

FARM GRAM

Promoting, Protecting & Advancing Farm Interests in Marion County



A publication of the Marion County Farm Bureau

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Standing Up for Agriculture Farm Bureau Members Head to the Capitol

On May 6, Oregon Farm Bureau held one of its most important advocacy events of the year at the Oregon State Capitol - Lobby Day.

It was an opportunity for farmers and ranchers to meet directly with lawmakers to share our stories and experiences in order to influence policies that directly impact Oregon agriculture. It is important that we help the legislators "put a face" on agriculture.

Over 60 OFB members attended the legislative portion of Lobby Day representing 20 of the 32 County Farm Bureaus in Oregon. We were well prepared the visits with our legislators, thanks to a comprehensive legislative issues overview from the OFB Government Affairs Team—Ryan Krabill, Lauren Kuenzi, and Jenny Dresler—and the detailed talking points we received on the key bills of concern.

A panel discussion on water bills, featuring representatives from the Oregon Water Association and the Oregon Water Resources Department, along with a legislative session overview provided by Senator Lieber and Representative Drazan, also helped prepare us for the day ahead.



Emily Iverson (Clackamas County Member), Anne Krahmer-Steinkamp, Jon Iverson (Clackamas County Member), Representative Christine Drazan, John Zielinski, and Bruce Chapin.

There were eight different groups visiting the Capital from OFB and our group leaders were tasked with keeping us on point and making sure that we respected everyone's time. In total, OFB members visited 42 of the 90 Representatives and 12 of the 30 Senators. Marion County Farm Bureau members were split into 2 groups and were paired with members from Clackamas County.

Unfortunately, it was a beautiful day so some members had to farm and couldn't attend but for those who did attend, it was well worth it, and we had some really good discussions.

Group 1 met with Representative Mannix's staff, Senator Thatcher, Representative Diehl, Representative Munoz's staff, and Representative

Drazan. Group 2 met with Representative Helm's staff, Representative Hartman, Representative Lewis, Senator Girod, and Representative Wright.

The reception that followed at The Reed in Salem was very well attended and it was a good opportunity to follow up on earlier conversations as well as reach out to more legislators and their staff. It was a very positive experience for all.

Thank you to everyone who attended either the Lobby Day, the reception, or both. We appreciate your time. Marion County Farm Bureau contributed \$500 to sponsor the event and we want to thank Paradis Vineyards, Chapin Orchards and EZ Orchards for donating wine and food to the reception.

Be on the lookout for the next Lobby Day during the long legislative session in 2027.

Find us online anytime at: www.marioncofarm.com





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A Message from the President

The weather has been “shifty,” a term the meteorologists like to use, but our vineyards are looking good. With a little sun, they’ll get over their “spring fever” and start growing like crazy. We’ve been tasting through the 2024 wines with our winemakers and it looks like it will be one of the best vintages since 2016.

As a grassroots organization, member participation is the foundation of everything we do. Thank you to all of our members who have stepped up and actively participated in various aspects of Farm Bureau this year. Your involvement - whether through leadership, advocacy, volunteering, or attending an event - has made a meaningful impact.

HB 2548 was a challenging (and terrible) bill and was put to rest for this year thanks to over 700 farms and ag groups that submitted testimony in opposition to the bill. That doesn’t mean it’s gone forever but it was a victory for this session. The current status is that a report sharing the perspective of farm workers in Oregon will be published in Fall of 2026 in anticipation of legislation in 2027. We need to make sure that Farm Bureau and agriculture are part of that process.

Lobby Day on May 6 was a great success and we appreciated the great turnout from Marion County. I know a few of you who signed up were unable to attend and assumed that farming had to be done since it was such a beautiful, sunny day.

Next up, the Oregon Agricultural Education Foundation’s Farm Dog of the Year event will be held on June 5 at Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm. There is at least one Marion County “Farm Dog” entered and our member Lucas Rue from Victor Point Farms is one of the guest artists for the “Poorly Drawn Pet Portrait Online Auction.” I’ve attended the past few years and it’s a fun event and you can bring your dog. Skeeter and I hope to see you there.

Thanks for reading and I hope you have a great season farming and ranching.

Cheers!

Dana Estensen

Marion County Farm Bureau President



Dana Estensen

Marion County FB President

Growing Leaders: REAL Oregon Program

Marion County Farm Bureau member Austin Kraemer, of Kraemer Farms in Mt. Angel, participated in Class 8 of the REAL (Resource Education & Agricultural Leadership) Oregon program during 2024–2025. Seeking opportunities to expand his knowledge beyond the farm, Austin found the experience to be both enriching and rewarding.

“The program was thoughtfully designed and very methodical—well worth the time away from the farm,” he shared. Austin especially valued the insights he gained into the complexities and interconnected layers of agriculture and its adjacent industries.

Beyond the educational content, Austin appreciated the strong sense of community and the powerful networking opportunities the program provided. He enthusiastically recommends REAL Oregon to anyone involved in agriculture, “This is a great opportunity that everyone in the industry should take advantage of.”

REAL Oregon brings together current and emerging leaders from across Oregon’s natural resource sectors—including farming, ranching, forestry, fisheries, and related industries such as transportation, finance, education, and government.

Through five intensive sessions held across the state from November through March, participants gain valuable knowledge, build a statewide network, and develop essential leadership skills. The program equips them to strengthen Oregon’s natural resource communities and drive meaningful, long-term change across the state.

Marion County Farm Bureau has a \$1,500 scholarship available for a Marion County Farm Bureau member applying to Class 9. The deadline for applications for Class 9 is July 31, 2025, but early submissions are encouraged.

For more information visit their website at realoregon.net or contact Lauren at info@realoregon.net or 503-710-7001.



Let’s Meet at the County Fair

Marion County Farm Bureau members are invited to a special Summer Reception at the Marion County Fair!

Join us Saturday, July 12 from 5 to 7 PM in The Woods area of the fairgrounds for a relaxed evening of fun, food, and farm community.

This is a great opportunity to connect with fellow members, celebrate agriculture, and enjoy everything the county fair has to offer.

The reception is free for members and their families, thanks to the generous support of Valley Ag. We’ll have light hors d’oeuvres and drinks, and you’re welcome to stay afterward to catch the Saturday night concerts featuring Drake Milligan and Ned LeDoux!

Saturday is also Ag Day at the Fair, with livestock shows, FFA and 4-H exhibits, local vendors, and hands-on activities for kids. It’s a celebration of the people and traditions that make our agricultural community strong.

While there’s no cost to attend the reception, registration is required to receive your admission tickets. Just scan the QR code below, or visit our website, to sign up, and we’ll email you your tickets.



Let’s celebrate summer and our shared love of ag—we’ll see you at the fair!

www.marioncofarm.com

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MCFB Board Meetings

*The MCFB meets the second Wednesday of each month. Information subject to change.
Contact staff to confirm details.*

Next Meeting: June 11, 6:30 p.m.
1320 Capital St NE, Salem, OR



June 5:

Farm Dog of the Year,
Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm

July 12:

Member Meet-up at the
Marion County Fair, Salem

Nov. 19:

MCFB Annual Dinner
Location: TBA



It's easy to renew your membership and enroll in the auto-renewal program. Visit the OFB website: www.oregonfb.org/membership or scan the qr code.



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