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Conversation with an Economist about Farm Income: George Frisvold

U.S. farm income fell by 38% between 2014 and 2015 and is forecast to fall by another 3% this year reminding us that farm income is volatile and commodity price spikes don't last for long. Reviewing the dramatic swings of our industry, a U of A economist speaks to the present and future.

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Communication Director

Professor and Extension Specialist in the Department of Agricultural & Resource Economics for the University of Arizona, George Frisvold, Ph.D., wholeheartedly engages in conversations about Arizona agriculture and economics as they relate to our industry. He'll help you understand the numbers and give you a broad perspective on economic issues. In fact, the non-numbers person might even walk away from a conversation with him embracing the numbers, at least understanding them better.

Dr. Frisvold joined the faculty at The University of Arizona in 1997. He came to us with an impressive record of experience. For example, he has been a visiting scholar at the National Institute of Rural Development in Hyderabad, India, a lecturer at The Johns Hopkins University, and Chief of the Resource and Environmental Policy Branch of USDA's Economic Research Service.

His research interests include domestic and international environmental policy, as well as the causes and consequences of technological change in agriculture. In 1995-96, Dr. Frisvold served on the senior staff of the President's Council of Economic Advisers with responsibility for agricultural, natural resource, and international trade issues. He is a co-editor of the *Journal of Water Economics and Policy*.

Arizona Agriculture asked Dr. Frisvold to give us a perspective on U.S. Farm income and the serious decline it's taken in the last few years.

Arizona Agriculture: The USDA says that U.S. Farm income in the aggregate will be down again in 2016 after large declines in 2015. How do we sustain profits in our farm and ranch businesses with these conditions in agriculture?

Dr. Frisvold: According to the USDA Economic Research Service, U.S. net farm income fell by 38% between 2014 and 2015 and is forecast to fall by another 3% from 2015 to 2016. Keep in mind, though, that 2011 to 2014 saw record highs for farm income.

Farm income is volatile and commodity price spikes don't last for long. While farmers don't like to see incomes fall, a downturn after four record-setting income years, unfortunately, isn't that surprising. Federal farm program payments rose by about \$1 billion in 2015 and are forecast to rise by another \$3 billion in 2016. That helps, somewhat but the rise in payments is not keeping pace with the fall in market returns. When cash receipts are down, farmers can try to economize on inputs. Fuel and feed expenses are down, but labor costs are rising as the overall economy is improving.

Arizona Agriculture: What does this mean specifically for Arizona agriculture?

Dr. Frisvold: USDA doesn't report state-level forecasts, but makes forecasts by larger regions. Arizona is split between two regions where farm income is forecast to fall by 2%-5% in 2016. Unfortunately, farm income is down because agricultural commodity prices are falling across the board. It isn't just one or two commodities. Cattle and calf prices are down, dairy prices are down; same for cotton and wheat. Vegetable and melon prices are also forecast to be down in 2016. So, weak prices are hitting nearly all of Arizona's main agricultural commodities. Rising labor costs can be an issue because Arizona agriculture is more labor-intensive than many other parts of the U.S.

Arizona Agriculture: Are some agriculture commodities more susceptible than others and if so which ones?

Dr. Frisvold: Nearly every major Arizona commodity is susceptible this year. USDA's longer range forecasts for wheat and for cotton prices suggest those prices will start to recover, but there is a lot of "noise" in those forecasts. Market projections for vegetables, melons, and nuts are fairly bullish. Given California's water supply problems, Arizona has the potential to capture a bigger share of these markets in the future.

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Frisvold suggests the brightest future is going to be in vegetable and other specialty crop production in Arizona. In fact, he says, "Arizona is one of the best places in the world to do it and Arizona growers are really good at it."

The ABCs of Prop 123

By Joe Sigg, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

Wondering what the ABCs of Arizona Education Finance Amendment, Proposition 123 might be since it's on the ballot for the Special Election May 17th? Since this issue was referred to the May 17th ballot by the legislature in October of last year, the Arizona Farm Bureau Board of Directors examined the issue and has elected to support the proposition.

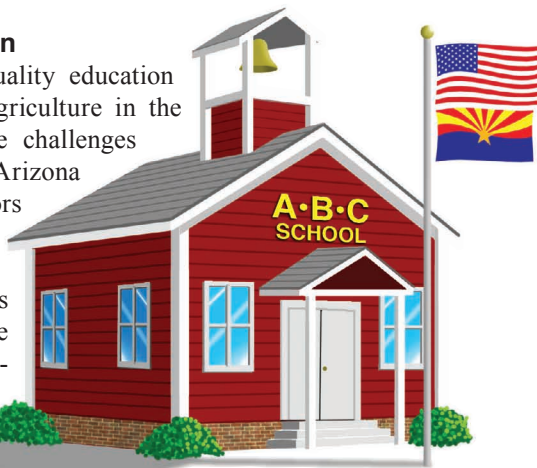
In summary, the measure, if passed, would allocate \$3.5 billion for education funding. About \$1.4 billion would come from general fund money and \$2 billion would come from increasing annual distributions of the state trust land permanent funds to education. It would raise the distributions from 2.5% of the average value of the funds to 6.9% for the next 10 fiscal years.

The ABCs of the Proposition

As strong advocates of quality education that should at times include agriculture in the classroom and recognizing the challenges of educational funding, the Arizona Farm Bureau Board of Directors recommends a "yes" vote on Proposition 123. Additionally and as importantly, since this proposition deals with the State Trust Fund, Farm Bureau members need to be assured that the proposition deals with safeguarding the trust.

