

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION®

2020 IMPACT REPORT



AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION®



America's farmers and ranchers rose to the challenges of 2020, working together across the food chain to ensure our nation's food supply remained secure in these uncertain times. The American Farm Bureau Federation has been proud to tell that story and focus intently on ensuring that our nation's farms and ranches keep running throughout and well beyond this crisis.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the crises it brought our way, we never let-up on the gas pedal to make progress on ag labor, regulatory reform, increasing broadband access, addressing mental health in rural America and expanding trade. As evidence, we brought home some big wins for farmers and ranchers in 2020.

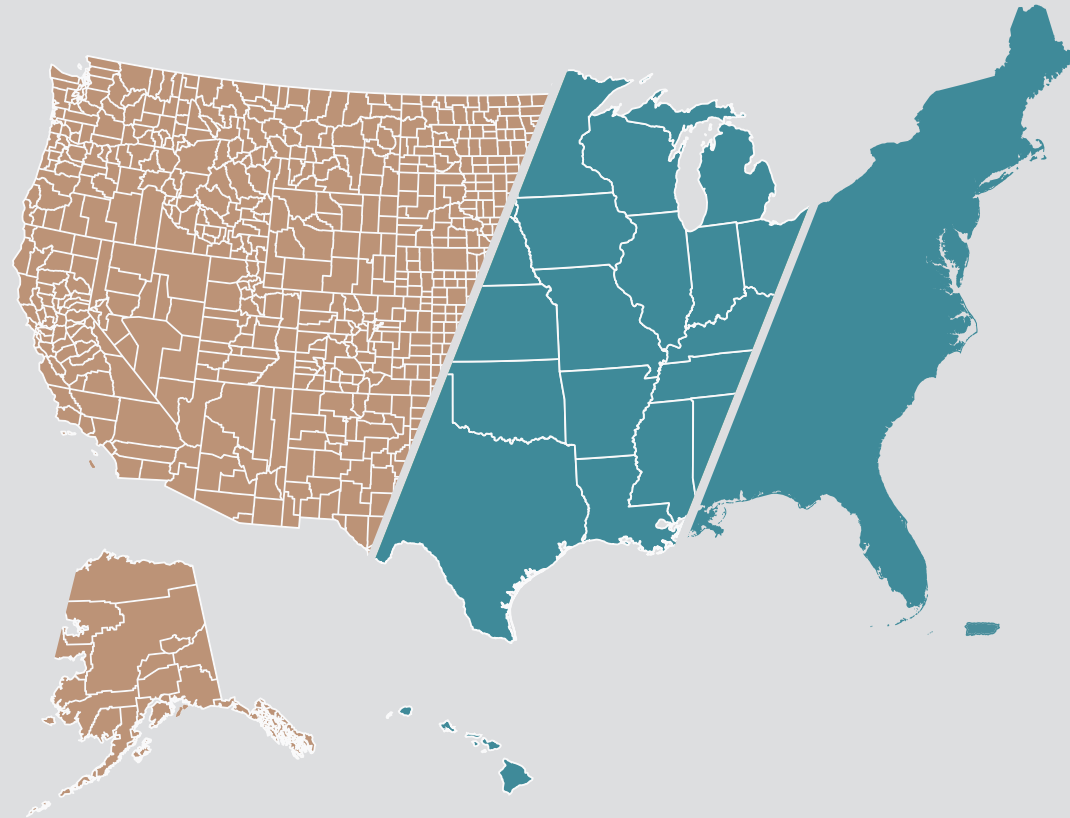
One example is our successful effort to ensure H-2A visa workers could travel to the U.S. to work on farms across the country, even when consulates around the world threatened to cease processing of H-2A visas due to the pandemic. We're also heartened that trade is headed in the right direction, with USDA recently issuing a forecast that exports of farm goods will increase to \$140.5 billion next year. Another bright spot is that through Farm Bureau's legal advocacy, we defeated early efforts to block implementation of new rules that provide a reasonable definition of "navigable waters" and commonsense reforms of the process for environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act.

These accomplishments, and others outlined in this Impact Report, would not have been possible without the active engagement of grassroots Farm Bureau leaders and members in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Informed, skilled, active and engaged members were the source of our strength in 2020, just as they have been for the last 101 years.

We hope this Impact Report makes you proud and sparks your interest in joining our efforts to share the impressive story of agriculture and ensure the right policies and programs are in place to build a sustainable future of safe and abundant food, fiber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world. With record-high interest in how food is produced, record-high public trust in farmers, and so much potential to make even greater strides forward in U.S. agriculture in the next few years, now is the time to seize this opportunity together.

God bless,
ZIPPY DUVALL
PRESIDENT

A large, stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Zippy Duvall".



2,800
COUNTY FARM BUREAUS

50
STATE FARM BUREAUS +
PUERTO RICO

NEARLY
6 Million
MEMBER FAMILIES

The American Farm Bureau Federation® is the Voice of Agriculture®

We are farm and ranch families working together to build a sustainable future of safe and abundant food, fiber and renewable fuel for our nation and the world.

Working Together to Build Strong Agricultural Communities Since 1919

Farm Bureau is an independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization governed by and representing farm and ranch families. Farm Bureau is local, county, state, national and international in its scope and influence and is non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-secret in character.

