

Grassroots Leader Newsletter

October 2015

REMEMBER TO VOTE: Don't forget to exercise your constitutional right to vote. The 2015 General Election is Nov. 3. Let your voice be heard.

MISSISSIPPI SPOTLIGHT AT SUNBELT AG EXPO: Mississippi will be featured as the Spotlight State at the Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition in Moultrie, Georgia, on Oct. 20-22. The expo annually honors one of the 10 Southeastern states that have participated in the expo during its 38-year history. Organizers, including Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and the Mississippi State University Extension Service, hope to show visitors that things indeed are "Sweeter in Mississippi," which is the theme of this year's Spotlight State exhibit. They are bringing a number of examples for visitors to enjoy. Several state organizations have come together to make the exhibit memorable – and tasty:

- Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) will serve fried catfish nuggets and honey candy.
- Mississippi State University (MSU) will offer samples of its famous Edam cheese.
- The Mississippi Sweet Potato Council will provide sweet potato cake bites.
- The MSU Coastal Research and Extension Center will serve shrimp.

As a special feature, Alcorn State University will have a display commemorating the 125th anniversary of the passage of the second Morrill Act. (See <http://www.1890universities.org>.) Alcorn State representatives will also serve soy nut cookies. A video display will showcase "Farmweek," the MSU Extension Service's weekly farm broadcast, as well as footage from the Mississippi Tourism Association and the Farm Families of Mississippi campaign. Mississippi Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce Cindy Hyde-Smith will open the exhibit during ceremonies on Oct. 20, the first day of the show. Also on hand will be produce farmer Allen Eubanks of Lucedale, this year's Mississippi Sunbelt Expo Farmer of the Year. "Our hope is that the thousands of people who attend the Sunbelt Expo will recognize the innovative accomplishments of Mississippi's agricultural industry, and that this will translate into a positive perception not only of the industry itself but of the state as a whole," said MFBF President Mike McCormick. "Mississippi State is doing an excellent job of leading the charge in putting together an impressive state spotlight, and Farm Bureau could not be prouder to partner with them in these efforts."

MISSISSIPPI SUNBELT FARMER OF YEAR: Fourth generation produce farmer Allen Eubanks of Lucedale has been selected as the Mississippi winner of the 2015 Swisher Sweets/Sunbelt Expo Southeastern Farmer of the Year award. Eubanks joins nine other state

winner from the Southeast as a finalist for the award. The overall winner will be announced on Tuesday, Oct. 20, at the Sunbelt Ag Expo farm show in Moultrie, Georgia. Allen specializes in farm-fresh, hand-picked vegetable crops and has one of the largest vegetable farms in Mississippi. Eubanks Produce encompasses about 2,800 acres, and Allen farms in six counties, including in nearby Alabama. A farmer for 23 years, Allen owns three major enterprises. These include Eubanks Produce, Inc., his main vegetable-farming business; Charlie's U-Pik, a pick-your-own venture; and Farm Fresh Gourmet, a startup company specializing in creative recipes and value-added canning and preserving. Allen's wife, Janice, oversees accounting and manages the farm's office.

MISSISSIPPI FARM BUREAU TAILGATE: The Young Farmers & Ranchers State Committee is doing something different this year than they have done in the past. They are hosting a Mississippi Farm Bureau Tailgate for all Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation members on Nov. 14, 2015, in Starkville for the MSU vs. Alabama football game. The tailgate will begin three hours prior to game time (which hasn't been announced yet) and will be held inside Bost Building B on the MSU campus. YF&R State Committee members would like to extend an invitation to all Farm Bureau members to come and enjoy lots of good food and fellowship.

