

Spring 2017

Volume 17, Issue 1



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IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 - Farmers, Ranchers & Foresters
Crush Bad Bill
 - Ag Tour Showcases Local
Ag-Related Attractions
 - MCFB Offers Four Scholarships
to Students Reaching for Higher
Education
- 3 - MCFB Earns County Action
Award
 - The Willamette Basin Review
 - MCFB Helps Individuals Earn
CPR/First Aid/AED Certification

Back Cover

- Are You Aware of the New Labor
Regulations?

FARM GRAM

A publication of the Marion County Farm Bureau
Promoting, Protecting & Advancing Farm Interests in Marion County

A Call to Action

By John Zielinski, President

The 2017 Legislative session is well underway and I am pleased to report there have been positive outcomes for Oregon Agriculture. In my last *FarmGram* message I shared how important it is to engage in the legislative process. Engagement from farmers has proven to be very effective in influencing our legislators.

Testimony from **Brenda Frketich** (MCFB), **Shelly Bosart-Davis** (LCFB), **Anna Scharf** (YCFB) along with email testimony from **Wade Flegel** (CCFB) helped to obtain an exemption for agriculture from **SB 1008** which will impose much stricter standards on diesel emissions.

SB 779, a bill that was put forward by OFB to fix issues in the 2015 Paid Sick Leave law, had some farmer engagement also. Thank you to those who sent emails to their legislators and the following people who submitted written testimony: **Mark Dickman** (Dickman Farms, Inc.), **Wes Miller** (WTM Farms), and **Nathan Rice** (Benjamin Orchards Inc); and those who testified in person, **Jenny Dresler** (OFB), **John Iverson** (CCFB), and **Molly McCargar** (Pearmine Farms, Inc.).

HB 2859 sparked the most engagement by farmers. This bill would have eliminated the property tax deferral for farms and reinstated personal property tax on all farm equipment. If enacted this would have been devastating to Oregon agriculture. This bill stirred many farmers to write emails to their legislators, submit written testimony, and testify in person. There are too many to list, but here are those from Marion County who took time to engage in the political process: **Bill Brawley**, **Tom Brawley**, **Bruce Chapin**, **Doug Durst**, **Brenda Frketich**, **Kathy and Troy Hadley**, **Paul Kirsch**, **Kevin Loe**, **Ben Miller**, **Jerome Rosa**, and **Matt Schuster**. Thank you!

We may have won a few battles, but the outcome of this war on agriculture is not yet decided. All of the folks listed in this column have done their part to help Oregon Agriculture. Have you done your part? Great things can be achieved when we work together.

Take a few minutes each week to know where your emails and testimony are needed. It is easy to stay up to date on current Legislative issues through Oregon Farm Bureau's Action Alert system <http://oregonfb.org/advocacy/>. Here are just a few of the many bills that could impact agriculture: **SB 770** establishes an annual fee for water rights. **SB 167** and **HB 2071** pertain to tax credits for farm worker housing. **SB 168** and **HB 2072** regard tax credits for bio-mass energy generation. **HB 2464** allows local jurisdictions to prohibit GMOs. **SB 785** prohibits the use of antibiotics by farmers and requires a veterinarian to diagnose animals. **HB 2193** relates to predictive scheduling/show up pay. There are many more.

Please stay informed and engaged. Your farm — the farm you hope to pass to your children — depends on it!

###

Stay up to date on Senate and House Bills by using the many resources available at <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1>. Select the Bills icon in the upper right corner then type a bill number to read an overview of the bill, measure history, and scheduled events. Choose the tabs Text, Analysis, Meeting Materials/Exhibits, and Amendments to learn even more.

Are you Aware of the New Labor Regulations?

Labor Compliance Issues Presentation
by Roberta Gruber, OFB, FEELDS Program
April 12, 2017 at 6 p.m.

See back cover for details. Food and refreshments provided. RSVP to 503-378-0595.

