

MISSISSIPPI FARM BUREAU® FEDERATION

**GRASSROOTS LEADER NEWSLETTER**

**APRIL 2016**

**YF&R LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE ENJOYS RECORD ATTENDANCE:** This year's Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Leadership and Advocacy Conference proved to be the biggest to date, with nearly 200 participants registered. The conference, held on March 4-6 in Memphis, Tennessee, at the historic Peabody Hotel, had as its theme: "Moving Ag's Agenda Forward." Conference attendees from across the state learned a great deal about the importance of telling their agricultural story and how to do this effectively, while also gaining insight into the importance of Memphis as a transportation hub for moving our agricultural products around the nation and the world. Plans are already being made for next year's conference to be held in Natchez on Feb. 24-26. We would like to extend a special thanks to supporters of this year's event: First South Farm Credit, DuPont Pioneer, Dow AgroSciences, Peoples Bank, Horizon Ag, Tippah County Farm Bureau, Bayer CropScience, Sanders Inc., Nutrena and Purina. MFBF President Mike McCormick stated, "It is truly an honor for Farm Bureau to partner with these organizations in sponsoring our Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership and Advocacy Conference. We will continue to recognize their generosity and support throughout the year in our publications and at our events. We sincerely appreciate their willingness to promote our state's young farmers, and we hope to continue this vital partnership for many years to come." Conference coverage will run in the July/August issue of our membership magazine.

**AGRICULTURAL TOWN HALL LUNCHEON:** Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and the Mississippi Sweet Potato Council are pleased to announce an Agricultural Town Hall Luncheon with U.S. Congressman Trent Kelly to be held at noon on Tuesday, April 5, in Calhoun City at the Lewis Memorial Methodist Corner located at 139 Public Square. The luncheon has been coordinated for area farmers, ranchers and industry professionals to visit with the congressman on matters pertinent to Mississippi agriculture. As a member of the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture, Congressman Kelly has been a true advocate for Mississippi farmers and ranchers in Washington, D.C. Please encourage area producers to attend and feel free to pass this information along to other interested parties. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Justin Ferguson at (601) 720-4238 or [jferguson@msfb.org](mailto:jferguson@msfb.org) if you plan to attend.

**MCCORMICK NAMED TO AFBF ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AG DATA USE:** On March 14, MFBF President Mike McCormick was named to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Advisory Committee on Ag Data Use. AFBF has been actively working on the issue of Ag Data Use for several years. Just recently, AFBF announced the formation of an Ag Data Coalition that intends to build a data repository. The idea is to have a secure place

where farmers can easily store, analyze and transmit their data. AFBF is also beginning work on an Ag Data Transparency Evaluator, which is essentially a type of evaluation of a product and an approved data management provider if the provider is transparent. If you are interested in reviewing the website, here is the address: <http://www.fb.org/agdatatransparent/>. McCormick and staff traveled to Washington on March 31 to participate in an Ag Data Summit with other commodity groups and industry representatives hosted at AFBF headquarters.

**SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE:** Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation offers 11 scholarships, including four Berta Lee White scholarships and seven Young Farmers & Ranchers Foundation scholarships, to eligible college and community college students in Mississippi. Each scholarship totals \$3,000. The Berta Lee White Scholarship is for female students only. The deadline for applying for these scholarships is June 1. For more information, contact Nancy Britt at (601) 977-4230 or Pam Jones at (601) 977-4854.

**STATE SEED PREEMPTION BILL PASSES:** As this newsletter was going to press, the State Seed Preemption Bill (SB 2209) had passed and was expected to be signed by the governor. In a letter to Mississippi House Speaker Phillip Gunn on March 21, Farm Bureau joined 10 other Mississippi ag organizations in voicing support for the bill, which strengthens Mississippi's current seed laws by instituting a state-level protection against any local ordinance or regulation in conflict with our current state seed laws. Agricultural groups signing the letter included: Mississippi Seedsmen's Association, Mississippi Rice Council, Delta Council, Mississippi Feed and Grain Association, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation, Mississippi Soybean Association, Mississippi Agricultural Consultants Association, Mississippi Corn Growers Association, Mississippi Agricultural Industrial Council, Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce and Mississippi State University Division of Agriculture.

