



2024

Annual Report

Executive Summary

At the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF), our mission is to amplify the voices of American farmers and ranchers. Our grassroots approach makes the American Farm Bureau the Voice of Agriculture, engaging lawmakers, the media and consumers to build trust in agriculture and share farmers' and ranchers' stories. Central to this effort is the Grassroots Outreach Team (GO Team), composed of more than 500 state Farm Bureau-approved members. These advocates and thought leaders represent the agricultural community in public forums, media and government settings, bringing respected agricultural perspectives to critical conversations.

The 2024 GO Team Annual Report underscores the growing importance of direct engagement between farmers and ranchers and congressional delegations and the media in shaping legislation and consumer perceptions. In a challenging advocacy environment, the GO Team is a cornerstone of legislative and media advocacy, leveraging traditional mediums and tools and social media to advance Farm Bureau's goals and amplify agricultural interests.

GO Team membership is composed of Farm Bureau members in good standing, selected for their leadership, communication abilities and passion for agriculture. Through specialized media and advocacy training, members are equipped with the tools and information to engage policymakers, connect with stakeholders and advocate effectively for critical agricultural issues.

This report highlights the team's diverse efforts in advocating for agriculture in 2024, including participation in **legislative fly-ins, congressional testimony, regulatory panels, consumer interactions, regular media contributions and farm tours.**

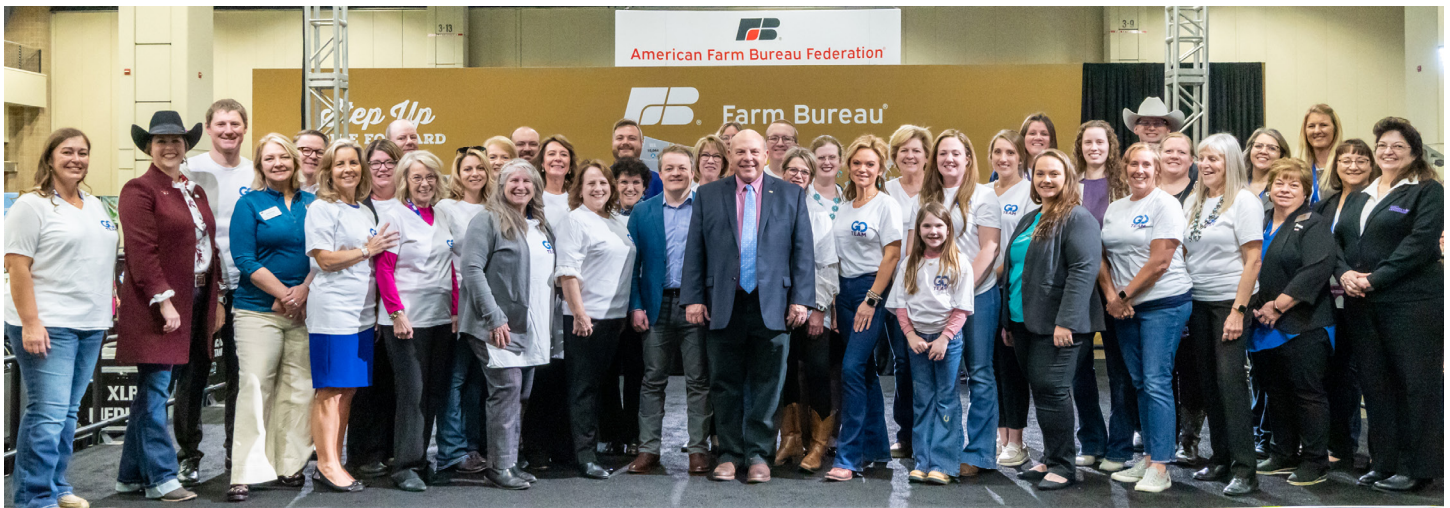
Notable contributions in 2024 include:

- Addressing agricultural labor shortages during the AFBF Labor Fly-In and congressional visits.
- Increasing public awareness about farming and ranching through newspaper columns, television appearances and social media outreach.
- Delivering testimony before congressional committees and state commissions to influence policy.
- Collaborating with USDA, the White House and congressional leaders during Labor Issue Advisory Committee meetings to address pressing issues including the Agricultural Labor Working Group's Final Report issued by the House Committee on Agriculture on March 7, 2024.
- Participating in educational initiatives, such as the Future of Farming exhibit on the National Mall.

The report also celebrates the **GO Teamers of the Year**, individuals who excelled in media engagement, legislative advocacy and representing the agricultural community.

Key milestones in 2024 include the first-ever gathering of state staff stakeholders — **GO Team facilitators** — in Denver on August 13. This event fostered idea-sharing, collaboration and actionable insights, laying the groundwork for strategic improvements.

Next steps include developing a comprehensive GO Team database for facilitator collaboration and reviewing the annual GO Team approval process.



