

FARM GRAM

A publication of the Marion County Farm Bureau

*Promoting, Protecting & Advancing
Farm Interests in Marion County*



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John Zielinski
MCFB President

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Labor Cost and Availability Affecting Local Farms

By: John Zielinski, MCFB President

What a busy time of year! I am sure that most of you have been hard at work farming with some of you already past your harvest season. On our farm we have finished Bartlett pear harvest and are partway through the Bosc pear picking. Like many of you, we are having difficulty finding enough laborers to pick our crops.

Unemployment numbers remain really low which is great for the thriving economy, the state, and the whole country; however, people are being pulled away from agriculture to work in other industries (e.g., construction). Labor – both cost and availability – is something my local farm market contacts have all said is having an impact on them. Comprehensive immigration reform with a guest-worker program that is beneficial to both guest workers and employers is needed.

I am honored to represent Oregon on the American Farm Bureau Federation Labor Committee. This has allowed me to see what is happening regarding labor in a more in-depth manner at the national level. There are many legislative concepts and stories that don't make it to the mainstream media. Though it has been enlightening to learn about the political system and the power plays that happen, it has also been very frustrating. In the seven years I have served on the committee, Congress has been unable to pass any immigration legislation. Some of the good folks with whom we share many political beliefs are not with us on the labor issue.

Legislation recently drafted by Congressman Goodlatte (R-Va.) could truly change the situation. The bill, which has not been introduced yet, will overhaul the current H2A guest worker program giving employees more flexibility in who they work for (portability) and diminish some of the expenses that farmers are required to pay – expenses that have made the program too expensive for some small farms to use. This legislation will also help the dairy industry which, by its very nature of needing employees year-round, has not fit well with the current H2A program.

Know that while you are busy working the Farm Bureau Family has your back. Here at Marion County Farm Bureau, your board of directors and very capable staff are watching the issues impacting your farm operation that are controlled by the county government. Oregon Farm Bureau and their team of talented people are watching for your interests statewide and at the national level preventing the urban legislators from walking all over the rural farm community. The American Farm Bureau Federation is focused on issues at the national level with issues like WOTUS (Waters of the US), The Farm Bill, Labor Reform, The Food Safety & Modernization Act, and so much more.

This winter though, when you have time, we would sure like to see you get involved.



RECOMMENDED READ

“Rickreall Dairy wins national sustainability award” by Tracy Loew, *Statesman Journal*.

<http://tinyurl.com/ybucqelt>

Understanding Water-Use Regulations: Medical and Recreational Marijuana

The article below is an excerpt from the State of Oregon Water Resources Department document by the same title. Download the handout at http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/docs/Water_Use_and_Marijuana_Handout_FINAL.pdf

Marijuana-related water use is subject to the same water-use regulations as any other irrigated crop. Under the Oregon Water Code of 1909, all water belongs to the public. With a few exceptions, cities, irrigators, businesses, and other water users must obtain a water right from the Water Resources Department to use water from any source – whether it is underground, or from lakes or streams. Generally speaking, landowners with water flowing past, through, or under their property do not automatically have the right to use that water without authorization from the Department.

New water permits are not available in many areas of Oregon, so individuals are strongly encouraged to investigate their water-resources options before investing in any project that requires a water supply. Violations of Oregon Water laws can result in civil penalties or prosecution for a class B misdemeanor.

The best way to identify your legal water resources options is to speak with your local watermaster. For more information, you can contact the State of Oregon Water Resources Department at 503-986-0900, or visit its website at www.oregon.gov/owrd.

Like any crop, the growth of marijuana for commercial purposes, whether medical or recreational, is not eligible for groundwater exemptions.

The federal government is responsible for determining whether water from their projects can be used to grow marijuana. Previous statements by the federal government indicate that use of Bureau of Reclamation water for the purpose of growing marijuana is prohibited. Contact the Bureau of Reclamation or your irrigation district for more information.

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Like Marion County Farm Bureau on Facebook

It’s a new world with generations sharing and receiving information through social media outlets. Associations are realizing the huge benefits of a social media presence to stay relevant and share important information with a wider audience. Facebook allows us to engage, share, request feedback, and educate people from all walks of life.

Nearly 300 visitors to the Marion County Farm Bureau Facebook page recently watched OFB and MCFB member Molly McCargar explain how broccoli is harvested on her family farm, Pearmine Farms, in Gervais, Oregon. We encourage you to visit our page at www.facebook.com/Marion-County-Farm-Bureau-775743355778392 to watch and share the video.

Our Facebook page is also used as a tool to notify members about upcoming events and share information about assistance programs, can’t miss radio programs, recommended articles, and other posts that help create a buzz about agriculture.

A recent event invited the community to join Marion County Farm Bureau at the Elsinore Theatre for President John Zielinski’s presentation of the 2017 Modern Agriculture Award to NORPAC Foods followed by a concert by country western artist Ned LeDoux. The evening was a huge success!

Become our Facebook friend and share our posts with your friends and family to give us that added stretch that only you can provide.

Not on Facebook? You can sign up to receive email alerts and newsletters by contacting us at info@marioncofarm.com.



Congratulations to NORPAC, the 2017 Modern Agriculture Award recipient!