Through collaboration and partnership with state Farm Bureaus and operating with integrity, the American Farm Bureau Federation is the national advocate for farmers, ranchers and rural communities. This includes engaging consumers to build trust in, and share the story of, agriculture. AFBF also strives to develop programs and tools that help farmers and ranchers succeed in business and leadership.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

Active and engaged farmers and ranchers are the power behind the American Farm Bureau Federation. Our influence is unmatched when state and county Farm Bureaus and grassroots members unite with us to advocate for public policies that advance agriculture and strengthen rural communities.

The power of AFBF begins with some of the most respected agricultural policy experts in the country who provide deep insight to members of Congress and federal agencies as they develop and implement policy. That foundation of expertise is leveraged by AFBF programs that develop leadership and engagement skills among our members, building an unparalleled network of effective advocates.

Focused strategic communications unite and amplify Farm Bureau voices and perspectives, reaching beyond elected leaders and government officials to engage consumers interested in learning more about how their food is produced. This comprehensive framework establishes AFBF as the Voice of Agriculture.

AFBF has a long and proud history of analyzing policy proposals, including their potential benefits, drawbacks and unintended consequences. Since its inception in 1919, AFBF has been defined by a true grassroots policy development process. Every January, farmer and rancher delegates set AFBF's formal policy agenda after deliberation on and anticipation of the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture in the coming year.

AFBF's Issue Advisory Committees provide avenues for Farm Bureau's grassroots leaders to contribute their expertise to the organization's policy development process. Committees focus on issues including farm policy, agricultural labor, water resources, energy, technology and animal care. Committee members provide advice and counsel to the AFBF board of directors, overall policy recommendations to the AFBF Resolutions Committee, and recommendations for state Farm Bureau policy development.



Credit: Michael LoBiondo, AFBF

In the final step of Farm Bureau's grassroots policy development process, voting delegates meet each January at the AFBF Convention to determine the policies that will guide the organization in the coming year.

2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

AFBF's 2020 goals were advanced through a mix of in-person and virtual meetings, action alerts sparking grassroots advocacy, media engagement and digital amplification. Highlights of achievements, progress and advocacy for 2020 are below.

Covid-19 Assistance to Farmers and Ranchers

Throughout 2020, AFBF continuously responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our primary focus was to ensure farmers and ranchers had the resources to continue to provide America's food supply, and to maintain public support for agriculture to ensure the integrity of the food supply chain.



Credit: AKFB

Policy Initiative Fund

AFBF awarded grants of \$5,000 each to five state Farm Bureaus – Alaska, Maine, New Mexico, South Dakota and Vermont – for new programs through the Policy Initiative Fund, which was established in 2020. The goal of the program is to advance AFBF's board-approved strategic policy issues by supporting smaller states (those with fewer than 25,000 members) in conducting meaningful projects. The program was funded primarily by AFBF, with contributions from the Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee and Utah Farm Bureaus.



A powerful letter co-authored by AFBF and Feeding America struck a chord with USDA. The letter and subsequent meetings contributed to the development of USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program.

AFBF advocated for support for farmers and ranchers impacted by COVID-19 through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, with \$16 billion in funding; inclusion of agriculture in the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan program; and a focused effort to enable meat processing plants to protect workers while remaining open to ensure a market for livestock producers and a stable meat supply for U.S. consumers.

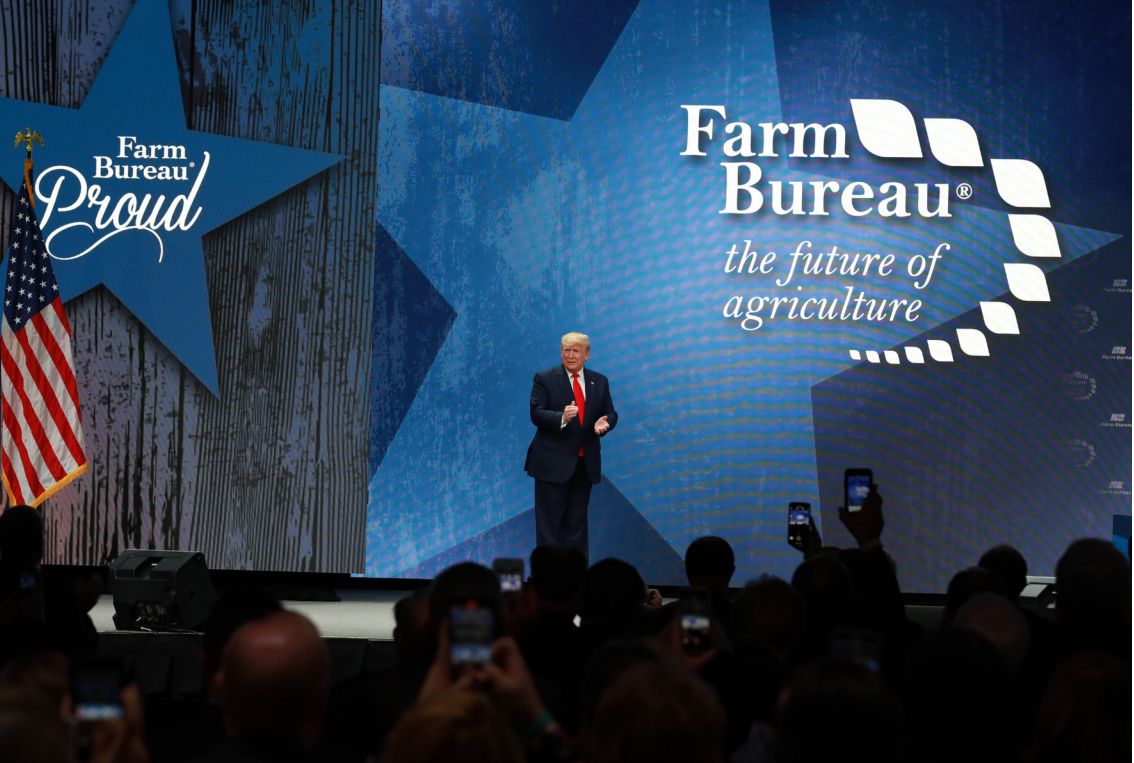
In September, the administration announced details of a new \$14 billion Coronavirus Food Assistance Program, or CFAP2. AFBF strongly urged support for the program, which provided direct payments to farmers and ranchers to partially offset COVID-19-related losses. This followed an estimated \$10 billion in support provided to cattle, hog, dairy, non-specialty crop, specialty crop and other producers in the first round of CFAP to offset COVID-19-related losses experienced through mid-April 2020.