Farmers, Ranchers & Foresters Crush Bad Bill

By Brenda Frketich | March 3, 2017 | <http://en.gravatar.com/nuttygrass>

Many of you have heard this already, but the pieces of House Bill 2859 that included sunseting some of the most important tax assessments for farmers in Oregon has been removed!

I'll quote Representative Barnhart in saying, "*In other words, you win.*"

What an incredible day at the Capitol!

A huge thank you to the over 100 folks who took the time to come show up and stand up for our great industry here in Oregon! You all made the difference on Wednesday.

We showed up, we were at the table, and we killed it!

For a more extensive recap check out these links:

Bad Bill Crushed: HB2859, a Win for Farmers, Ranchers & Foresters - Daughter of a Trucker (Shelly Boshart Davis)
<https://daughterofatrucker.com/2017/03/02/bad-bill-crushed-hb2859-a-win-for-farmers-ranchers-and-foresters/>

Lawmakers Back Away from Controversial Farm Property Tax Bill -Capital Press
<http://www.capitalpress.com/Oregon/20170301/lawmakers-back-away-from-controversial-farm-property-tax-bill>

And if you would like to read the testimony that I submitted you can find it by clicking <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Measures/Exhibits/HB2859>. Mine is under "Kirsch Family Farms Testimony" by Brenda Frketich (half way down the page). It's pretty long, but if you're curious why farmers should get or do get special assessments on their taxes, check it out.

Ag Tour Showcases Local Ag-Related Attractions

The Marion County Farm Bureau's fourth annual Ag Tour on April 4 was enjoyed by all who participated. Special thanks to those who welcomed the many tour-goers on the exciting learning excursion:



Image courtesy of
Stuart Miles at
FreeDigitalPhotos.net

- Antique Powerland: Oregon Vintage Machinery Museum featuring John Deere
- McKay High School Ag Class
- Wooden Shoe Tulips
- GK Machine Inc.
- Industrial Aviation
- Skylane Farms
- Marion Ag Services

Travelers were treated to a catered lunch prepared by Mt. Angel Sausage Company and afternoon refreshments by Sassy Onion.

We hope you will join us next year!

Marion County Farm Bureau Offers Four Scholarships to Students Reaching for Higher Education

The Board of Directors understands that higher education in a variety of fields benefits the agricultural community; for this reason there is no longer a requirement for students to be studying in the agricultural field to be eligible for the scholarships.

The application deadline for the Mary Petzel Scholarship and Scott Miller Memorial Scholarship is June 1, 2017. Individuals may apply for both scholarships.

Mary Petzel Applicant Eligibility:

1. The applicant must be a family member of Marion County Farm Bureau or enrolled in FFA or 4-H or majoring in Agriculture.
2. The applicant must be a graduating high school senior or a full-time freshman, sophomore, or junior at an accredited college or trade school.
3. The applicant must be from Marion County.

Scott Miller Applicant Eligibility:

1. The applicant must be a family member of a voting or supporting member of Marion County Farm Bureau.
2. The applicant must be a graduating high school senior or a full-time freshman, sophomore, or junior at an accredited college or trade school.
3. The applicant must be from Marion County.

In 2016, the Marion County Farm Bureau awarded three \$1,000 scholarships and one \$500 scholarship.

Applications are available online at www.marioncofarm.com, by contacting the MCFB Office at 503-378-0595 or by emailing MCFB staff at jessica@marioncofarm.com.

Marion County Farm Bureau Earns County Action Award

By Anne Marie Moss, Oregon Farm Bureau

January 27, 2017, SALEM, OREGON: Marion County Farm Bureau was honored with a County Farm Bureau Action Award during the 84th Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) Annual Meeting in Salem.

The award is given to a County Farm Bureau that has developed a successful, innovative project or program in the political or public education arena within the last two years.

"Since 2013, Marion County Farm Bureau has organized agriculture-themed bus tours to proactively connect with elected officials, candidates, and legislative staff," said OFB President Barry Bushue.