Thank you to everyone who joined us at The Elsinore Theatre in June to honor NORPAC and enjoy a performance by singer Ned LeDoux following the presentation of the prestigious Modern Agriculture Award. It was an evening to remember.

Oregon Nursery Owner Selected for AFB's Partnership in Advocacy Leadership Program

An American Farm Bureau program, Partnership in Advocacy Leadership or PAL, is attempting to bridge the gap between producers and consumers - many of whom have never set foot on a farm or even talked to a farmer.

Angi Bailey - who owns and operates Verna Jean Nursery near Gresham, Oregon, together with her husband Larry, is part of a 10-person national team selected to learn how to better tell ag's story to consumers, legislators, regulators, and the media. In June, PAL team members went to an urban grocery store in New York City to interact with shoppers. The group will visit Washington, D.C., in September.

Oregonians for Food and Shelter hired Bailey as its grassroots coordinator in 2016. She served as the Oregon Farm Bureau's second vice president in 2015 and was honored with the state organization's Outstanding Farm Bureau Woman Award in 2014.

We are honored to have Angi Bailey representing Oregon farmers as an advocate and leader for ag.

Marion County Farm Bureau: Proud Sponsors of the 2017 Marion County Fair

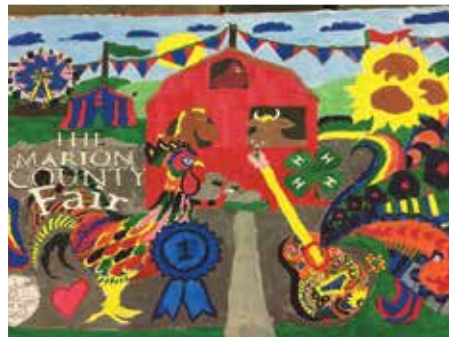
The Marion County Farm Bureau was thrilled to help sponsor the 2017 Marion County Fair.

The STEAM Game, sponsored by MCFB and Country Financial, helped connect rural and urban youth through **Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Agriculture, and Mathematics**. Families and teams worked together to complete STEAM Game trivia cards. In total, 24 prize winners received Lego® kits, science kits, art and activities as prizes. Two winners received the grand prizes of a tablet and laptop.

Shirts featuring the new MCFB logo were distributed by the 4-H office to 720 youth, 4-H, and FFA participants. 4-H youth development educator Melanie McCabe said, *"Everyone loves the shirt. The kids wore them all around the fair and now we see them showing up at club meetings and all around town, too."*

MCFB also supported other activities:

- 4-H paint by number mural (pictured right)
- Home Depot Kids Build
- STEAM stage presentations including:
 - Fizz Whiz - Build a lava lamp
 - Awesome Eclipse - Build an eclipse viewer
 - Build a boat
 - Rootopia - Make a natural paintbrush
 - The Science of Sport - Balloon launch
 - Boys & Girls Club - Drones and virtual reality goggles
 - Photography Department - The art and technology of Photo Editor Live



The fun learning experiences were a hit. We are already looking forward to another successful event in 2018!



Exploring Oregon's Heritage: Oregon's Bounty AT THE OREGON STATE CAPITOL

Saturday, October 7, 2017 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. • Free

The Oregon State Capitol Foundation hosts the Oregon's Bounty, a free Capitol Galleria/State Capitol State Park event, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, October 7, at the Oregon State Capitol. The event showcases the variety of crops harvested in Oregon and shared with the world. The celebration will take place rain or shine.

Families are encouraged to learn about the significance of agriculture through sight, sound, smell, touch and taste. This free and fun learning event includes hands-on activities, displays, entertainment, and complimentary samples of Oregon's tremendous bounty.

Tours of the Capitol and tower tours (weather permitting) will be available. Check oregoncapitol.com for details. The event, parking, and tours are all free for this special Saturday event at your Oregon State Capitol.



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MCFB Board Meetings

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

Oct. 11

Dinner at 6 p.m.
Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
1284 Court St NE
Salem

Nov. 7, 6:30 p.m.

MCFB Annual Meeting
and Banquet
Oregon Garden Resort
Silverton

Marion County Events

Sept. 14-17

Mt. Angel Oktoberfest
Mt. Angel

Sept. 28, 12:30 to 5:00 p.m.

14th Annual OFB Classic
Golf Tourney
Oregon City

Oct. 11, 10 am to 2 p.m.

Oregon's Bounty at the
Oregon State Capitol
Salem

Dec. 5-7

OFB Annual Meeting
Pendleton

MCFB ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND BANQUET NOVEMBER 7, 2017 OREGON GARDEN RESORT | SILVERTON

The 2017 Marion County Annual Meeting and Banquet will take place on Tuesday, November 7, at the Oregon Garden Resort in Silverton, Oregon.

Join us at 6:30 p.m. to socialize with colleagues and friends. Dinner and the association's annual business meeting –which will include a review of the bureau's annual report and election of board members – will begin at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be followed by an evening of entertainment and door prize drawings.

Details coming soon in your email and on the MCFB website, www.marioncofarm.com.

Annual meeting dinner tickets are only \$15.00 through October 31. Beginning November 1, the ticket price increases to \$25.00. Please RSVP early to get the best price available.

We hope you will join us to conduct important association business and enjoy the camaraderie of other Marion County farmers.