Introduction

Welcome to the 2024 Grassroots Outreach Team annual report. The GO Team is a key advocate initiative established by AFBF to help Farm Bureau at every level navigate the evolving landscape of media and legislative advocacy.

At AFBF, our mission is to amplify the voices of American farmers and ranchers. Our grassroots approach makes the American Farm Bureau the Voice of Agriculture. This includes engaging consumers, lawmakers and the media to build trust in and share the story of agriculture. A component of this effort is our GO Team, a group of Farm Bureau's most influential advocates and thought leaders. The GO Team is composed of members whose perspectives are widely respected and who represent the agricultural community in public forums, media and government settings.

Recent surveys conducted in congressional offices underscore the significance of direct engagement between constituents and members of Congress and their staff. And interactions with the media have emerged as pivotal means to impact policy decisions.

Lawmakers are influenced by narratives depicting the real-world consequences of legislative actions, or lack thereof. These impactful stories, disseminated through in-person meetings, social media and local media channels, substantially influence congressional members' decisions on critical legislation.

As the public increasingly scrutinizes matters affecting agriculture, reaching out to lawmakers as active farmers and ranchers becomes paramount. The overarching objective of the GO Team is clear: to be the premier group of national grassroots and media advocates dedicated to advancing the goals of Farm Bureau.

This report delves into the initiatives, achievements and ongoing efforts of the GO Team in fulfilling this vital mission in 2024.

Message from AFBF President Zippy Duvall



Dear Farm Bureau members,

Over the past year, our GO Team has once again demonstrated the power of grassroots engagement, and I'm excited to share this year's annual report highlighting their incredible work and impact.

Since its inception in 2013, the GO Team has become an essential part of Farm Bureau's advocacy efforts, bringing together over 500 members, in collaboration with state Farm Bureaus, who continuously step up and share their stories through advocacy programs, grassroots engagement initiatives, media interviews and consumer outreach endeavors.

In 2024, we saw these efforts on full display starting with our Ag Labor Fly-In last spring. Through this event, GO Team members brought their crucial perspectives directly to lawmakers and shared why comprehensive legislation to address the ag labor crisis is critical. We also saw members engage with the administration, provide testimony to state and federal congressional committees, and even share agriculture's sustainability story with consumers on the National Mall.

These are just a few highlights of what was accomplished by our members, and I encourage you to read the full report and take note of the incredible impact these advocates made in 2024 alone. Their efforts have not only shaped policies but also strengthened the ties between farmers, consumers and lawmakers.

Thank you to all of our GO Team members for their hard work this year, and to all of the supporters who helped make this impact possible. I look forward to building on this success in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Zippy Duvall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Zippy" being more prominent.

Zippy Duvall
President

Program Overview

The Genesis and Purpose of the GO Team

The GO Team was established to enhance Farm Bureau's advocacy efforts by empowering members who can make a significant impact in critical discussions. The impetus for creating the GO Team came when a New York Times reporter contacted the American Farm Bureau Federation seeking a farmer to discuss estate tax issues. At the time, AFBF was unable to provide a suitable spokesperson. Recognizing the need for readily available, well-trained advocates, AFBF set out to develop a group that could effectively represent agriculture on key issues.

In November 2013, AFBF created the GO Team, initially composed of participants from established AFBF programs including graduates of the Partners in Advocacy Leadership (PAL) program, members of the Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Committee, the Women's Leadership Committee (WLC), and alumni of the Women's Communications Boot Camp. By October 2014, AFBF and state Farm Bureaus began identifying additional Farm Bureau members with an aptitude for advocacy, who would be appointed by their respective state Farm Bureaus to further expand and strengthen the team.

Eligibility and Membership

GO Team membership is exclusive to Farm Bureau members in good standing who not only meet the organization's membership criteria but also represent Farm Bureau in a positive light.

GO Team members are automatically eligible through their service on national AFBF committees like the Issue Advisory Committees (IACs) and the Promotion & Education Committee. Others have completed rigorous training programs, like the PAL program or the Women's Communications Boot Camp.

Additionally, members may be nominated by their respective states, ensuring a diverse and well-prepared group of advocates.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the GO Team is to empower trained Farm Bureau members with the necessary information and tools to actively influence the outcome of crucial national issues. This is achieved through a multifaceted approach that encompasses direct contact with members of Congress and their staff, involvement in hearings and regulatory meetings, and participation in print, radio and television interviews and social media engagement.

Training

GO Team members are offered media and advocacy training through webinars and in-person sessions led by AFBF staff and industry experts. These sessions are held regionally, in Washington, D.C., and at pre-determined AFBF national committee meetings and annual state Farm Bureau conventions.

This training equips participants with the skills to communicate effectively with the media, policymakers and the public. It emphasizes crafting persuasive messages that resonate, delivering captivating speeches and leveraging storytelling in constructive dialogue to shape perceptions and confidently control the narrative surrounding agriculture.