The county hosts a full-day bus tour highlighting different agricultural commodities, processors, distributors, and ag research facilities in the Willamette Valley. The goal is to help decision-makers have a greater understanding of and respect for Oregon agriculture and the challenges faced every day by farm and ranch families.

County Farm Bureau members help plan the tour, host tour stops, and work to build relationships with lawmakers while on the tour. Attendance has been excellent every year.

"These ag tours have successfully established Marion County Farm Bureau as a go-to resource when local government officials have questions about Oregon agriculture and the impacts of public policy on farmers and ranchers," said Bushue. "The program has excited members, the media, and the public. It has been a successful program by any measure."



PHOTO: Marion County Farm Bureau was honored with the County Farm Bureau Action Award during the 84th Oregon Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Salem. Marion County Farm Bureau President John Zielinski (right) and Genoa Ingram accepted the award from Mike Dillard (left) of the OFB Membership & Recognition Committee.

The Willamette Basin Review

The Willamette Basin Review, commonly referred to as the re-allocation study, is a three-year feasibility study to determine to what extent the 13 federal reservoirs of the middle and upper Willamette Basin system may help to meet future water demands in the valley and if changes in project authorizations are necessary to meet those needs.

This system, which has a combined conservation storage capacity of 1.6 million acre-feet of water, is in the process of being allocated to better serve present and future water needs in the basin. They are midway through the process. OFB's Mary Anne Nash and Joe Hobson have been monitoring the plan and are working with the ODA to support agriculture receiving an allocation of water that will be adequate for the next 50 years.

Want to learn more? Visit the links below.

https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/mgmt_res_study.aspx

https://www.oregon.gov/owrd/docs/Place/Willamette_Basin/2017_02_WBR_Update_Final.pdf

<http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/About/Current-projects/Willamette-Basin-Review/>

http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/pages/mgmt_res_study.aspx#Staff_Reports_&_Other_Items

MCFB Helps Individuals Earn CPR/First Aid/AED Certification

Marion County Farm Bureau offered CPR/First Aid/AED classes in English and Spanish during March. More than 30 individuals participated in the CPR/First Aid/AED training and received certification. Although the training was familiar to some who had received certification in the past, the training was a new for many attendees.

"Besides giving a voice to local farm and ranch families at the capitol, Marion County Farm Bureau promotes agriculture health and safety," said Marion County Farm Bureau President John Zielinski. "It's important that farm owners and their employees are certified in CPR and receive First Aid training. You never want to have to use those skills, but it's good to be prepared."



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Important Dates

*Information subject to change.
Contact staff to confirm event details.*

April 12 at 6 p.m.

**** All Members Invited ****

Labor Compliance Issues

Presentation by Roberta Gruber

RSVP: 503-378-0595

1320 Capitol Street NE, Salem

April 12 at 7 p.m.

MCFB Board Meeting

1320 Capitol Street NE, Salem

May 10 at 6 p.m.

MCFB Board Meeting

1284 Court Street NE, Salem

June 1

Scholarship Application Deadline



Please RSVP by April 10 to
info@marioncofarm.com or
503-378-0595 if you plan to
attend the labor compliance
issues presentation by
Roberta Gruber of OFB
on April 12 at 6 p.m.

*Food and refreshments
will be provided.*

Are you aware of the new labor regulations?

**Labor Compliance Issues Presentation
by Roberta Gruber, OFB, FEELDS Program
April 12, 2017 | 6 p.m. | Oregon Farm Bureau**

Members are invited to join us for a labor compliance issues presentation by **Roberta Gruber**, a nationally certified FEELDS Program Director who has worked exclusively with agricultural employers since 1991. Ms. Gruber will be presenting "**Ag Human Resources 101: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You**" on Wednesday, April 12, at the OFB office located at 1320 Capitol St NE in Salem.

Labor laws and rules are changing fast. Make sure you have the latest information to steer clear of trouble. This presentation will cover topics you should know for pre-employment, employment and post-employment issues.

Food and refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP by April 10 to info@marioncofarm.com or 503-378-0595.

We hope you will join us!