**FARM FAMILIES OF MISSISSIPPI® 2016 CAMPAIGN:** The Farm Families of Mississippi® Ag Image Campaign has begun its seventh season, which will run until mid-June. This statewide media blitz is designed to educate the public about the multitude of things that agriculture provides for them every day. Over 250 organizations, businesses, individuals and county Farm Bureaus have joined together over the years to make this multimedia effort possible. There are five TV commercials, five radio commercials and four different billboard designs that are spread out all over the state touting the great aspects of agriculture and how they add to everyone's daily lives. David Arant Jr., a Leflore and Sunflower County row crop farmer, chairs the Communications Committee for 2016. If you would like to become a sponsor or help in some other way with the campaign, contact Justin Ferguson at (601)720-4238 or Greg Gibson at (601) 573-4154.

**SUMMER COMMODITY MEETINGS:** Summer commodity meetings are being scheduled as we go to press. See the Calendar of Events for the dates we have so far. For more information, call Nancy Britt at (601) 977-4230.

**GRAIN BIN SAFETY PROGRAM COMING TO MID-DELTA AREA:** The MFBF Safety Division will hold a Grain Bin Workshop on Monday, April 4, 2016, at the Mississippi Delta Community College Capps Technology Center located at 920 Hwy 82 West, Indianola. The segment of the workshop designed for farm and farm employees will begin at 1 p.m. The segment of the workshop designed for emergency first responders will begin at 6 p.m. A special thanks to the Monsanto Company for their support of this important program. Please contact Angela Ellis for more information at (601) 977-4242 or [aellis@msfb.org](mailto:aellis@msfb.org).

**MAGNOLIA BEEF AND POULTRY EXPO:** The annual Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo is set for April 7 at the Smith County Ag Complex in Raleigh. The expo offers educational seminars and a trade show. Approximately 400 producers attend annually.

**WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE:** The annual Women's Leadership Conference will be held April 22 at the MFBF Building in Jackson. Speakers will address issues of interest to farm women, and participants will have an opportunity to enjoy Ag in the Classroom activities. For more information, call MFBF Women's Programs at (601) 977-4245 or (601) 977-4854.

**FARM BUREAU SECRETARIES' CONFERENCE:** The 2016 Farm Bureau Secretaries' Conference will be held April 26-27, 2016, at Table 100 in Flowood. The theme of this year's conference is "Happy and Healthy." Happy and healthy people are productive people. For more information, contact Merlene Partridge at (601) 977-4233.

**TEACHERS & VOLUNTEERS AITC WORKSHOPS:** This summer's Teachers and Volunteers Ag in the Classroom Workshops are scheduled as follows: June 7 at the Forrest County Community Shelter in Hattiesburg; June 8 at the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Building in Jackson; and June 9 at the DeSoto County Schools Administration Building in Hernando. The objective of the workshops is to provide information to educate students and the general public as to the importance of agriculture. A \$20 deposit is required for all participants (to be returned at the workshop if the CEU is not requested; if the teacher receives the CEU, the cost will be \$20.) Teachers can receive .7 CEU. Registration deadline is May 15. For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau office or MFBF Women's Programs at 1-800-227-8244, ext. 4245 or 4854.

**GARY LANGLEY MEMORIAL CLAY SHOOT:** The MFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee will host the Gary Langley Memorial Clay Shoot on Saturday, June 25, at Kearney Park Farms in Flora. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Young Farmers & Ranchers Scholarship Foundation, which awards over \$31,000 in scholarships annually to students in Mississippi majoring in the field of agriculture. Registration will begin at 8:15 a.m., with the shoot beginning at 9 a.m. and concluding by noon. A catfish lunch will be served for all participants. First-, second-, and third-place prizes will be awarded to the top-three teams and individuals. Entry fees for the event are \$140 for an individual shooter and \$550 for a four-man or corporate team. The registration deadline is Friday, June 3. To register, you may contact

Nancy Britt at (601) 977-4230 or [nbritt@msfb.org](mailto:nbritt@msfb.org). Sponsorship opportunities for the event are also available. For more information, please contact Chris Shivers at (601) 408-7787 or [cshivers@msfb.org](mailto:cshivers@msfb.org).

**YOUTH SAFETY CAMP:** The Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Youth Safety Camp will be held July 25-28 at Gray Center in Canton. The application and \$100 registration fee are due by July 8. Contact your county Farm Bureau office for more information and about sponsoring your student. Additional information can be found on our website at [www.msfb.org](http://www.msfb.org) or by calling Angela Ellis at (601) 977-4242.

**WOMEN'S AG TOUR:** The two-day Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Women's Ag Tour will be held in October and will visit operations in Hinds, Copiah, Lincoln, Adams, Claiborne and Warren counties. More information will be provided as tour dates are firmed up. If you'd like to participate, contact your county Farm Bureau or MFBF Women's Programs at (601) 977-4245 or (601) 977-4854.