MFBF ANNUAL MEETING: Gov. Phil Bryant will be the keynote speaker for the annual membership meeting of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation. Convention activities will be held Dec. 5-7 at the Hilton Jackson hotel in Jackson. The General Store and Young Farmers & Ranchers live and silent auctions will be held throughout the event. Saturday highlights will include the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Ambassador Competition and YF&R Discussion Meet Finals; Grain Bin Safety Meeting; Land Program Meeting; Farm-to-Table Cooking Demonstration; Farm Families of Mississippi Benefit Dinner; and YF&R Alumni Reception. Sunday activities will include the Women's Recognition Breakfast and Women's Business Session; Commodity Market Update Conference; and Worship Service. The afternoon General Session will include the County Recognition Program as well as presentations to Mississippi Pennies and to recipients of the Farm Woman of the Year, Friend of Agriculture, Excellence in Leadership and Distinguished Service awards. During the evening General Session, presentations will be made to the YF&R Discussion Meet winner and to the Excellence in Agriculture and YF&R Achievement Award recipients. Monday's Business Session will close the event. More detailed information will run in the November issue of our membership magazine.

STATE FAIR BOOTHS: Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation will have a booth in the Trade Mart Building and one in Barn 6 for the kids during the Mississippi State Fair on Oct. 7-18 at the state fairgrounds in Jackson. Come join the fun. As always, the fair will offer food, entertainment, livestock shows and rides.

OCTOBER IS FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH: The first full week in October has been designated by the Mississippi Legislature as Mississippi Farm to School Week. Each year, schools across the state participate in a variety of farm to school activities and strive to serve produce from local farmers. For more information, see the next issue of Mississippi Farm Country magazine.

MAEA ANNUAL MEETING: The 41st Annual Meeting of the Mississippi Agricultural Economics Association, with the theme “Production Agriculture in 2020,” will be held Oct. 15-17 at Mississippi State University. Registration details can be found at <http://www.agecon.msstate.edu/>.

LIFE LINE SCREENING: Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation has teamed up with Life Line Screening to offer members four screenings at a discounted price. Established in 1993, Life Line Screening has since become the nation’s leading provider of preventive health screenings. Preventive screenings enable you to understand your risk for major chronic diseases while you and your doctor can still take preventive action. Life Line Screening is coming to your community soon to make these valuable tests convenient for you. The non-invasive, painless tests help people identify their risk for stroke, vascular diseases and other chronic diseases early enough that the physician can begin preventive procedures. Call them at 1-844-591-7116 to schedule an appointment, or call the state office at (601) 977-4242 for additional information.

DEADLINE FOR PHOTO CONTEST: The deadline for the photo contest sponsored by the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Women’s Programs is Nov. 1, 2015. Photographs must be your own original creation. You may submit a photo(s) in one or all three categories as follows: **At Home on the Farm** – Includes but is not limited to your farm and gardening as well as all ages, family members, and generational groups; **My Scenic Farm** – Dynamic and visually appealing photos can cover a variety of topics, including but not limited to farmhouses, barns, crops, farm animals, land, etc.; **At Work on the Farm** – Can cover a variety of topics, including but not limited to planting, harvesting, irrigating, animal care, branding, etc. Prizes will be awarded to the top-three photos in each category as follows: **First Place** - \$75; **Second Place** - \$50; and **Third Place** - \$25. The contest is open to all Mississippi Farm Bureau members and employees over the age of 18 at the time of entry – amateur photographers only. All photos must be taken in Mississippi. A 2015 Photo Contest Entry and Release Form must be filled out for each image. All images and forms must be submitted electronically to pjones@msfb.org. Forms can be found on the MFBF website at www.msfb.org. On the left-hand side, click Programs then Women. This contest is being held in order to obtain usable and appropriate photos which accurately portray today’s agriculture. They may be used in future promotions and publications.

COUNTY FARM BUREAUS URGE PRODUCERS TO REPORT FLOW METERS: With the Dec. 31 deadline quickly approaching for the Delta Sustainable Water Resource Task Force

Voluntary Metering Program, many county Farm Bureaus in Regions 1 and 3 are urging producers to register their flow meter with MDEQ to participate in the voluntary metering program. During the month of August, most Delta-area county Farm Bureaus issued reminder letters to all producers in the county, urging their participation in the program. Donald Gant, MFBF Vice President for North Mississippi and a taskforce member, stated, “We still have many counties who have not met their metering goal. I would highly encourage any producer who has a meter on their well to make sure the meter is signed up under the voluntary metering program. It is vital that we reach these goals by the end of the year. If we do not reach the goals, a mandatory program will take effect.”