At the end of December, Congress passed a COVID stimulus package that included up to \$13 billion in funding for agriculture. The AFBF team worked for months to ensure the needs of America's farmers and ranchers were brought forward to lawmakers as they considered the package, which provides more help to specialty and non-specialty crop growers, as well as farmers and ranchers who were previously left out of aid and will now qualify for assistance.

Farmers to Families Food Box Program

When stories emerged of empty food bank shelves and hours-long lines at food banks in April, AFBF co-authored a letter with Feeding America calling on USDA to be nimble and innovative in helping to get surplus food from farms to food banks. The letter and subsequent meetings contributed to the development of USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program, while also generating an impressive reservoir of good will.

Within 24 hours of issuing a news release about the letter, AFBF was mentioned more than 350 times in the media, including by "Good Morning America", CNN and ABC News. Virtually every time empty shelves and long lines at food banks were mentioned, so was our letter and our efforts to help find a solution.



Credit: Michael LoBiondo, AFBF

President Donald Trump addressed Farm Bureau members at the 101st AFBF Convention in Austin, Texas, in January.

REGULATORY REFORM

National Environmental Policy Act:

The Council on Environmental Quality announced its final rule titled "Update to the Regulations Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act." AFBF consulted with the Council and submitted comments in support of the rule, which was the first comprehensive update to NEPA in 40 years. The regulations are a welcome modernization of the federal environmental review process and will protect the environment while benefiting the economy.

Leveraging Media to
Achieve Strategic Goals

Part of AFBF's mission is to serve as the Voice of Agriculture. This requires a clear focus and strategy to earn media coverage, which paid off in 2020 with almost 37,000 placements in print and broadcast. An aggressive outreach effort, coupled with unprecedented issues caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, led to an increase in placements by more than 60% compared to 2019. The coverage had a reach of 84 million, with more than 86% being either positive or neutral.

AFBF was mentioned by top-tier media outlets such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, CNN and Fox News more than 300 times.

We continue to focus our strategic efforts on growing our audience and increasing engagement across digital platforms. The results have been impressive – AFBF's digital audience grew by 30% and engagements increased by 35% in 2020.

This growth stemmed, in large part, from our coverage of America's farmers and ranchers' response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most-viewed page on FB.org in 2020 was the COVID-19 Impact page, which illustrates the pandemic's impact on Farm Bureau members and how they responded. The page garnered nearly 90,000 page views. That's a 42% increase in the top-viewed page on the site compared to 2019.

In The News

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THE RURAL DIGITAL DIVIDE

The Epoch Times quoted AFBF President Duvall in a story about how 65% of rural Americans have access to high speed internet compared to 97% of urban Americans. “It’s ridiculous that a farmer’s child has to go to McDonald’s to be able to get online and keep up with his education,” Duvall said.

Conservation Compliance:

AFBF launched a campaign to stand up for farmers and ranchers treated unfairly by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service after the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals issued a stern rebuke of the agency’s historical conservation compliance enforcement. The campaign highlighted the case of Illinois farmer Kurt Wilke, who later scored a major victory when the director of USDA’s National Appeals Division ruled he could pursue reimbursement for legal fees in a court battle that had lasted 10 years. More broadly, the decision is expected to help ensure fair NRCS enforcement going forward.

Clean Water Rule:

In January, EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers finalized the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, which brings much-needed clarity and constitutional boundaries to authorities’ control over “waters of the United States.” A 2015 version of the rule vastly expanded EPA’s and the Corps’ regulatory authority over farm and ranch land, as well as other private property, far beyond the limits approved by Congress and affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court. AFBF and a broad coalition of business and industry organizations championed this reform and continue working to ensure that the new rule is implemented in a manner that achieves the clarity promised by the administration.

Endangered Species Act:

Comments submitted by AFBF and the National Endangered Species Act Reform Coalition to the Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies helped shape a proposed rule defining the term “habitat” as used to determine critical habitat designations under the ESA. This change benefits farmers and ranchers by bringing greater clarity and consistency to how the Service designates critical “habitat” by explicitly limiting the term habitat to apply only to critical habitat designations under the ESA. In addition, AFBF supported the Department of the Interior’s removal of the gray wolf from the endangered species list, as this signaled a successful recovery under the ESA. The population is now thriving in the lower 48 states.