How AFBF Leverages GO Team Members

AFBF utilizes GO Team members strategically, ensuring their contributions are highly effective and tailored to the situation. Our advocates play pivotal roles in various engagements, including:

- **Targeted Advocacy Fly-ins:** GO Team members travel to Washington, D.C., to meet with lawmakers and advocate on issues such as tax reform and environmental regulations.
- **Testifying Before Congress:** GO Team members provide expert testimony before congressional committees, sharing firsthand experiences and insights on critical agricultural issues to inform and influence policy decisions.
- **Media Engagement:** Members respond to media inquiries on priority issues, lending credibility and expert insight to public discussions.
- **Consumer Engagement:** GO Team members participate in public-facing initiatives, like the Smithsonian Meet-a-Farmer series and social media, to educate and connect with consumers.
- **Hosting Lawmakers:** By welcoming lawmakers onto their farms or hosting legislative update meetings, members share their farming challenges and opportunities.
- **High-Level Meetings:** GO Team members have also met with key administration and White House officials to represent Farm Bureau's positions on key issues.

Through these multifaceted activities, GO Team members contribute significantly to advocacy for and the promotion of a robust and resilient agricultural sector.

Complementary to State Advocacy Efforts

The GO Team is designed to complement and enhance the legislative and media advocacy efforts of state Farm Bureaus. Rather than being a separate or competing entity, the GO Team serves as a strategic resource that state Farm Bureaus can harness for their advocacy and media outreach.

States are encouraged to use these highly trained advocates to amplify messaging and strengthen legislative initiatives, creating a unified voice for agriculture and advancing Farm Bureau priorities.

Keeping Members Engaged and Empowered

State Farm Bureaus recognize GO Team membership as a valuable way for farm and ranch members to stay actively engaged with Farm Bureau. It's an ideal opportunity for those who have aged out of YF&R programs or come from states without a Promotion & Education Committee or Women's Leadership Committee. The GO Team offers a meaningful path

for members passionate about grassroots advocacy to continue contributing to the Farm Bureau mission while honing their media and legislative advocacy skills. Through their involvement, these members can remain connected and expand their impact on behalf of the agricultural community.

Strategic Engagement with Flexibility

It's important to understand that AFBF's requests for GO Team participation are not an everyday occurrence. While AFBF is regularly asked for media interviews and congressional testimony, it responds in a targeted and strategic manner. When these opportunities arise, it's crucial that we are prepared with a list of GO Team members who perfectly match the criteria of the request, whether it's for a specific policy issue or a specialized area of expertise.

To ensure this readiness, AFBF maintains a robust and well-organized database of GO Team members. This allows AFBF staff to quickly identify and reach out to the right individuals when their knowledge and experience are needed. Importantly, there is no set schedule or ongoing time commitment required from GO Team members. Participation is flexible, empowering members to engage in ways that work best for their schedules and personal commitments.

GO Team members are free to choose when to participate in a media inquiry, legislative campaign or advocacy effort. This flexibility acknowledges that many of our members are farmers and ranchers with demanding responsibilities. By offering the option to engage on a case-by-case basis, AFBF ensures that our members can prioritize their own commitments while still contributing meaningfully to our advocacy efforts.

Ultimately, the GO Team is about empowering individuals to make an impact in a way that is both effective and manageable. We recognize that every contribution, large and small, plays a significant role in advancing Farm Bureau's mission. By valuing and respecting our members' time and expertise, we create a supportive environment where advocacy efforts are both rewarding and impactful.

A Typical Engagement Scenario

Here's how it works. Our communications or policy teams receive a request from a media outlet or congressional committee for a farmer or rancher with specific expertise to provide an interview or testify on a pressing policy issue. AFBF then consults our database of GO Team members to identify suitable candidates. Internally, we review the list to ensure the best possible match. Once potential candidates are identified, we reach out to the appropriate state staff to confirm the choice or to receive an alternate suggestion.

The GO Team's strategic mobilization enables AFBF to respond quickly and effectively to opportunities that shape agricultural policy and public perception. Our timely response makes it more likely Farm Bureau members will be the ones who testify. This ensures that our members, who understand Farm Bureau policy positions, are heard where and when it matters most.

Resources

The GO Team benefits from resources that enhance collaboration, communication and individual development. The cornerstone of our supportive community is the private Facebook group exclusively for GO Team members. This platform serves as a dynamic space for the exchange of ideas, stories and activities, fostering a sense of camaraderie among team members. It's a virtual hub where individuals share insights, seek advice and celebrate successes.

In addition to our Facebook group, the GO Team stays well-informed through a monthly newsletter that keeps members abreast of the latest national legislative and regulatory developments, as well as Farm Bureau initiatives and success stories. The newsletter is a valuable source of information and reinforces a sense of unity among team members by highlighting their achievements and milestones.