FARM FAMILIES REVIEW AND PLANNING SESSION: The Farm Families of Mississippi Producer Steering Committee convened this summer for their annual planning meeting in Jackson to review the results of the 2015 Farm Families of Mississippi campaign and to make tentative plans for the upcoming year. The committee welcomed new members, Bill Ryan Tabb, Kevin Rhodes and Shannon Rogers, and elected Hugh Arant of Leflore County to chair the committee for 2015. Coley Bailey, a current member of the Farm Families Steering Committee, stated, “We reviewed our results for 2015, which showed a consistent level of impact being made on the public’s perception of agriculture in Mississippi. The committee voted to continue moving toward a web-based effort to reach consumers through the use of social media and more advertising through social media. We gave staff direction to continue our focus on messaging in the following policy areas: biotechnology, animal care, agriculture’s impact on our daily lives and promotion of specialty crops. We thank all of the generous supporters of this program, which is continuing to improve the public’s appreciation and awareness of agriculture.”

CANDIDATES FOR AFBF PRESIDENT: American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) President Bob Stallman announced this summer that he would not seek re-election. Four state Farm Bureau presidents have thrown their names in the hat to be considered as the next AFBF president. Stallman's successor will be elected to a two-year term by voting delegates on Jan. 12 during the national convention and trade show in Orlando, Florida. The four potential candidates include Indiana Farm Bureau's Don Villwock, Georgia Farm Bureau's Zippy Duvall, Arizona Farm Bureau's Kevin Rogers, and current AFBF Vice President and Oregon Farm Bureau President Barry Bushue.

VOICES OF AGRICULTURE: Join Voices of Agriculture as it travels Mississippi, exploring the interesting stories of agriculture in our great state. The next Voices of Agriculture will air Nov. 23 at 2:30 p.m., CST, and Nov. 28 at 2:30 p.m., CST, on RFD-TV. RFD-TV can be found on Channel 231 on Dish Network and Channel 345 on DirecTV. Voices of Agriculture is a production of the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation.

FARMERS ARE A HIT AT SMITHSONIAN PROGRAM: Brandon Whitt, along with his father-in-law, John Batey, talked to visitors at the Smithsonian's American History Museum recently about what farming looks like in modern America. The Smithsonian's new Ask a Farmer program, which takes place the third Wednesday of every month, allows museum-goers to ask real farmers and ranchers questions about what the business of farming looks like today and how innovation plays a role in caring for their land and animals. For many, this could be their first conversation with a farmer. Brandon and John spoke to nearly 100 visitors via video chat from their historic log cabin at Batey Farms, just outside Murfreesboro, Tennessee. They answered a variety of questions, ranging from what sustainability looks like on their farm to how their farm has diversified and changed over its 200-year history. As a special treat for visitors, Brandon wrapped up the chat with a performance of his original song, "Farm Strong." Ask a Farmer is a special feature of the American History Museum's new American Enterprise Exhibit. For more on the exhibit, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/american-enterprise>.

NATIONAL YF&R PRIZES: The American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) competitions will offer great prizes in 2016. Winners of the Achievement Award, Discussion Meet, and Excellence in Agriculture contests will have a choice of a 2016 Chevrolet Silverado or a 2016 GMC Sierra pickup truck, sponsored by Chevrolet and valued at \$35,000. In addition, they will receive a paid registration to attend the 2016 AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference to be held Feb. 12-15 in Kansas City, Missouri. Three finalists in the Achievement Award, Discussion Meet and Excellence in Agriculture contests will receive a Case IH Farmall 50A, sponsored by Case IH, along with a \$2,500 cash prize and \$500 in merchandise, courtesy of STIHL. Winners will be determined at AFBF Annual Convention, Jan. 10-13, 2016, in Orlando, Florida. For more information about the YF&R program, contact Samantha Laird at (601) 573-7913. Our state YF&R competition also offers a fantastic prize package.

