

FARM GRAM

Promoting, Protecting & Advancing Farm Interests in Marion County



A publication of the Marion County Farm Bureau

Volume 22, Issue 1

Honoring Austin Smith

Last month, Marion County Farm Bureau joined others in the agricultural community in mourning the loss of Austin Smith, a 30-year-old volunteer firefighter who perished after being critically injured during an explosion at a barn fire.

A 4th generation hop farmer, Austin was a respected, beloved pillar of the tight-knit community of St. Paul. He was also a multi-generational volunteer for the St. Paul Rodeo.

In honor of his memory, the Marion County Farm Bureau Board of Directors donated \$2,500 to his GoFundMe campaign to help with family expenses.

“Austin was a prime example of the spirit of giving back that’s so evident in Oregon’s small agricultural towns, and he is deeply missed,” said OFB President Angi Bailey.

Our condolences to out to Austin’s family and friends



Farm Bureau Members Testify Against Ag Overtime

Article by Dianne Lugo via Salem Statesman-Journal

Dozens of farm owners testified against the bill, warning that passage of the bill without amendments would bring ruin to Oregon’s agricultural industry.

“This is not a threat, this is a reality. A cap will be placed so that farmers can continue to farm and operate,” said an emotional Tiffany Monroe, a fifth-generation farmer who started her own farm in Junction City in 2020.

Passing a bill of this magnitude would devastate smaller farms, many said. Several referred to themselves as “price takers” not “price makers,” unable to set their own prices for their crops. Even if market prices are down for their harvest, their workers and other costs remain the same.

“I will not be able to afford the time and a half for my pickers,” Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp, a sixth-generation farmer in Oregon, said. The added costs would force her farm to switch to more mechanical harvesting rather than handpicking, she warned.

The agricultural business is unique, farmers said. The amendment proposed by Rep. Shelly Boshart Davis acknowledges that, they said.

“Agriculture is seasonal, and our work schedules are dictated by weather conditions and the tight time frames we work in. As a result, farmworkers rely on working extra



Photo: OFB Facebook

Marion County Farm Bureau board member Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp is interviewed by Pat Dooris of KGW-TV on her blueberry farm about ag overtime.

hours during these peak seasons to offset when there is not as much work or when the weather makes it impossible to work,” Lesley Tamura, a fourth-generation pear grower from Hood River County, said. “Allowing a permanent peak season accommodation gives workers a chance to get the extra wages they need during busy times and gives family farms a chance at survival.”

OVERTIME continued on page 3

Find us online anytime at: www.marioncofarm.com





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dana Estensen
President

Stuart Olsen
Vice President

DIRECTORS

Greg Bennett
Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp
Joe Ruef
Keith Ditchen
Richard Hostetter
Casey Stadel
Dylan Wells
John Zielinski

DISTRICT 15 DIRECTOR

Bruce Chapin

**YOUNG FARMERS
& RANCHERS**

Claire Zielinski

WOMEN'S

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Kathleen Carl
Jessie DeJager

**VOTING DELEGATES/
ALTERNATES**

Greg Bennett
Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp
Casey Stadel
Dylan Wells

STAFF

Jill Ingalls
Macy Chapman
Ashley Christie

**MARION COUNTY
FARM BUREAU**

PO Box 12216
Salem, Oregon 97309

Phone: 503.877.1999

www.marioncofarm.com

A Message from the President

My name is Dana Estensen and, as of November 2021, I am honored to be your new Marion County Farm Bureau president. I am a 1st generation farmer and have been involved in Farm Bureau since I graduated from college. We farm wine grapes southeast of Salem as well as in Yamhill County in the Newberg/Yamhill area.

It's been a busy winter so far. In our vineyards the vines are getting pruned, tied, and set up for the coming year and it seems like everyone else is just as busy. We typically finish pruning around mid-March and will be ready for bud break around mid-April. We are hoping for more rain and snow - we need about 15" to 20" of precipitation to reach our "normal" average for the rainfall year. Let's hope that happens!

Ag overtime is the biggest issue in the 2022 Oregon short session. Thank you to all our members who wrote letters to their legislators, submitted written testimony and did an excellent job testifying in person. MCFB and OFB had a great turn out. It is so important that legislators hear from those of us involved in Agriculture. The short session will be completed by the time this Farm Gram is published so as I write this, we don't know the results of our efforts. We appreciate you, our members, and OFB staff working so diligently to achieve the best possible outcome. OFB staff is amazing.

Our newest directors (Casey Stadel, Claire Zielinski, and Richard Hostetter) recently participated in a new directors' training presented by Dave Dillon, OFB Executive VP. He provided background material on Farm Bureau, there was good discussion and questions. We all left with a better understanding of the purpose and mission of Farm Bureau. The county Farm Bureaus are the foundation for the state and national levels. We are a "Grass Roots" organization that is driven by you, our members. We take a proactive approach to help farmers and ranchers and don't complain that "we don't like it", we figure out how to fix it.