In the legislative arena, AFBF urged support for Sen. John Barrasso’s (R-Wyo.) ESA Amendments Act. The legislation reauthorizes the ESA for the first time since 1992, elevates the role of states and increases transparency in implementation. It also prioritizes resources to help meet conservation goals, while providing regulatory certainty to promote species recovery activities.

TRADE

AFBF remained engaged in a wide range of trade issues, seeing significant progress in 2020. A recent USDA report projected that ag exports will increase to \$140.5 billion next year, with China leading the increase. In addition to the new U.S.-China Phase 1 Agreement committing China to more purchases from the U.S., 2020 brought the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the U.S.-Japan agreement, and negotiations are well underway with the United Kingdom.

AFBF President Zippy Duvall and several state Farm Bureau presidents testified at U.S. Trade Representative/USDA/Commerce Department hearings on seasonal produce imports as part of a welcome effort to remedy the damage caused to America’s produce farmers by increased imports from other countries that do not comply with trade agreements. USTR subsequently requested an International Trade Commission investigation, which was an important step forward.

BROADBAND

AFBF continued to advocate for several legislative initiatives related to broadband, a need further highlighted by the pandemic as school and office closures made it necessary to work and learn from home in many underserved rural areas. Signed into law in March, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocated more than \$500 million to help rural communities connect to broadband internet. Also in March, the Broadband DATA Act was signed into law, changing the way the government collects data on broadband access so that maps correctly show the areas that are lacking and need service.

AFBF joined the American Connection Project Broadband Coalition, representing more than 100 businesses and organizations across agriculture, finance, health care, technology and food production, to extend our reach and collective impact advocating for enactment of groundbreaking broadband connectivity legislation that closes the digital divide.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR & IMMIGRATION

AFBF worked with the administration to find a way to safely continue visa processing services for H-2A and H-2B workers, after the COVID-19 pandemic halted routine visa processing services in consulates around the world. Through continual communication with key leaders in the administration and Congress, we were able to meet the workforce needs of U.S. farmers

AFBF Legal Advocacy: A Respected Voice for Farmers in the Courts

AFBF is the leading national advocate for U.S. farmers and ranchers in the courts. As the Voice of Agriculture®, AFBF initiates or joins litigation to shape many of the laws that affect the ability of farmers and ranchers to conduct their operations. Farm Bureau member dues support AFBF’s Legal Advocacy efforts to maintain a functional U.S. legal and regulatory climate so farmers and ranchers can be productive stewards of our natural resources.

Through Farm Bureau’s legal advocacy, in 2020 we defeated early efforts to block implementation of new rules that provide a reasonable definition of “navigable waters” and commonsense reforms of the process for environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act. The litigation is ongoing, and AFBF remains fully committed to defending these and other administrative wins of the past several years.

Also in 2020, AFBF stood up for hundreds of dairy farmers being targeted by lawyers representing the estate of Dean Foods, which is undergoing bankruptcy proceedings. AFBF sent a letter to the law firm representing the Dean Foods estate calling for an immediate reversal of their “predatory shakedown” and threatening potential legal action if the firm fails to withdraw letters sent to farmers demanding that they refund money legitimately earned prior to the bankruptcy filing.



A strong FMMO system ensures orderly marketing of milk.



Farmer members reviewed data collection and reporting methodologies.

and ranchers. Our efforts resulted in modified entry requirements for the majority of H-2A applicants, ensuring appropriate scrutiny while enabling the essential work of producing food, fiber and fuel.

AFBF partnered with the Agriculture Workforce Coalition on several letters requesting funding to offset additional costs incurred by employers to provide workers with personal protective equipment, additional housing, sanitization supplies and COVID mitigation, and prioritize COVID mitigation supplies for the agriculture and food supply chain. We also advocated for a better system of determining appropriate compensation for H-2A workers and supported a revised Labor Department regulation that provides stability and predictability in labor costs. This also ensures wage rates under the program keep pace with wage growth observed across the broader U.S. economy.

WORKING GROUPS

Federal Milk Marketing Order Working Group:

After a more than year-long effort to develop milk pricing reforms, AFBF released its final recommendations in July, calling for a strong Federal Milk Marketing Order system that ensures orderly marketing of milk. The group also released proposed improvements in the FMMO system designed to restore farmers' trust in the system.

Cattle Market Working Group:

Ten state Farm Bureau presidents convened to analyze extreme volatility in the cattle markets due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of the Holcomb, Kansas, beef plant fire that occurred in August 2019. After more than two months of investigation, the group issued a report that provides an economic overview of the two events. The report is intended to serve as a guiding document for county and state Farm Bureau policy development.

USDA-NASS Working Group:

A group of farmer members reviewed USDA-NASS data collection and reporting methodologies, considering the impact of unforeseen and unexpected shocks to the farm sector on the survey-based collection and subsequent dissemination of USDA-NASS data. The working group's findings were presented during the December board meeting and shared with the Secretary of Agriculture following board approval.