FALL FLOWER & GARDEN FEST: The 2015 Fall Flower & Garden Fest will be held Oct. 16 & 17 at the Truck Crops Experiment Station in Crystal Springs. Crystal Springs is about 25 miles south of Jackson. Hours are from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. both days, and food vendors will have food and drinks available. For more information, contact your county Extension office or call (601) 892-3731. This is the largest home gardening show in the Southeast. Average attendance is 5,000 people over the two-day event. Admission and parking are free. The garden, grounds, seminars and one of the tour wagons are handicapped accessible.

THE BEEMAN: The 2015 Agricultural Book of the Year is "The Beeman" by Laurie Krebs and Valeria Cis. The book looks at beekeeping through the eyes of a child whose grandpa is a beekeeper. Copies of "The Beeman" can be ordered by contacting Pam Jones at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4854, or (601) 977-4854. You may also contact your county Farm Bureau office. The cost of the book is \$6 plus \$2 shipping.

FARM FAMILIES OF MISSISSIPPI VANITY CAR TAG: Show your support for the Farm Families of Mississippi Agriculture Promotion Campaign by purchasing a Farm Families of Mississippi vanity car tag. The additional tag fee (in addition to your annual tag fee) is \$31. The campaign receives \$24 of these funds to better promote agriculture to the general public. Please visit your local tax collector's office to order your tag. For more information, contact Greg Gibson at (601) 977-4154.

POLARIS MEMBER DISCOUNT: Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation now offers a member discount with Polaris. Through this program, eligible Farm Bureau members receive a \$300-per-unit discount on all Polaris utility and sport vehicles, a \$200-per-unit discount on all all-terrain vehicles, and a \$300 per-unit discount on all GEM electric vehicles. Your membership must be valid for 30 days before using the discounts. To take advantage of the Polaris discount, please visit www.fbverify.com/polaris. Eligibility will be confirmed once your membership number and zip code are entered. A certificate will be made available online that must be printed and taken to the dealership of choice for presentation to the salesperson. Certificates expire after 60 days.

MEMBER DISCOUNT ON CASE IH EQUIPMENT: Farm Bureau members have an opportunity to receive up to \$500 off eligible tractors and equipment from Case IH. The following products are eligible for this benefit: Farmall Compact tractors (A & B) - \$300 per unit; Farmall Utilities C, U, & J series - \$500 per unit; Maxxum Series and Farmall 100A series - \$500 per unit; self-propelled windrowers - \$500 per unit; large square balers - \$500 per unit; round balers - \$300 per unit; small square balers - \$300 per unit; disc mower conditioners - \$300 per unit; sickle mower conditioners - \$300 per unit; and Case IH Scout - \$300 per unit. Simply go to www.fbverify.com/case and follow the prompts for the Case IH offer. Members enter their Farm Bureau membership ID and zip code and click "submit." A prompt to print a personalized certificate will appear. Members should take the certificate to their dealer with a current driver's license or state identification. The discount is stackable, meaning it can be used with other discounts, promotions, rebates or offers that may be provided by Case IH or a Case IH dealership. For assistance or for more information, call (601) 977-4242.

NEW FARM BUREAU APP FOR SMARTPHONES: A new app for your smartphone will give you quick access to Farm Bureau information, including member benefits, programs, events and more. You can pay your dues, watch the latest videos from Farm Bureau, link to our social media sites, find directions to your county Farm Bureau office, read the latest Mississippi Farm Country magazine, even send us photos! Versions are available for Apple and Android phones. Go to the App Store or the Android Store and search for Mississippi Farm Bureau.

COUNTRY COOKING, VOLUME V: "Country Cooking, Volume V," is now available at most county offices. The cost is \$20. If you order a cookbook from the state office, you will

pay \$20 plus postage. For more information, contact Pam Jones at pjones@msfb.org or (601) 977-4854.