**SAVE MORE WITH GRAINGER AGREEMENT:** Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation and Grainger announce an updated agreement that allows our members to enjoy more money-saving opportunities when they shop at Grainger. Farm Bureau members can save up to 30 percent on products purchased through Grainger, and they also receive free standard ground shipping on all standard Grainger products, including orders placed in-store, by phone or online. "Grainger is proud to support Mississippi Farm Bureau members—the ones who get it done," said Scott Harte, Senior Corporate Sales Manager for Grainger. "These new money-saving opportunities help take the cost out of purchasing supplies, managing inventory and operating safely and sustainably." The Farm Bureau Grainger Program now includes discounts in 12 product categories. The discounts range from 10 to 30 percent off the catalog prices on more than one million different products.

- 30% off [Motors](#) and [Electrical](#)
- 25% off [Cleaning](#) Consumables and Janitorial; [Plumbing](#) Pipe, Valves and Fittings and Other Plumbing; [People Safety](#); [Hand Tools](#) and [Welding](#)
- 20% off [Outdoor Equipment](#), [Power Tools](#) and [Facility Safety](#)
- At least 10% off all other products found in [Grainger catalogs](#)

All Mississippi Farm Bureau members are eligible for Grainger benefits. Discounts cannot be applied to past purchases. To register your current Grainger account or to set up your own Grainger account, visit [www.fbadvantage.com/granger](http://www.fbadvantage.com/granger) and use Mississippi's exclusive discount number 818224800.

**CATERPILLAR ADDS NEW MACHINES, TOOLS TO DISCOUNT:** Caterpillar has expanded the reach of its Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation Member Benefits Program. Farm

Bureau members can now save up to \$2,500 thanks to the addition of hydraulic excavators and a medium track-type tractor to the program. As an additional incentive for Farm Bureau members, Caterpillar is offering \$250 added savings on work tool attachments with the purchase of a new Cat machine. This deal provides members a low-cost way to properly equip their machines for any job. To take advantage of Caterpillar incentives, members can visit [www.FBadvantage.com/Cat](http://www.FBadvantage.com/Cat), enter their membership ID and ZIP code, download a certificate and present it to a Cat dealer at the time of purchase. The dealer will verify customer eligibility by matching the name and address on the certificate to the customer's current driver's license or state identification. The offer is transferrable to anyone living in the Farm Bureau member's household. Residency must be verified for both the original customer and the transferee through a current driver's license or state identification. Farm Bureau members can save \$2,500 on the Cat 336F and Cat 349F hydraulic excavators as well as the Cat D6T track-type tractor. In addition, Farm Bureau members can receive a \$250 credit on attachments purchased with a new Caterpillar machine.

**MOBILE GRAIN BIN SIMULATOR:** With grant funds from the Monsanto Company, the Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) Safety Division built a Mobile Grain Bin Simulator that is now available for county Farm Bureaus and fire departments throughout the state and in the surrounding states of Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee. The goal of the unit is to improve farm safety awareness by better educating farmers, farm workers and first responders about the dangers of working around grain bins. The unit will also work collaboratively with the Mississippi State Fire Academy in Pearl and their Extension program to reach rural first responders who would be called to incidents of grain bin entrapments on the farm. The MFBF Safety Division is responsible for the coordination and movement of the new Mobile Grain Bin Simulator. If you would like to book it, contact Angela Ellis at (601) 977-4242. Firemen get three CRS hours for participating in the program.

**LIFE LINE SCREENING:** Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation has teamed up with Life Line Screening to offer our 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 1-844-591-7116 to schedule an appointment, or call the state office at (601) 977-4242 for additional information.

**LAP THROWS:** Afghan lap throws with the Ag in the Classroom artwork (the same as the T-shirts) are now available for \$40 from the state office. The throws are maroon and are 51 inches by 38 inches in size. For more information, contact Pam Jones at [pjones@msfb.org](mailto:pjones@msfb.org) or (601) 977-4854.

**AG BOOK OF THE YEAR:** The 2016 Ag Book of the Year is “Millie’s Chickens” by Brenda Williams, illustrated by Valeria Cis. The book has a rhyming text. Millie’s backyard is filled with plants, a slide, a clothesline and happily pecking chickens. One of Millie’s hens, Silkie, gets lost but is quickly found with a clutch of eggs. Millie is kept contentedly busy looking after the chickens and the new baby chicks. Endpapers display an assortment of heritage breed chickens. The book has an informative text on keeping chickens, chicken anatomy, the parts of an egg and the life cycle of chickens as well as suggestions of different cooking methods for eggs. “Millie’s Chickens” sells for \$6 and can be ordered by calling Pam Jones at (601) 977-4854. We also have a limited number of past ag books of the year, including “The Bee Man,” “Seed, Soil, Sun” and “Who Grew My Soup?”

