410.00 — 185.00-200.00	406.30-421.30 155.00 — — — — — 360.00-370.00 385.00 —	388.70-422.70 — 192.00-245.00 — — — 200.00-220.00 598.00-625.00 — —			

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# AUCTION/MARKET

## STATE AVERAGES

Steers (M&L 1-2)	This Week	Prior Week	Last Year
350-400 lbs	160.46	165.90	165.54
400-450 lbs	163.58	158.85	159.81
450-500 lbs	160.64	156.13	153.94
500-550 lbs	156.31	151.31	149.29
550-600 lbs	149.82	148.00	144.67
600-650 lbs	142.44	140.74	137.99
650-700 lbs	139.78	139.54	135.02
700-750 lbs	130.12	128.37	127.50
750-800 lbs	129.06	128.49	123.41
800-850 lbs	125.94	122.49	125.75
850-900 lbs	128.29	119.58	120.22
Heifers (M&L 1-2)			
300-350 lbs	143.74	138.51	146.57
350-400 lbs	143.35	141.13	142.77
400-450 lbs	143.26	139.43	138.07
450-500 lbs	142.97	139.55	136.96
500-550 lbs	137.25	134.19	129.71
550-600 lbs	131.83	129.77	127.96
600-650 lbs	125.44	124.23	121.12
650-700 lbs	125.77	121.14	117.28
700-750 lbs	114.18	110.28	114.51
750-800 lbs	111.85	108.56	112.65

WEEKLY COW SUMMARY				
Slaughter Cows	Average	High	Low	
Breakers	58.00-72.00	62.50-80.00	53.00-61.00	
Boners	46.00-73.50	59.00-84.00	46.00-61.00	
Lean	35.00-69.00	55.50-78.00	20.00-57.50	
Slaughter Bulls	Average	High	Low	
Yield Grade 1&2	83.00-103.00	94.00-118.50	67.50-91.00	

<u>May 27, 2021</u>		Bowling Green, KY	
SLAUGHTER GOATS: 250			
Kids-Selection 1 100-115 lbs 325.00-360.00. Selection 1-2 56 lbs 372.50; 67 lbs 360.00; 90 lbs 270.00. Selection 2 47 lbs 300.00; 53 lbs 367.50; 63 lbs 290.00-...			
SLAUGHTER SHEEP: 535			
Wooled-Choice and Prime 1-2 54 lbs 240.00; 71-72 lbs 230.00-260.00; 82 lbs 240.00; 95 lbs 235.00; 113 lbs 230.00; 160 lbs 100.00. Choice 2 70 lbs 230.00; 122 lbs 110.00. Hair Breeds-Choice and Prime 1 71 lbs 245.00. Choice and Prime 1-2 53 lbs 240.00; 70 lbs 222.50; 89 lbs 210.00.			

GRAINS	This Week	Prior Week	Last Year
Corn	6.82-7.39	6.30-7.15	3.26-3.31
Soybeans	15.16-16.34	14.67-15.87	8.01-8.28
Red Winter Wheat	6.41-7.14	6.49-6.76	4.71-5.16

### WEEKLY 400-600 LB FEEDER STEER M&L 1-2 WEIGHTED AVERAGE PRICE (\$/CWT)

Month	2021	2020	5 Year Average
J	150	150	150
F	155	155	155
M	160	160	160
A	165	165	165
M	160	160	160
J	155	155	155
J	150	150	150
A	145	145	145
S	140	140	140
O	145	145	145
N	140	140	140
D	145	145	145

### WEEKLY 400-600 LB FEEDER HEIFER M&L 1-2 WEIGHTED AVERAGE PRICE (\$/CWT)

Month	2021	2020	5 Year Average
J	125	125	125
F	130	130	130
M	135	135	135
A	140	140	140
M	135	135	135
J	130	130	130
J	125	125	125
A	120	120	120
S	115	115	115
O	120	120	120
N	115	115	115
D	120	120	120

### WEEKLY KENTUCKY CATTLE AUCTION RECEIPTS

Month	2021	2020	5 Year Average
J	25	25	25
F	15	15	15
M	30	30	30
A	20	20	20
M	15	15	15
J	10	10	10
J	15	15	15
A	10	10	10
S	15	15	15
O	20	20	20
N	15	15	15
D	30	30	30

### WEEKLY KENTUCKY CORN BID AVERAGE PRICE (\$/CWT)

Month	2021	2020	5 Year Average
J	5.0	4.0	3.8
F	5.5	4.0	3.8
M	5.8	4.0	3.8
A	6.0	4.0	3.8
M	7.5	4.0	3.8
J	7.0	4.0	3.8
J	3.5	4.0	3.8
A	3.2	4.0	3.8
S	3.5	4.0	3.8
O	4.0	4.0	3.8
N	4.2	4.0	3.8
D	4.3	4.0	3.8

