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Genoa Ingram  
Jessica Carpenter  
Laureal Williams

1284 Court St NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
503-378-0595  
503-364-9919 fax  
[www.marioncofarm.com](http://www.marioncofarm.com)

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## President's Message

*John Zielinski*  
MCFB President

In a year where the Oregon Legislature was not particularly friendly to agriculture or small business, I have been encouraged by the sheer number of farmers who have been engaged at the Capitol. During this "short session" many of you testified before lawmakers, attended hearings, and joined meetings regarding a wide variety of issues.

Despite our best efforts, ag and business issues simply did not fare well in this session. You may feel beat up and frustrated by this process with good reason, but please continue to show up. I express my gratitude to all of you, the farmers, who took time to participate and again, please do not give up.

Politics is a pendulum. A pendulum that swings back and forth; sometimes the arc of the swing is wide, sometimes short. Regardless of the momentum, we must, as the agriculture community, continue to tell our story to those who shape our laws, the media, and the public. If we do not, then others will tell our story for us and we may not like what they have to say.

Your membership in Marion County Farm Bureau and by default Oregon Farm Bureau is vital in getting the message out of how proposed laws will impact agriculture. Oregon Farm Bureau is the largest ag membership organization in Oregon. OFB exists to assist you in advocating for your farm by standing in the gap for all of Oregon agriculture.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Marion County Farmers—Subject Matter Experts

With the 2016 Oregon Legislative session now adjourned, many people will look back at those few days and write about what happened. It may be that the Legislature will most likely not meet again this year, but what is on the horizon for lawmakers and citizens of Oregon? What do we do now?

Examining the future is what Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron does after every session, and that has been his practice for many years. Why? "Because if something that happened affects me or business, why shouldn't I be involved and help to fix it?" says Cameron.

That is why he became involved in politics in the first place. He hasn't always been an elected official but when he realized politics and elected leaders were making decisions that imposed hardships upon him, his family, and his community, he realized he needed to be involved.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## SBA Offers Disaster Assistance to OR Businesses

*U.S. Small Business Administration press release  
March 9, 2016*

Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to Oregon businesses and residents affected by the severe winter storms, straight-line winds, flooding, landslides, and mudslides that occurred December 6-23, 2015. SBA acted under its own authority to declare a disaster following the denial of the state's request for a major disaster declaration.

The disaster declaration makes SBA assistance available in Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Hood River, Lincoln, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook Wasco, Washington, and Yamhill counties.

"Low-interest federal disaster loans are available to businesses of all sizes whose property was damaged or destroyed by this disaster," said SBA's Portland District Director Camron Doss. Businesses and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets.

SBA can also lend additional funds to businesses and homeowners to help with the cost of improvements to protect, prevent, or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future. SBA also offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. EIDL assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any property damage. It is important to note that agricultural losses are not covered by the SBA, but agricultural-related business losses are covered; for example, damage to the orchard is not covered, but damage to the fruit stand is covered.

Interest rates can be as low as 4 percent for businesses, 2.625 percent for private non profit organizations, and 1.813 percent for homeowners and renters with terms up to 30 years. Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application via SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.






SBA representatives will be on hand at the Disaster Loan Outreach Center for Marion County at the Maps Credit Union South Salem Branch (4615 Commercial Street SE, Salem 97302) from April 3 through April 19 to answer questions about the program, explain the application process, and help individuals complete their applications. Loan information and application forms are also available from SBA's Customer Service Center by calling 800-659-2955 or by emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).

The filing deadline to return applications for property damage is May 9, 2016. The deadline to return economic injury applications is December 9, 2016.

## MCFB Ag Tour—April 6—RSVP Today!

Marion County Farm Bureau will host its third annual Ag Tour on Wednesday, April 6. Cost for the tour is \$25 per person and includes transportation, lunch, and light refreshments.

Potential tour stops include:

-  Howell Prairie Vineyard
-  NW Greenland Recology (composting)
-  Doerfler Seed
-  Willamette Valley Pie Company
-  Mountain View Seed Company



The full schedule will be finalized soon and posted on the [MCFB website](#). The tour bus will load at 8:45 a.m. at the Howell Prairie Vineyard, 3515 Howell Prairie Road SE, in Salem (503-932-4294).

Space is limited—RSVP to the MCFB office by calling 503-378-0595 or by emailing [jessica@marioncofarm.com](mailto:jessica@marioncofarm.com) by April 1, 2016, to ensure your seat on the bus!