MARKET INTEL & MARKET PRICES|SNAPSHOT

Market Intel and Market Prices|Snapshot, produced by the economics department, continued to grow in popularity in 2020. Market Intel provides market and policy insight and analysis for farmer and rancher members nationwide, as well as policymakers on Capitol Hill. In 2020, Market Intel garnered an impressive 660,000 page views. Market Prices|Snapshot, which features commodity market futures prices for grains, oilseeds, livestock, dairy and soft products (e.g. cotton, sugar, orange juice), garnered 10,000 page views. Users visit the site to better understand market trends and make well-informed business decisions.

PRESIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire distributed by AFBF several weeks before Election Day to the 2020 presidential candidates provided insight into their priorities for rural America and generated a high level of interest. AFBF asked the Republican and Democratic candidates about their stances on several topics directly affecting America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities, including trade, labor, regulatory reform and sustainability. Responses to the questionnaire posted to FB.org resonated with visitors to the site — generating more than 27,000 page views.

RACE FOR CHANGE

In the wake of international protests against racism and injustice against Black people that were sparked by the killing of George Floyd and others, AFBF formed a 12-person anti-racism working group to guide AFBF staff efforts to serve as a positive influence against racism. AFBF embarked on this effort realizing that we can better embody the values of the Farm Bureau Family, and be a stronger team, if we work to be a positive influence against racism. The working group (which named itself Race for Change) is studying this important issue with plans to offer recommendations, which are not yet final as this report goes to press.

See the original statement from President Zippy Duvall in right sidebar.

"Our hearts go out to the family of George Floyd and others who have suffered as a result of racial injustice. We strongly oppose racial discrimination and believe just treatment by law enforcement is essential to maintain public trust and to uphold our Constitution. We also believe we have a responsibility across our society to honestly examine, identify and address racism.

"That includes looking within our own organizations. At AFBF, we are doing just that. We are forming a cross-functional working group to determine how we, as staff of the American Farm Bureau, can be a positive influence against racism.

"Part of the strength of our communities and nation is our ability to pull together in times of crisis. We must do so now."

**STATEMENT FROM
AFBF President Zippy Duvall,
June 4, 2020**

#STILLFARMING CAMPAIGN

When the country began to see empty grocery store shelves at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, AFBF launched the #StillFarming social media campaign as part of our strategy to build public confidence in America's farmers and ranchers. To date, the campaign has reached more than 99 million across the digital landscape. #StillFarming tells the stories of farmers and ranchers still hard at work during the pandemic – and the challenges they are overcoming to feed America and the world.

The campaign continued into the fall using digital marketing and the power of the Farm Bureau network across the nation to demonstrate how farmers and ranchers are working hard to keep the nation fed through these uncertain times.

Building on the phenomenal initial success, the next evolution of #StillFarming will include a merchandise line, with the proceeds benefiting the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture and Feeding America. The rollout of this phase of the campaign is planned for the American Farm Bureau's Virtual Convention in January 2021.



FARM DOG OF THE YEAR CONTEST

The Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year contest celebrates farm dogs who work alongside their people to bring nutritious food to our tables and our pets' bowls. Flint, an Australian shepherd owned by Utah Farm Bureau members Rhett and Beth Crandall, was honored as the 2020 Farm Bureau Farm Dog of the Year.

Runner-up Sue, owned by Alabama Farmers Federation members Phil and Kim Slay, was also named People's Choice Pup in a social media contest with online voting as part of the overall competition. More than 100,000 social media followers voted, commented, shared or liked their favorite dog as part of the People's Choice Pup competition.



The #StillFarming campaign tells the stories of members across the nation who are still hard at work on their farms and ranches through the use of numerous tactics including a video and the COVID-19 web page.

#STILLFARMING PERFORMANCE 2020

99M
DIGITAL REACH

873K
ENGAGEMENTS

28K
HASHTAG USES

50
STATES
USED

91
COUNTRIES
USED

90%
POSITIVE
SENTIMENT



Credit: John Boelts, AFBF

CELEBRATING FARM BUREAU MEMBERS: John Boelts

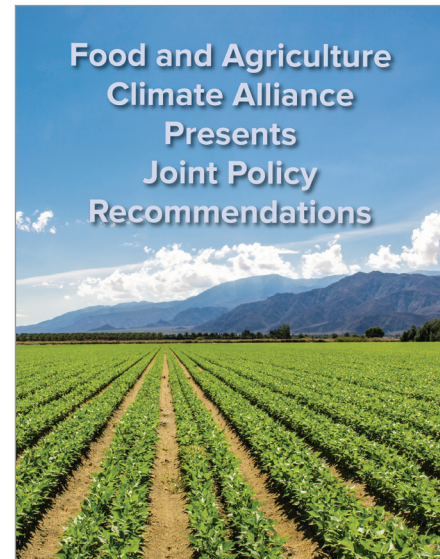
Making Sure Employees' Safety and Health Come First

In planting, harvesting and processing their fruits, vegetables and other farm goods, farmers and farm workers are making good on a commitment to feed their families, communities and many others. In the time of COVID-19, that commitment extends to staying healthy, a responsibility farmers, like Arizona grower John Boelts, take very seriously. Boelts grows melons, lettuce, leafy greens and other vegetables.

"We care a great deal for our farm workers," Boelts said. "There is nothing we can accomplish on our farm without each and every one of our employees. Our first priority is keeping them safe."