Some good news, we can finally have our First Aid/CPR trainings this year. Unfortunately, we aren't having our Farm Tour in 2022, but we are hopeful we can get it back on track in 2023. Please let us know if there are farms, ranches or ag related businesses that you would like to visit; or if you'd like to help organize, that would be great as well. The tour is typically held in March. Our goal each year is to include elected officials along with FB members to visit local farms and ranches and share our stories and concerns.

We had an OFB County President's meeting in Salem in February. It was an informative meeting (it was so nice to meet in person) with ample sharing of issues and ideas. Ag overtime and ag labor, including immigration and H-2A programs, were two of the larger concerns. Water availability (or rather lack of water availability) is a huge problem in certain parts of the state. Besides lack of water for irrigation (in areas where they rely on irrigation to grow their crops), domestic wells are also going dry. Their water issues are challenging and are also a good reminder for us not take anything for granted. We have members on the OFB State Committees and are always keeping an eye on any local issues that might affect our county.

Finally, and sadly, Marion County has lost two prominent members recently. Roger DeJager, dairyman from Jefferson, served on the board for many years. He and his wife Jessie have contributed so much to the Oregon Dairy Industry and Farm Bureau. Young Farmer and Rancher member, hop grower and volunteer fire fighter, Austin Smith from St Paul tragically passed away in early February while on a fire call. He was only 30 years old but left a huge gap to fill in that small community. They were both inspiring and we will strive to honor and continue their legacies. Our sincere condolences, to their families, friends and communities.

Dana Estensen
Marion County Farm Bureau President

Show Your Farm Bureau Love

We're stronger together!

We know you love your Marion County Farm Bureau and need your help to grow our Farm Bureau family!

We're offering our members a chance to order both small 18"x24" yard signs and large 4'x8' field signs at no cost. Let the ag community know we're here and ready to help.

Signs offer a variety of phrases to choose from including:

- Advocating for YOUR farm.
- Because Your Farm Matters
- Exclusive Member Benefits
- Fighting for your Future
- Helping the Next Generation Farmer
- Protecting Marion County Farms
- Serving Oregon Farms
- Stronger Farms. Stronger Voice.
- Your Agriculture Advocates
- Your Farm. Your Family. Your Future.



Deadline to order is March 31

Order your signs online today: bit.ly/3h0LDJG

Farm Bureau Scholarships Available

The Mary Petzel and Scott Miller Memorial Scholarship applications are now available.

High school seniors and undergrads will be able to download the applications from [our website](#).

Scholarships ranging up to \$2500 may be awarded. Award recipients will also receive a one-year supporting membership to the Marion County Farm Bureau.

Applications must be received by May 1, 2022.



Farm Bureau seeks FFA Videos for Contest

Oregon Farm Bureau invites FFA students to participate in its second-annual #GrowingOregon video contest.

"This year the winner will earn a cash prize for their FFA chapter," said Anne Marie Moss, OFB communications director.

To participate, FFA members should create a video up to a minute long that features the #GrowingOregon hashtag and something interesting about Oregon agriculture.

Video topic ideas include an overview

of an FFA project or program, what's happening on the farm or ranch, or a highlight of an Oregon agricultural product.

Students have until April 30 to submit their videos to annemarie@oregonfb.org.

The contest winner will be determined by which video gets the most likes and views on OFB's social media platforms by May 31.

For more information about the #GrowingOregon video contest, visit: www.oregonfb.org/growingoregon.

OVERTIME

Continued from page 1

Bobbi Harrold, a dairy farmer from Lane County and vice president of the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association, voiced her opposition to the current form of HB 4002.

She is a fourth-generation dairy

farmer and her life is dictated by cows, she said.

"Calves aren't born on a 9-5 schedule and cows only seem to get out when you're sleeping, at church or at a party," Harrold said.

"Livestock operations don't always follow neat, predictable cycles. Recognizing the unique nature of

caring for livestock to include these considerations would go a long way to making this proposal workable for farms like mine."

Get Ag Alerts sent directly to your inbox and learn how you can help by submitting your own testimony at: oregonfb.org/advocacy.

www.marioncofarm.com

Phone: 503.877.1999
Salem, Oregon 97309
PO Box 12216



MCFB Board Meetings

Information subject to
change.
Contact staff to confirm
details.

March 9, 2022,
6:30 p.m.
1320 Capital St NE,
Salem, OR

**Check our
website
for other
Upcoming
Events**



Publicize your farm stand for FREE!

Voting and supporting Farm Bureau members with farm stands, u-picks, on-farm events, CSAs, and other public ag ventures are invited to promote their business for FREE in Oregon's Bounty, a printed guide and website!

The guide is mailed out in April to 63,000 families across the state, and the website allows anyone anytime to search for

public ag ventures in their region.

Sign up by March 15 online at:
oregonfb.org/bounty/

If your farm or ranch is already included in Oregon's Bounty, your listing will be emailed for your review.

For more information, contact OFB's
Anne Marie Moss at annemarie@oregonfb.org.

Marion County Farm Bureau – PO Box 12216, Salem, OR 97309