## First Aid/CPR Classes—Time to Renew!

Are you and your foreman First Aid/CPR/AED certified? If not, you are invited to sign up for a class sponsored by Marion County Farm Bureau. **Two complimentary registrations are included in your MCFB Voting Membership**; all others are invited to register at a reduced price of \$50 per attendee.

One-day instruction in Spanish and half-day instruction in English is being offered based on the schedule listed below:

### **Spanish Instruction (limit: 8 attendees per class)**

9:00 am—4:00 pm, Monday, April 11 **or** 9:00 am—4:00 pm, Tuesday, April 12

Lunch and refreshments included

### **English Instruction (limit: 16 attendees per class)**

1:00 pm—5:30 pm, Thursday, April 28 **or** 8:00 am—12:30 pm, Saturday, April 30

Refreshments included



All classes will be conducted at the Oregon Farm Bureau office, 1320 Capitol Street NE in Salem.

Class size is limited—so be sure to **contact the Marion County Farm Bureau office today to secure your desired date** by calling 503-378-0595 or emailing [jessica@marioncofarm.com](mailto:jessica@marioncofarm.com).

## Subject Matter Experts (cont'd)

What Cameron will admit to being for all of his adult life is a husband, a father and a businessman. At one point, he realized that other people were making decisions about things that affected his life—all of his life.

“When I realized that no one but me was able to represent my business and what was impacting me operating successfully, then it became obvious that I had to be involved and telling elected leaders the significance of their decisions and choices.”

Today, Commissioner Cameron makes decisions every week that affect the health and vitality of the farming industry. In fact, he is a great supporter of the farming community. “Regardless, we don’t have a farmer on the commission. We have a teacher and solid waste manager and a cook serving on that commission. How are we supposed to know anything about farming?”

That is when he needs to turn to a farmer for more information. “Someone has to help us, has to educate us. We need farmers!” Cameron acknowledges that helping decisions makers takes time away from family, work, recreation and other things. “But, we sit on the sidelines at our own peril. The decisions will be made with or without your help. I’d rather have people here to explain these issues to me.”

Citizen Kevin Cameron encourages everyone to be involved in their local government in some way. It is the people who show up that impact the decisions, according to Cameron. “I would love to have a hearing room packed with farmers every time we have a land use hearing or make a decision about the urban growth boundary.”

As a kid who worked on the ranch during the summers to the present day 60-year-old man, Kevin Cameron knows that if you want to make a difference, you have to be involved. “All the farmers in Marion County should make it a point to visit with the commissioners. Become our experts in agricultural decisions and that will make a difference.”

The Marion County Board of Commissioners meets every Wednesday; check the website at [www.co.marion.or.us/BOC](http://www.co.marion.or.us/BOC) for meeting time, location, and meeting-related materials. In addition to Commissioner Cameron, the Board includes Commissioner Janet Carlson and Commissioner Sam Brentano.



1284 Court Street NE ☆ Salem, OR 97301  
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### **Important Dates**

April 6—MCFB Ag Tour  
8:45 am, Howell Prairie Vineyard

April 13—MCFB Board Meeting  
Salem Office, 1284 Court Street

April 15 & 16—YF&R Ag Tour  
8:00 am, OFB Building

May 11—MCFB Board Meeting  
Salem Office, 1284 Court Street

June 8—MCFB Board Meeting  
Salem Office, 1284 Court Street

## **President's Message (cont'd)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

They have a talented and highly regarded team of professionals fighting on your behalf at the Capitol. A special thanks to OFB staff members Jenny Dressler and Mary Ann Nash who tirelessly lobby on our behalf, and Genoa Ingram, MCFB staff, who has been attending the Marion County Commissioners meetings and helping us monitor the issues at the Capitol.

Though we did not win on several major issues such as minimum wage and energy, there was definitely significant impact from the ag advocacy efforts. I would point out the bus load of farmers from Malheur County who testified in one of the early hearings concerning minimum wage. Their message was picked up by the press and mentioned by a number of legislators. I would be so bold as to say their presence helped to influence the three-tier system that was passed and helped to put Malheur County is in the lowest tier.

The greatest influence that OFB can have in the legislative process is when our members engage through visits to legislators, emails to legislators, and testifying. OFB makes it easy for you to tell your story to elected representatives with "advocacy campaigns", offering outlines and talking points for the issues that are important to Oregon agriculture. I would encourage you to become engaged through whichever form of advocacy you are comfortable with and see the good things that come from being a member of Marion County Farm Bureau.

### ***Don't Miss Your Newsletter!***

In an effort to be careful stewards of our resources, MCFB plans to switch to e-newsletters to save money on printing and postage. Members are encouraged to forward your email address to [jessica@marioncofarm.com](mailto:jessica@marioncofarm.com).