### USDA-KY Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News

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# AUCTION/MARKET

Produce Prices updated 06/04/2021

Variety	Unit Size	Price Range	Avg. Price
Tomato #1	20 lbs	7.00-27.00	27.00
Tomato #2	20 lbs	5.00-19.00	10.74
Tomato small/canner	20 lbs	5.00-13.00	8.02
Asparagus	.5 lbs	1.50-1.75	1.57
Bell Peppers	.5 bu	18.00-20.00	19.50
Broccoli	.5 bu	8.00-11.00	9.63
Cabbage	hd.	0.40-1.20	0.53
Cauliflower	hd.	0.50-1.75	1.32
Cucumbers, slicing	.5 bu	3.00-24.00	14.47
Green Beans	.5 bu	16.00-27.00	20.77
Sweet Corn	doz.	5.25-6.50	5.75
Yellow Squash	.5 bu	12.00-27.00	20.72
Zucchini	.5 bu	11.00-30.00	19.02

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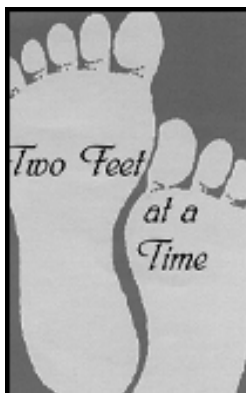
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## NCGA Announces Sustainability Commitment and 2030 Goals

National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) solidified U.S. corn farmers' commitment to environmental, economic and social sustainability with the release of U.S. Corn Sustainability Goals and the first U.S. Corn Sustainability Report. The report documents a long history of continuous improvement by U.S. corn farmers and the goals set targets for further progress over the next decade.

Farmer-leaders from Kentucky participated with NCGA to set five environmental national efficiency goals to further enhance corn production sustainability in the United States by 2030:

1. Increase land use efficiency by 12 percent.
2. Increase irrigation water use efficiency by 15 percent.
3. Reduce soil erosion by 13 percent.
4. Increase energy efficiency by 13 percent.
5. Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 13 percent.

Richard Preston, KyCorn President, explains the importance of this report and goals to ensure continued corn demand for the crop.

"Consumers' buying habits, both foreign and domestic, are evolving. The need has been developing for some time for our grain buyers and corn's end-users to be able to show consumers the environmental footprint throughout their supply chain. The fact is: consumers want a verifiable metric, and they want to see measured improvement over time. I'm proud we have created this forward-looking strategy, it is what our customers need to communicate with their customers."

## Kentucky Grain Tour Hosts Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

For farmers, the importance of interface with Kentucky's policy and regulatory agencies can never be overstated. And, the impact of having a personal working relationship with regulatory officials should never be underestimated. To enhance these relationships, grain agriculture organizations came together earlier this month to host a team from the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet, including Secretary Rebecca Goodman, Deputy Secretary John Lyons, Deputy Commissioner of the Dept. of Environmental Protection Amanda Lefever and Anne Marie Franklin, Executive Advisor to Secretary Goodman focused on the Kentucky AgriTech project.

The tour began at Commonwealth AgriEnergy for a deep discussion on the environmental benefits of ethanol and biodiesel, and the economic development importance of these products. Secretary Goodman was intent on understanding what her cabinet and others within the Beshear Administration can do to facilitate the success of these industries.

Joseph Sisk, KyCorn Board and Promotion Council member participated in that discussion. He observed, "I was grateful for her openness and willingness to ask and answer questions of the farmers. She was very proactive in expressing her desire to keep honest and open communication between the ag community and the Cabinet."

Joseph was then the first farm tour stop, providing insight on water management and irrigation strategies, the importance of winter crops for soil conservation and the environmental benefits of strip-tillage. The group caravanned to Cundiff Farms



Secretary Rebecca Goodman and her team visited several western Kentucky grain farms and businesses. They were amazed with the technology and sustainability demonstrations. Below right: KyCorn's Richard Preston presented Sec. Goodman with the US Corn Sustainability Report.



for demonstrations from Barry Alexander's edge-of-field water monitoring and to see the farm's system for using solar energy at their grain handling facility. Next, Josh Lancaster hosted at L. Hust Farms for open discussion on how farmers are preparing to be a resource in the design of future regulatory programs.

Day two of the tour began in Larue County with Ryan Bivens moderating a discussion on how regulatory processes can go off the rails without appropriate interaction with regulatory officials. The points were very well-received, and Secretary Goodman explained her efforts to avoid these occurrences. Family farming was then

center stage with Caleb Ragland at Shady Rest Farms; he explained his highly-technical program for responsibly injecting liquid manure for corn production. Richard Preston and Josh McGrath wrapped up the event with their explanation of how land-grant research enhances conservation by enabling intensive crop management.

"We are grateful for Secretary Goodman's complete attention and sincere dialogue for two intense days of travel," remarked Laura Knoth, KyCorn Executive Director. "There was tough discussion at some points, but every discussion was highly productive and certainly important to the future of Kentucky's grain community."