Advocate Profiles and Success Stories

AFBF's Labor Issue Advisory Committee (IAC) Meetings

AFBF's Issue Advisory Committee (IAC) for Labor played a critical role in 2024, meeting with USDA officials and White House representatives to address pressing agricultural labor challenges. Under the leadership of John Boelts of Arizona as chair and committee member Linda Pryor of North Carolina, the committee provided actionable recommendations on key labor issues affecting farmers and ranchers.

These meetings proved instrumental in shaping the Agricultural Labor Working Group's Final Report issued by the House Committee on Agriculture on March 7, 2024.

AFBF Labor Issue Fly-In

In March, Farm Bureau members, including representatives from the GO Team, convened in Washington, D.C., for a fly-in focused on addressing critical agricultural workforce challenges. Participants met with representatives from the White House, Senate and House Agriculture committees, and key congressional leaders to advocate for urgent reforms to tackle the persistent labor shortages threatening the sustainability of American farms.

The focus of the discussions was farmers' reliance on the H-2A temporary agricultural worker program. While initially seen as a solution, the program is now

viewed by many farmers as unsustainable in its current form. Participants, including Arizona Farm Bureau Vice President John Boelts, who grows vegetables, melons and other crops, called for freezing the Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) to provide cost stability and halting the implementation of disaggregated worker pay rates, which add complexity and financial strain. These reforms were presented as essential measures to keep farms operational, protect food security and sustain rural economies.

The delegation emphasized the collective responsibility of farmers, ranchers and agricultural advocates to actively engage policymakers and administration officials. They encouraged their peers to amplify advocacy efforts by contacting their congressional representatives and mobilizing broader support from workers and consumers. In addition, AFBF Communications staff facilitated media interviews that broadened the reach of the Farm Bureau members' message.

Other GO Team participants included April Clayton from Washington, Laura Haffner from Kansas, Karin Reeves from New York and Nick Oomen from Michigan. Each brought unique perspectives and experiences to the table, showcasing the diverse challenges and opportunities within American agriculture. Their collaborative advocacy highlighted the critical need for workable solutions to address systemic labor challenges and ensure the future sustainability of U.S. agriculture.





Congressional Testimony

Two of our GO Team members provided expert testimony before Congress, showcasing their advocacy skills and deep knowledge of agricultural issues.

- Senate Hearing on “Pathways to Farming: Helping the Next Generation of Farmers.”

Kevin Lussier of Florida testified before the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Commodities, Risk Management, and Trade. As the 2024 chair of the Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee and a third-generation dairy farmer, Kevin shared his personal experiences and outlined critical issues affecting young farmers during a hearing on “Pathways to Farming: Helping the Next Generation of Farmers.”

He highlighted the importance of passing a bipartisan farm bill to provide the certainty of a modernized safety net for young farmers. Drawing from his journey of managing a family dairy farm, Kevin emphasized the challenges of accessing credit, the need for improvements to the Dairy Margin Coverage program, and the value of USDA programs such as the Value-Added Producer Grant. He explained these tools are essential for enabling young farmers to diversify, manage risk and sustain their operations in the face of inflation, rising land costs and market volatility.

- House Hearing on Rising Energy Costs

Linda Pryor from North Carolina testified before the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Energy about the impact of rising energy costs on the agricultural sector. Drawing from her experience as an apple grower, Linda provided a compelling perspective on the challenges farmers face at the intersection of energy policy and agricultural sustainability.

Linda’s testimony underscored the need for balanced energy policies that address environmental goals without compromising the financial stability of farms. She explained how rising energy costs are driving up operational expenses, from fuel and electricity to transportation and production costs, leaving many farmers struggling to remain profitable. She advocated for pragmatic solutions that reduce energy costs and promote renewable energy adoption while maintaining the viability of agricultural operations.



Her message resonated strongly with policymakers, highlighting the importance of including farmers’ voices in energy policy discussions. Following the hearing, Linda expanded on her testimony during a Fox News segment, where she detailed the financial pressures created by current energy policies and reinforced the need for swift action to support farmers.

GO Team Members Provide Regular Editorial Contributions

Several GO Team members have expanded the reach of Farm Bureau advocacy through regular newspaper columns and media appearances. Contributors included Glenn Brunkow of Kansas, Paula Peterson of Nebraska and Renee McPherson of North Carolina, who regularly address top agricultural issues with local newspaper columns.



Glenn Brunkow's "Dust on the Dashboard" column in the Midwest Messenger brings readers into the heart of rural life with his authentic perspectives on farming and its challenges. Drawing from his own experiences, Glenn addresses farm policy, rural development and the daily realities of life in a rural community. His contributions emphasize the essential role agriculture plays in Kansas' economy and culture, offering both information and inspiration to readers.