AG MAGS AVAILABLE: Farm Bureau offers a children's agricultural newsletter called Ag Mag, which features one Mississippi commodity or a related topic each issue through facts, activities, games and more. You can order copies of this newsletter for your local classroom or ag promotion events from our Ag in the Classroom program. Dairy, corn, poultry, horticulture, cotton, soil and honey bee editions are now available. Peanuts will be available in November. For more information, call Pam Jones at (601) 977-4854.

AG IN THE CLASSROOM T-SHIRTS FOR SALE: If you have not purchased your Ag in the Classroom T-shirt, contact Pam Jones at pjones@msfb.org or (601) 977-4854. The shirts are available in maroon or red, sizes Youth, small through large, and Adult, small through 3XL. The cost is \$15 for short sleeves and \$20 for long sleeves. Flo Blue Comfort Color shirts are also available. These shirts cost more but are still more affordable than if purchased somewhere else. Short-sleeve shirts are \$18 and long-sleeve shirts are \$23 in the same sizes as the T-shirts.

Calendar of Events

Oct. 7-18

Mississippi State Fair
Mississippi Fairgrounds, Jackson

Oct. 20-22

Sunbelt Agricultural Exposition
Moultrie, Georgia

Nov. 1

Deadline
Women's Program
Photo Contest

Nov. 3

General Election

Nov.12

State Resolutions Meeting
MFBF Building, Jackson

Nov. 14

Mississippi Farm Bureau Tailgate
Bost Building B, MSU

Nov. 20-26

National Farm-City Week

Dec. 5-7

MFBF Annual Meeting
Hilton Jackson Hotel, Jackson

Jan. 5

Mississippi Legislature
Convenes at Noon

Jan. 10-13

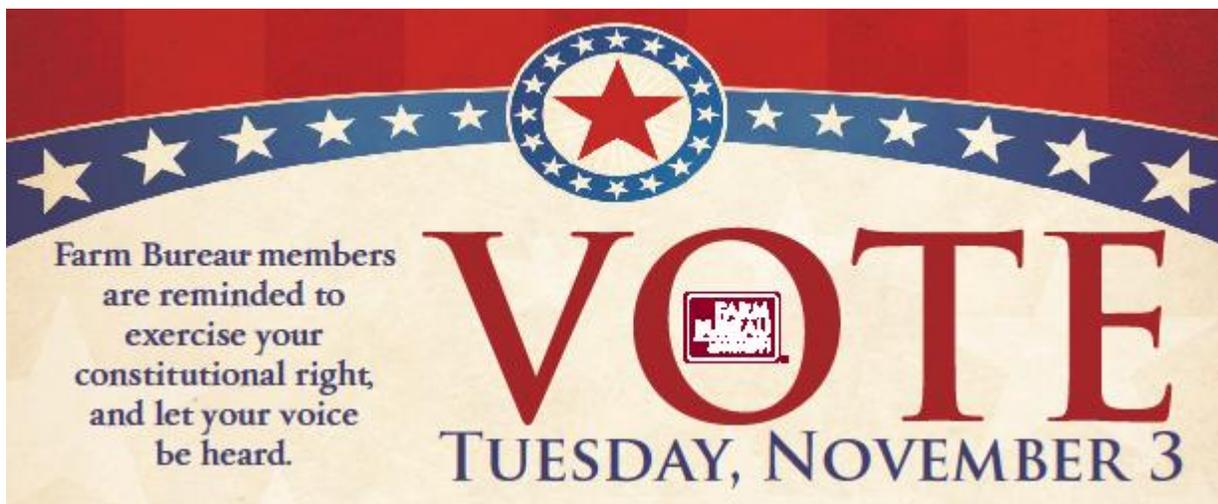
AFBF Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida

Jan. 25-26

Winter Commodity Conference
MFBF Building, Jackson

Jan. 25

Legislative Reception



If you have information for the December issue of Grassroots Leader newsletter, call (601) 540-6868 or email gphillips@msfb.org.