STRENGTHENING RURAL AMERICA INITIATIVES & COLLABORATIONS

AFBF's programs and initiatives beyond the policy arena enrich the rural communities where grassroots members live and work. These are a few of the highlights from 2020.



FACA unveiled an unprecedented set of recommendations to guide development of federal climate policy.

CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Farmers For a Sustainable Future:

In February, AFBF joined 20 other farm and ranch groups representing millions of U.S. farmers and ranchers to launch Farmers for a Sustainable Future, a coalition committed to environmental and economic sustainability. The coalition shared with elected officials, media and the public U.S. agriculture's commitment to sustainability and the incredible strides already made to reduce agriculture's environmental footprint. The effort includes a dedicated webpage at www.sustainablefarming.us.

Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance:

Building on the success of the FSF coalition, AFBF joined with groups representing farmers, forest owners, the food sector, state governments and environmental advocates in November to unveil the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance and an unprecedented set of recommendations to guide the development of federal climate policy. The Alliance was initially formed by AFBF, Environmental Defense Fund, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, and National Farmers Union, and was expanded to include FMI – The Food Industry Association, National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and The Nature Conservancy.



Credit: Getty Images

Key to the effort is advancing policies that respect farmers and ranchers. The recommendations advocate for voluntary, incentive-based tools for farmers to increase resiliency and climate-smart practices, increased funding of research, and reduced food waste, among others. With both agricultural and environmental groups behind the recommendations, legislation is already being drafted by several members of Congress based on the recommendations. Find more information at www.agclimatealliance.com.

Consumer Research on Sustainability and Trust:

To better understand consumers' attitudes about farmers' efforts on sustainability, AFBF commissioned a national opinion poll of 2,200 U.S. adults in October. The survey showed that a majority of U.S. adults have a positive view of farmers' sustainability practices, and an overwhelming majority trust farmers. More than half of U.S. adults (58%) rated the sustainability practices of U.S. farmers positively, with broad agreement from a majority of adults across demographic groups. Nearly nine in 10 (88%) said they trust farmers, a 4% increase from AFBF's June polling.

STRENGTHENING RURAL AMERICA INITIATIVES & COLLABORATIONS



Credit: Matt Niswander, TNFB

CELEBRATING FARM BUREAU MEMBERS: Matt Niswander

Farmer & Mental Health Advocate

Tennessee Farm Bureau member Matt Niswander is a first-generation beef cattle farmer and family nurse practitioner. For Niswander, meeting the needs of his patients means paying attention to both their physical and mental health, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

"The truth is, if we all sit and think about our lives and our futures in the current societal climate, it is easy to see how any of us could succumb to anxiety, worry and depression," he said. Further, "This virus has made us quarantine physically in our homes, but in rural America we have a long history of quarantining our emotions and compartmentalizing our fears because we are afraid people might see the real us."



AFBF's Farm State of Mind campaign was designed to generate awareness about the importance of mental wellness and provide resources to help farm families who are dealing with stress and mental health challenges.



Credit: ILFB

Advocates like Adrienne DeSutter, a farmer, behavioral health consultant and Illinois Farm Bureau member, are passionate about encouraging conversations to help farmers better understand and cope with stress.

RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Farm State of Mind:

In February, Bayer announced the transition of its Farm State of Mind campaign to AFBF, expanding the reach and effectiveness of Farm Bureau's rural mental health initiatives. This year, AFBF's work to raise awareness and reduce stigma surrounding mental health took on added importance due to the impacts of COVID-19. Expanding on our Farm State of Mind campaign, we continued to highlight the importance of mental wellness and provide resources to support farm families who are experiencing the effects of increased stress and mental health challenges.

Rural Resilience Training:

Our Rural Resilience farm stress management training, in partnership with Farm Credit and National Farmers Union, was made available at no cost in 2020, not only to Farm Bureau members, but to non-members as well. Targeted to those who interact with farmers and ranchers, it helps participants recognize signs of stress, learn how to facilitate discussions and refer people to appropriate care.

Legislation:

AFBF engaged on several legislative initiatives related to mental health in 2020. The bipartisan Seeding Rural Resilience Act (H.R. 4820 and S. 2599) contains provisions to help address stigma and increase access to mental health resources in rural communities. The House and Senate adopted these bills as an amendment in the House and Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act. We supported H.R. 7047, which would double funding for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network, and S. 3917, which would authorize up to \$10 million per year until 2025 for grant programs for health care providers to further develop mental telehealth services in rural areas.

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

AFBF welcomed 4-H and FFA members to the organization's Convention and Trade Show in Austin, Texas, in January. This experience, which was free for the students and included full access to all the convention offers to registered attendees, provided a great opportunity for young people to connect with farmers and ranchers and learn about careers in agriculture.

AG INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Rural entrepreneurs competed for \$145,000 in startup funds in the 2020 Ag Innovation Challenge, which focuses exclusively on U.S. rural entrepreneurs launching food and agriculture businesses. The 2020 Rural Entrepreneur of the Year, HydroSide Systems, produces hydroelectric irrigation technologies that provide cost-effective solutions for small and midsize farms.



Credit: Philip Gerlach, AFBF

Dana Mohr, CEO of HydroSide Systems, highlighted the company's hydroelectric irrigation technologies during a live pitch to a judging panel at AFBF's Convention.



Credit: Philip Gerlach, AFBF

Special programs for FFA students at AFBF's Convention provide information about careers in agriculture.