Paula Peterson's "Down on the Farm" column in the Midwest Messenger highlights the resilience and dedication of American farmers. From the joys of calving season and lessons in water management to market trends and drought challenges, Paula uses personal stories and insightful analysis to showcase the critical role farmers play in sustaining rural communities and food security. Her work provides a thoughtful lens into the triumphs and trials of agricultural life. Notably, Paula Peterson was recognized as the **Best Ag Media Personality/Writer** by the Midwest Messenger in 2024 for her exceptional storytelling and dedication to agriculture advocacy.

In North Carolina, Renee McPherson bridges the gap between agriculture and the public through her column, "Talking Agriculture," in the News of Orange County. Renee taps into her experience as chair of the North Carolina Farm Bureau State Women's Committee and co-operator of McPherson Farms to share valuable insights on agricultural practices, policy challenges and the importance of farming to local communities.

iFarmiVote Campaign



The 2024 U.S. presidential election underscored the critical role farmers and ranchers play in shaping the nation's future. As part of the iFarmiVote campaign, GO Team members shared powerful videos and written statements highlighting the importance of the rural vote, particularly when key policies impacting farming and ranching are at stake. By leveraging their personal stories and experiences, GO Team members inspired others in the agricultural community to participate in the democratic process, reinforcing the vital connection between civic engagement and the future of American agriculture.

Future of Farming on the National Mall

In 2024, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers hosted the Future of Farming exhibition on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., bringing together 51 agriculture organizations and companies to showcase the importance of modern agriculture. The AFBF booth featured GO Team members Jon Dinsmore of Arizona, Jamie Tiralla of Maryland, Kamal Bell of North Carolina and Andrea Brossard of Wisconsin. From Jon's insights into winter leafy green production in Yuma to Jamie's experiences raising livestock near urban markets, and from Kamal's work on sustainable food systems to Andrea's expertise in dairy farming, these grassroots leaders brought the story of agriculture to life for the event's thousands of visitors.



The event highlighted the power of personal stories in building trust in and understanding of agriculture. GO Team members, equipped with leadership training through AFBF, stepped "outside their fencerows" to share their experiences with the public, emphasizing how sustainability is integral to farming. Their efforts worked to bridge the gap between farmers and consumers, planting seeds of understanding and trust that will support the future of agriculture for years to come.

2024 GO Teamers of the Year

AFBF awarded the 2024 GO Teamers of the Year: Laura Haffner from Kansas, Julie Hardy from Georgia, and Renee McPherson and Linda Pryor from North Carolina. These outstanding individuals have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advocating for farmers and ranchers through a variety of impactful activities.



Laura Haffner has played a crucial role in advocacy efforts by participating in the AFBF Labor Fly-In. During her visits with representatives from the White House, Senate and House Agriculture committees, and key congressional leaders, she focused on addressing the critical labor

shortage that has plagued the agricultural industry for decades. In addition, Laura has provided testimonials for iFarmiVote and shared her experiences in a GO Team testimonial. AFBF Communications staff coordinated media interviews during the Labor Fly-In, and Laura was featured in prominent agriculture outlets such as Agriculture of America, AgriTalk and DTN/Progressive Farmer. Laura was a member of PAL Class 11, AFBF's prestigious Partners in Advocacy Leadership (PAL) program.



Julie Hardy has been a powerful advocate for Georgia's farmers, engaging in both legislative and media outreach. She has actively worked with her senators, particularly Senator Warnock, to address critical issues such as the flooding in Georgia and the farm bill, focusing on the importance

of increasing reference prices. Julie has made several appearances on 106.3 WTUF, where she discussed the farm bill and participated in a candidate forum, using her platform to raise awareness of the challenges faced by farmers and ranchers. Julie's leadership and dedication to influencing policy are further underscored in her GO Team testimonial, where her advocacy for the agricultural community continues to make an impact.



Renee McPherson has become a great voice for agriculture, effectively bridging the gap between the farming community and the public through her regular newspaper column. Her column provides readers with a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by farmers and

the importance of advocacy. Renee has also contributed testimonials for iFarmiVote and the GO Team, further amplifying her contribution to advocacy on both a local and national level.