**AG MAGS AVAILABLE:** Farm Bureau offers a children's agricultural newsletter called Ag Mag, which features one Mississippi commodity or 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, peanut, honey bee and soil editions are now available. Beef will be available in May. To order, contact Pam Jones at [pjones@msfb.org](mailto:pjones@msfb.org) or (601) 977-4854.

**AG IN THE CLASSROOM T-SHIRTS:** If you have not purchased your Ag in the Classroom T-shirt, contact Pam Jones at [pjones@msfb.org](mailto: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 T-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 red and maroon T-shirts.

**FORD SAVINGS:** Farm Bureau members can enjoy \$500 Bonus Cash savings off vehicle MSRP toward the purchase or lease of any eligible 2014/2015/2016 Ford vehicle or \$750 off Lincoln vehicles. With this valuable offer, you can enjoy savings on the vehicle of your choice from our exciting new lineup of hardworking and technologically advanced cars and trucks, including the Ford F-150 with its impressive power, fuel efficiency and best-in-class trailer-towing capacity.

**LANDOWNERS CAN DIVERSIFY INCOME:** A May 4 workshop in Lexington will help landowners, farmers and timber producers branch out and earn extra income from natural resources on their property. “Landowners and farmers can seek new and innovative ways to earn extra money,” said Daryl Jones, Mississippi State University Extension Service professor and Natural Resource Enterprises coordinator. “These workshops are designed for landowners interested in learning about developing enterprises from the natural resources on their property or simply learning more about wildlife and business management.” Topics covered in the workshop include marketing, recreational enterprise potential, available cost-share programs, ways to

reduce liability and management for natural resources, including habitats for wildlife game species on working farm and ranch lands. The workshop, cosponsored by MSU and the Walton Family Foundation, will be held at the Lexington Multi-Purpose Complex. Registration is free, but attendees must register in advance. Lunch and materials will be provided. For more information about the workshop or to register online, visit <http://www.wildlifeworkshop.msstate.edu>. The Natural Resource Enterprises program at MSU is a research and outreach program of the MSU Extension Service, Forest and Wildlife Research Center, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**CATFISH FARMERS OF YEAR:** The Catfish Institute (TCI) congratulates the Catfish Farmers of America's (CFA) 2016 Catfish Farmers of the Year named at CFA's annual convention held recently in Nashville, Tennessee. They are Bubba Drury of Greensboro, Ala., Alabama's Catfish Farmer of the Year; John Farmer of Dumas, Ark., Arkansas' Catfish Farmer of the Year; and Jerry Nobile of Moorhead, Miss., Mississippi's Catfish Farmer of the Year. TCI would also like to congratulate Joe Oglesby of Indianola, Miss., recipient of the Catfish Farmers of America Lifetime Achievement Award. For more information about U.S. Farm-Raised Catfish, visit [www.uscatfish.com](http://www.uscatfish.com).

## **Calendar of Events**

### **April 4**

Agricultural Town Hall Luncheon  
*Calhoun City*

### **April 4**

Grain Bin Workshop  
Mississippi Delta Community College  
*Capps Technology Center*  
*Indianola*

### **April 7**

Magnolia Beef and Poultry Expo  
*Smith County Ag Complex*  
*Raleigh*

### **April 22**

Women's Leadership Conference  
*MFBF Building*  
*Jackson*

**April 26-27**

Farm Bureau Secretaries' Conference

*Table 10*

*Flowood*

**May 15**

Deadline to Register

Teacher/Volunteer

Ag in the Classroom Workshops

**June 1**

Forestry & Land Use Summer Commodity Meeting

**June 7-8-9**

Teacher/Volunteer Ag in the Classroom Workshops

*Hattiesburg, Jackson, Hernando*

**June 25**

Gary Langley Memorial Clay Shoot

*Kearney Park Farms*

*Flora*

**July 6**

Cotton Summer Commodity Meeting

*Grenada Extension Office*

*Grenada*

**July 7**

Peanut Summer Commodity Meeting

*Larry's Fish House*

*Itta Bena*

**July 15**

Sweet Potato Summer Commodity Meeting

*Calhoun County Multipurpose Building*

*Pittsboro*

**July 25-28**

Youth Safety Camp

*Gray Center*

*Canton*

*If you have information for the June issue of Grassroots Leader newsletter, please contact Glynda Phillips at (601)540-6868 or [gphillips@msfb.org](mailto:gphillips@msfb.org).*