Credit: Philip Gerlach, AFBF

4-H'ers have full access to all that AFBF's Convention offers to attendees.

CULTIVATING LEADERS & GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

At a time when 3 in 4 Americans want to know more about how their food is produced, and the public interest in sustainability continues to drive rapid change, it's more important than ever for farmers and ranchers to feel comfortable engaging with the public, policymakers and media.

AFBF provides intensive leadership development and effective outreach training, strengthening the ability of farmers and ranchers to connect with others in an impactful manner.

Skills learned are applied at the local, state and federal level, including through FB Advocacy, the network developed to help members of Congress and the administration understand how public policies impact farmers and ranchers, consumers and agriculture as a whole.



Credit: WAFB

"Agriculture is the second-largest industry in Washington state," says GO Team member Rosella Mosby. "We are proud to be part of it. Not only stewarding land but working as a team to keep each other safe and provide sustenance for our community."

GRASSROOTS OUTREACH (GO) TEAM

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March, members of the Grassroots Outreach (GO) Team enthusiastically contributed to AFBF's #StillFarming social media campaign, which was part of our strategy to build public confidence in America's farmers and ranchers. They also put their high-level AFBF training to work throughout the year by engaging with lawmakers and regulators on policy issues, as well as media and the public. GO Team members played a key role in the success of the popular Kids' Questions About Agriculture video series, a new project of the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture. The GO Team is made up of hundreds of farmer and rancher members who participate in focused advocacy efforts throughout the year.



The Virtual Women's D.C. Fly-In featured training on a broad range of topics including grassroots advocacy, social media and communications outreach.

VIRTUAL WOMEN'S D.C. FLY-IN

The Women's Leadership Committee and AFBF staff hosted the Virtual Women's D.C. Fly-In at the end of September. Farm Bureau women connected virtually for training on a variety of topics including grassroots advocacy, using social media effectively and tools for communications outreach. Anne Hazlett, senior director of government relations and public affairs at Purdue University, was a featured presenter and shared insights about progressing as an advocate for agriculture. More than 600 women signed up to receive recordings and resources related to the event.

CULTIVATING LEADERS & GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY



Credit: Edwin Remsburg

CELEBRATING FARM BUREAU MEMBERS: Jennifer Cross

Helping Families Understand Food and Farming

Jennifer Cross, a farmer and Farm Bureau leader from Maryland, also serves on the AFB Women's Leadership Committee. She enjoys helping people learn about food and farming.

"Helping people understand and trust that the food farmers and ranchers produce - and the practices they use - are safe, is a win for everyone," Cross said. "I share my personal experiences, as well as science and research, to help consumers sort through myths and misinformation."



Credit: B. McAndrew, AFBF

Members of the Promotion & Education Committee are committed to the mission: “Inspire. Equip. Collaborate.”



Credit: The Farm Story

Members sharing on social media helped drive interest in Farm Bureau Target: Trust Engagement Training.

VIRTUAL TARGET: TRUST ENGAGEMENT TRAINING

AFBF’s Promotion & Education Committee and engaging speakers hosted an inspiring and lively Farm Bureau Target: Trust Engagement Training in September. The virtual program was open to all members and developed to provide resources for those who are active on state or local committees. To assist members further, the P&E Committee created “Connecting to Agriculture,” to bridge the gap between field and fork. This online digital toolbox provides resources to promote agriculture and education through agriculture literacy.

YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS

AFBF’s commitment to highlighting the talents and successes of the next generation is embodied in our Young Farmers & Ranchers competitive events – Achievement Award, Excellence in Agriculture Award and Discussion Meet. This recognition of outstanding YF&R members is a nod to the bright future awaiting U.S. agriculture. Successful pivots to the first ever Virtual YF&R Leadership Conference and Virtual Collegiate Discussion Meet provided outstanding opportunities for learning and engagement, in addition to showcasing the competitive event in a way that allowed connections with new audiences.



Credit: Michael LoBiondo, AFBF

(L to R) YF&R competitive event winners for 2020: Braden and Jordan McInnis of Texas, Achievement Award; Dani Catana with sponsor Ford; Kirby Green of Kentucky, Excellence in Agriculture Award; and Sarah Rudolph of Virginia, Discussion Meet.



Credit: Johnna Miller, AFBF

Members of AFBF’s 10th Partners in Advocacy Leadership Class will complete their course of study in 2021.

PARTNERS IN ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP

One of the most intensive training programs offered to farmers and ranchers is AFBF’s Partners in Advocacy Leadership. PAL class members graduate after completing four learning modules over two years. In 2020, the 10th PAL class pivoted to online training due to the pandemic. AFBF applauds their commitment to effective engagement and celebrates the inroads they are making in their local communities, as advocates at the state and federal levels, and engaging with media.



Credit: WIFB

Derek Orth, a member of PAL Class 10 and Farm Bureau member in Wisconsin, answered the question “Do Brown Cows Make Chocolate Milk?” as part of the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture’s Kids’ Questions About Agriculture video series.

FARM BUREAU GIVES BACK

The spirit of farm communities has always been one of working together and giving back, a tradition that continued in 2020. Farm Bureau and grassroots members gave their time, talents and resources to lift their communities and help local charities, including providing assistance to those in need due to the pandemic.