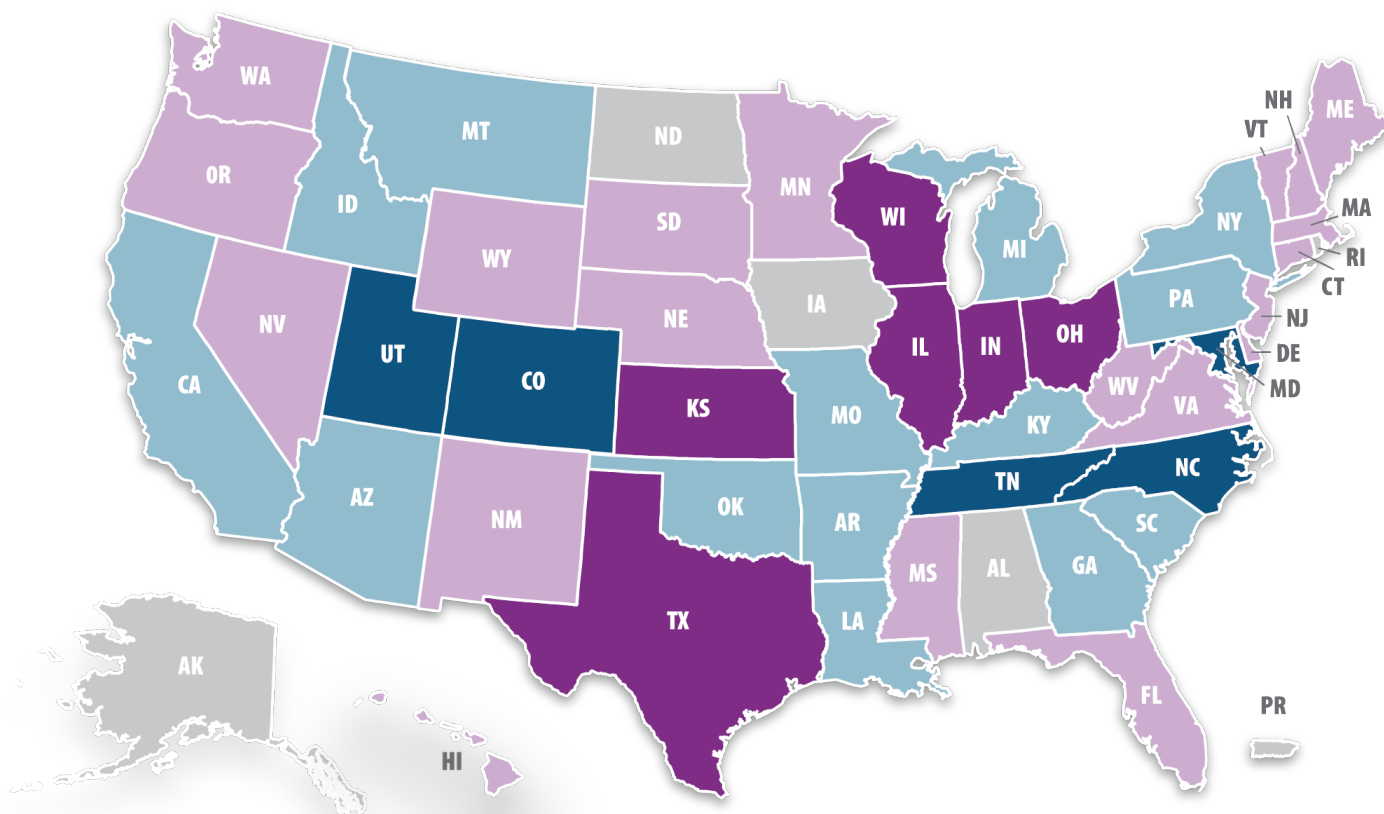
Linda Pryor has been an influential advocate for the agricultural community, playing a pivotal role on AFBF's Labor Issue Advisory Committee. She was part of the team that engaged in high-level discussions with the White House and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, addressing critical

labor issues such as the H-2A visa program and the Adverse Effect Wage Rate. Recently, Linda testified before the House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on the impact of rising energy costs on the agricultural sector. Her expertise and firsthand experience were instrumental in conveying the challenges faced by farmers to policymakers. Following the hearing, she was featured on Fox News, where she further highlighted the financial pressures on farmers due to current energy policies. Linda has also provided a testimonial on the benefits of participating in the GO Team and is a member of PAL Class 12.

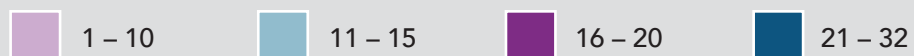
Zippy Duvall, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, expressed his gratitude and admiration for the 2023 GO Teamers of the Year, saying, "Laura Haffner, Julie Hardy, Renee McPherson and Linda Pryor exemplify the spirit of grassroots advocacy that is at the heart of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Their dedication and tireless efforts to represent the interests of farmers and ranchers are truly commendable, and they serve as an inspiration to us all."

GO Team Demographics – By the Numbers

Here are some insights into the geographical distribution of our GO Team members, including key demographics on legislative and media advocacy and the pathway to GO Team status.



GO Team by the Numbers



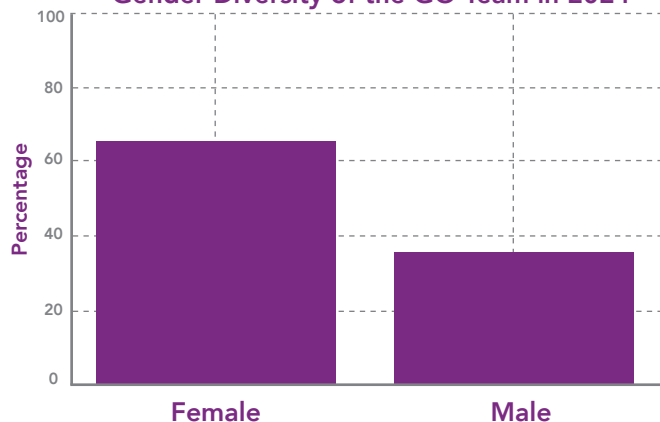
State Representation

The GO Team's geographical reach spans the entire nation. This remarkable breadth brings together diverse perspectives, ideas and experiences, enabling Farm Bureau to address agricultural challenges with a truly national voice and a deeper understanding of the unique issues facing farmers and ranchers across the country.

The states with the most representation include:

- Colorado: 41
- Utah: 31
- Maryland: 25
- North Carolina and Tennessee: 23

Gender Diversity of the GO Team in 2024



Gender

In 2024, the GO Team was 65% female and 35% male. The higher percentage of female members reflects the growing leadership and advocacy roles women are taking in agriculture, a trend that aligns with the increasing visibility of women in the industry. Their presence amplifies the diverse voices within the agricultural community, ensuring a broader range of experiences and ideas are represented. At the same time, the male members of the GO Team continue to provide valuable insights and expertise, creating a balanced and inclusive team committed to advancing agriculture's future.

Legislative

In 2024, GO Team members actively engaged with lawmakers through farm tours, town halls, emails and phone calls. Their collective efforts underscore the GO Team's commitment to being a proactive force on behalf of Farm Bureau.

Establishing and nurturing relationships with lawmakers drives our GO Team advocacy training. Of the over 500 GO Team members, 99% say they have a good or excellent relationship with their local and national lawmakers. Through open lines of communication, our GO Team members can influence policies that shape their lives and the lives of farmers and ranchers across the country.

Media Advocacy

In 2024 our GO Teamers achieved more than 40 media mentions in a range of media outlets, from local newspapers and insightful podcasts to national television programs. GO Teamers were quoted in discussions surrounding the farm bill, the contributions of women in agriculture and weather-related challenges, including drought conditions and severe storms.

According to the AFBF Communications team, the GO Team provided essential perspective to news media on various topics in 2024. Being able to put a real farmer's or rancher's voice on Farm Bureau issues helps the public better understand the issues we advocate for.



GO Team Commodity Demographics

Our annual survey of GO Teamers indicates they are involved in a wide range of agricultural activities, including the cultivation of crops, raising livestock and specialty farming.

The main agricultural activities mentioned:

Crops



- The most common crops include corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa, hay and various vegetables (lettuce, romaine lettuce, cauliflower, melons, strawberries).
- Some farmers grow specialty crops like almonds, walnuts, tree fruits (apples, peaches, cherries), peanuts, sugarcane and tobacco.
- Others focus on grains such as barley, rye, malt barley, oats, sorghum and different types of wheat (spring wheat, winter wheat).

Livestock



- Beef cattle are common, along with hogs, goats, sheep, lambs, market goats and registered Angus.
- Many GO Team members are involved in the poultry sector, including poultry farming, including chickens (broilers, laying hens) and turkeys.
- Several are in dairy, including the production of milk and dairy products.
- Some farmers raise horses, alpacas and angora goats.
- Specialty livestock like bison were also mentioned.

Mixed Farming



- Many individuals combine crop cultivation and livestock raising.
- Integrated farming systems involve raising various crops and livestock simultaneously.

Other Activities



- Some individuals are involved in niche or specialty farming, such as vineyards, orchards (cherries, apples, peaches) and flower farming.
- Aquaculture is mentioned in the form of live fish farming.
- There are references to organic farming, grass-finished beef and direct-to-consumer sales.

Diversification



- Some farmers diversify by engaging in hay production, cover crops, honey production and even turfgrass cultivation.

Overall, the data showcases the diversity within the GO Team, with individuals involved in a wide array of activities based on their regions, preferences and market demands.



New Members in 2024

We are thrilled to announce the addition of 40 amazing individuals to our GO Team in 2024.

These new GO Team members are a combination of the Women's Communications Boot Camp graduates, AFBF national committee participants and state-recommended members.

As we welcome these new advocates, we look forward to the wealth of skills, experiences and perspectives they bring to the GO Team.



GO Team Annual Review

Each year, AFBF asks state Farm Bureaus for a comprehensive review of their GO Team members.

This critical process helps ensure that the roster of GO Teamers remains up-to-date and aligned with the evolving landscape of the Farm Bureau community. By reaching out to the state Farm Bureaus, AFBF maintains the accuracy and effectiveness of its GO Team.

During this review, state Farm Bureaus are asked to make edits to the GO Team roster on two tracks: adding new GO Team members and removing individuals who no longer qualify for membership. New GO Teamers are often recruited to bring fresh perspectives and energy to the advocacy efforts, while individuals who have transitioned out of Farm Bureau membership or have assumed positions as state staff or local lawmakers need to be removed from the GO Team roster.