Credit: FLFB

Farm Bureau members continued a long tradition of helping local charities as the COVID-19 pandemic gripped the nation.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic caused wide-ranging impacts across rural communities, resulting in economic hardships for many who had lost jobs and straining food banks that struggled to keep up with increased demand. State and county Farm Bureaus banded together to respond to the many urgent needs in their communities, contributing money and food to help those in need of assistance.

The Farm Bureau family across the country giving \$5.3 million and 1.4 million pounds of food to foodbanks and relief programs. Farm Bureaus also reached out to help in many other ways. This included coordinating logistics for food distribution programs, donating and distributing hand sanitizer, masks and other protective equipment, soliciting funds to purchase food products from farmers to donate to food banks and various relief efforts, paying for processing costs for donated livestock and countless other acts of kindness. Throughout the pandemic, Farm Bureau was there, giving back to local communities and helping to meet the difficult challenges of this unprecedented crisis.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

At the 101st convention in Austin, Texas, Farm Bureau members from across the nation helped

fight hunger in the local community by participating in a food packaging event organized by the Outreach Program. Members packed nearly 9,000 meals to assist those in need.

HARVEST FOR ALL

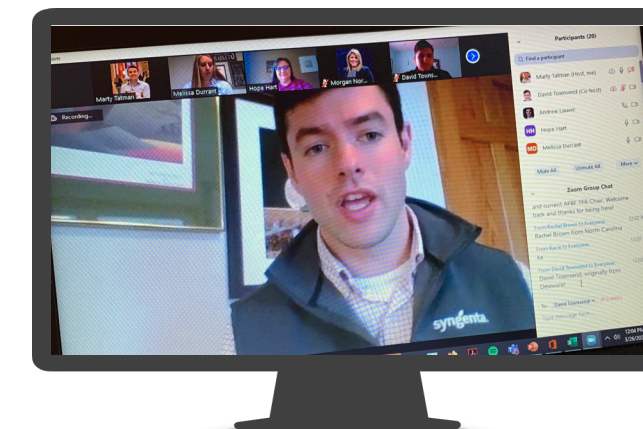
For the 18th year, AFBF's Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee put food on the tables of those in need through volunteer time and donations to local food banks and soup kitchens. Since Harvest for All was launched, Farm Bureau families have gathered 323 million pounds of food, logged more than 193,000 volunteer hours and raised \$8.3 million in donations.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES

The Women's Leadership Committee exceeded its goal of raising \$100,000 for a donation drive to support Ronald McDonald House Charities in 2020 in part by challenging grassroots Farm Bureau members to support local houses. RMHC provides a "home away from home" for families with critically ill children.

YF&R VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ATTENDEES HELP THOSE IN NEED

When the 2020 Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference transitioned to a virtual format due to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than \$2,000 in charitable contributions from participants was donated to non-profits in Louisville, the original host city. Funds were donated to St. John Center for Homeless Men, and Uniting Partners for Women and Children.



Young farmer and rancher members participating in the 2020 Leadership Conference made charitable contributions to non-profits in Louisville.



Credit: AFBF

Member volunteers packaged simple, nutritious meals for local hunger relief programs in Austin, Texas.



Credit: NHFB

Farm Bureau's long-running "Harvest for All" Program benefits local communities.

THE AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION FOR AGRICULTURE

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture strives to build awareness, understanding and a positive perception of agriculture through education. The Foundation offers a variety of fun and engaging standards-based programs and activities at all grade levels for educators, volunteers and families.



FEEDING MINDS PRESS

Through Feeding Minds Press, the Ag Foundation is leading the way when it comes to engaging young learners about where their food comes from through accurate books about agriculture.

MY AMERICAN FARM

As part of a commitment to finding innovative ways to reach kids and introduce them to agriculture, the Ag Foundation creates online games on the My American Farm platform that are capturing imaginations. The “1 millionth” game play on My American Farm was attained in spring 2020. A redesigned website with easier-to-find resources and a fun, new look helped attract visitors.

PURPLE PLOW

STEM hands-on education continued to be a vital component of education in 2020. Purple Plow challenges are an easy way for 5th- to 12th-grade science teachers to get students excited about creating solutions to real-world agricultural problems.



Credit: Philip Gerlach, AFBF

Foundation resources are well-researched, written by education specialists and reviewed by subject matter experts, which means teachers and parents can be confident in their relevance and accuracy.

FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES IN 2020:

- Published “Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck’s Ice Cream Wish,” a story about a boy named Chuck who wishes for all the ice cream he could ever eat and gets granted a dairy farm.
- Published a new free downloadable book, “The Prized Pumpkin,” a story of friendship and a pumpkin-growing contest that challenges it.
- Published two Next Generation Science Standards-aligned curriculums: a look at ecosystems for middle school and a dive into genetics for high school; connected with 553 educators on how to implement NGSS-aligned curriculum.
- Inspired kids and teachers to look for solutions in new Purple Plow Challenges including waste (“Waste Not Want Not”) and water runoff (“Go with the Flow”).
- Curated and adapted at-home learning resources for parents and educators adapting to the increase in virtual classroom needs throughout the pandemic.



“Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck’s Ice Cream Wish” introduces young readers to the round-the-clock work and ingenuity of dairy farming.



The My Little Ag Me book series introduces youth to agricultural careers. Books in the series are available online to download and print, for free.

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