This annual review process is crucial to maintaining the integrity and relevance of the GO Team. GO Team members who have been removed will no longer receive GO Team-specific communications and action alerts and will be removed from the GO Team Facebook group.

This annual review process is crucial to maintaining the integrity and relevance of the GO Team, ensuring that it remains a dynamic force in advancing the interests of American farmers and ranchers in the ever-changing political landscape.



2023 2024

Lessons Learned

Communication Dynamics

Optimizing communication channels to facilitate productive dialogue between AFBF staff and state staff regarding the GO Team remains a priority for AFBF. To enhance efficiency and accessibility, we have established a quarterly state facilitator email to provide consistent updates, training materials and other resources. Additionally, we are launching a new WhatsApp community for GO Team members and state facilitators, streamlining real-time communication and collaboration between AFBF and the states. These efforts aim to strengthen coordination, ensure timely information-sharing and reinforce the partnership between AFBF and state organizations.

We recognize the importance of refining our communication protocols to ensure that GO Team members remain accessible for state advocacy efforts while maintaining a clear process for state approval when deploying members for national media and advocacy requests. By leveraging these new communication tools, we are committed to fostering a more connected and responsive network that supports the success of our advocacy initiatives.

Plans and Goals for the GO Team in 2025

The GO Team is poised for growth and enhanced impact in 2025, charting a course for the GO Team that embraces innovation, collaboration and responsiveness.

AFBF on the Road: Strengthening Agriculture, One Stop at a Time

To further enhance the effectiveness of the GO Team and strengthen engagement between AFBF and state Farm Bureaus, AFBF is launching a nationwide “road tour” in 2025. This initiative was inspired by discussions with state staff during our August 2024 meeting in Denver, Colorado, as well as insights gained from an AFBF Public Policy staff retreat. A common theme emerged from both meetings: the need for AFBF to be more present in the states, listening to stakeholders, and reinforcing the value of the GO Team as a critical advocacy tool.

This road tour represents a proactive step in understanding the unique challenges and opportunities facing state Farm Bureaus. By engaging directly with state staff and leadership, AFBF is committed to refining the GO Team program to ensure it remains a strong and effective asset for agricultural advocacy. At each stop, we will facilitate discussions on the role of the GO Team, how it supports state and national advocacy efforts and ways to further strengthen collaboration between AFBF and its members.

Regional Training

In addition to the AFBF on the road tour, AFBF is planning to host two regional training sessions to further strengthen the GO Team’s impact. These sessions will provide GO Team members with advanced advocacy training while fostering collaboration and camaraderie among participants. By offering hands-on learning opportunities, these sessions will equip advocates with the tools they need to effectively engage with policymakers, the media and the public on agricultural issues.

The regional training sessions will also allow AFBF to tailor its approach to advocacy by addressing region-specific challenges and opportunities. By combining insights gathered during the “road tour” with the skills developed in these sessions, we aim to enhance the GO Team’s ability to adapt to evolving policy landscapes, ensuring that every state Farm Bureau has a well-prepared, dynamic and responsive advocacy force.

Understanding Our GO Team

In 2025, we are committed to gaining a clearer picture of who our GO Team members are and how they engage in advocacy by making a strategic investment in a customer relationship management system. By leveraging this system and encouraging self-reporting of meetings with lawmakers and media, we will be able to track key data and analyze member activity. These insights will allow us to better support Farm Bureau's advocacy efforts by strengthening engagement, identifying opportunities for growth and ensuring our team is positioned to make an impact.

Conclusion

The GO Team will continue to be at the forefront of AFBF's efforts to advocate for agricultural and rural interests, drive positive change and ensure that the collective voice of the agricultural community is heard and amplified at local, state and national levels.

As we enter the new year, the GO Team looks forward to not only overcoming challenges but leveraging them as opportunities for growth. The listening tour and regional training sessions underscore our commitment to continuous improvement and our recognition that the success of the GO Team is intricately tied to the collaborative spirit of the entire Farm Bureau family. Together, we are poised to achieve new heights and make lasting contributions to the advocacy landscape.

For more information or to get involved, please contact Tom Donnelly (tomd@fb.org) or Johnna Miller (johnnam@fb.org) or visit <https://www.fb.org/go-team>.

Acknowledgments

This report would not have been possible without the dedication and expertise of many individuals. We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who contributed their time and talents.

A special thank you to Tom Donnelly and Matthew Myers for their efforts in writing, research and content development; Erin Anthony for editing and review to ensure clarity and accuracy.

We also appreciate the creative vision and technical skills of Catherine Page, who brought the report to life through thoughtful layout and design. Her work ensures that our message is both visually engaging and accessible.

Finally, we acknowledge the support of Cody Lyon and Johnna Miller, whose guidance and feedback were instrumental in shaping this report.

Thank you to all who played a role in making this report a valuable resource. Your hard work and dedication are truly appreciated.

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