First, distributions from the State Trust Fund shall not impair the current baseline value of the trust. Enhanced distribution formulas should have limited time periods.

As stated earlier, the measure would allocate \$3.5 billion for education funding. \$1.4 billion would come from the general fund and the balance (\$2 + billion)



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They Don't Mingle Anymore

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Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

All Food is Local to Someone

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Communication Director

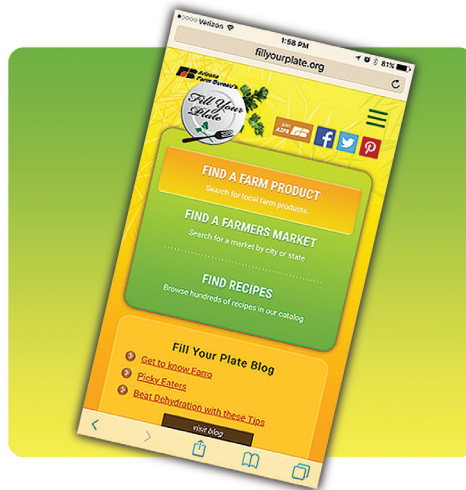
As posted in a recent United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) blog, “All USDA Foods are local to someone.” And, in fact, the use of the word local in food discussions is a constantly shifting definition of terms.

For those of us representing Arizona Farm Bureau, our “local” is all Arizona agriculture. As a result, our geographic border is clear. But, if you’re an ardent “slow foodie”, your geographic region might only encompass 250 miles. If you’ve never heard the term, “Slow Food,” it’s a grassroots organization (sounds familiar) founded in 1986 by Carlo Petrini in Italy that promotes an alternative to fast food, striving to preserve traditional and regional cuisine and encourage farming of plants, seeds and livestock characteristic of the local ecosystem.

In recent years, Arizona has come into its own with the local foods movement. To wrap our arms around some numbers representing the local, direct market (retail) food sector in Arizona, we look to the USDA.

For Arizona Farmer’s Market data, USDA’s 2012 Census of Agriculture data of direct sales for human consumption is what gives us some clarity to the local farm to table market. This includes roadside stands, farmer’s markets, Pick-Your-Own, and community supported agriculture (CSAs).

The data show that in Arizona only 0.2% of the Total value of Arizona agriculture sales is from direct sales. In 2012, 1,216 farms in Arizona sold directly for human consumption in 2012 with a total value of \$7.96 million. We can imagine that by the next Census of Agriculture the number should be bigger.



Arizona Farm Bureau’s mobile-friendly Fill Your Plate helps viewers find “local” agriculture product, recipes and farmers markets and celebrates our direct-market farmers and ranchers. Today in Arizona the direct market represents 0.2% of the total value of Arizona agriculture.

Here’s a brief breakdown of sales.

	Farms	Value
<\$5,000 in sales	1,016	\$1.08 million
\$5,000 - \$50,000	172	\$2.70 million
>\$50,000	28	\$4.19 million

The top 4 counties (below) had 70% of the value of sales.

Maricopa County	218	\$2.04 million
Pima County	102	\$1.32 million
Cochise County	122	\$1.15 million
Coconino County	115	\$1.04 million

For the national numbers, 144,530 U.S. farms sell directly for human consumption valued at \$1.31 Billion or 0.3% of total Value of Agriculture Sales nationally.

In the meantime, for more than 70 years the USDA’s Food Distribution Programs have purchased foods from American farmers that then find their way to children’s lunch trays. Since the signing of the National School Lunch Act in June 1946, USDA Foods have been available to schools nationwide. The programs’ more than 200 offerings span the food groups.

In fact, the USDA purchases more than 2 billion pounds of food worth nearly \$2 billion from American farmers and distributes the food to schools, food banks, Indian Tribal Organizations, disaster feeding organizations, and other charitable institutions and feeding organizations. The programs benefit both ends of the food chain by supporting local agriculture and the economy while also providing a nutrition safety net for vulnerable Americans.

What’s more, each state has specific agriculture food items to sell to the USDA. The USDA’s 2015 State of Origin chart reveals a variety of foods purchased in Arizona. In 2015, Arizona sold 9,255,020 pounds of food to the USDA at a value of \$4,289,261. Compare this to California’s 385,622,235 pounds of food at a dollar value of \$487,422,392. Granted, California is one of America’s largest agriculture states.

The Arizona Foods Sold to USDA in 2015; Our Geographic Reach

- Dried Fruit (pitted plums)
- Orange Juice
- Eggs (I’m sure they were Hickman’s Family Farms eggs)
- Whole grain pasta
- Whole grain macaroni
- Whole grain spaghetti
- Other Pasta (Mainly egg noodle)
- Yogurt
- Powdered milk

For the United States, local is our country and the USDA appears to be doing a decent job of sourcing for foods in this great country though I think much more could be purchased by the USDA from Arizona.

And, if the case is made by the USDA that all food is local to someone, then we can certainly review the entire agriculture industry in Arizona and celebrate that \$17.1 billion that the University of Arizona’s economic team identified no more than 18 months ago.

As Shane Burgess, dean of the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences said, “Arizona is a destination state and all the reasons that people have for coming here and investing here are based around Arizona’s historical and future rational use of its natural resources. There are some real opportunities for the next iteration of Arizona agriculture.”

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Frisvold *continued from page 1*

Beef prices hit records in 2014. Longer-term, USDA forecasts prices moving slowly downward from those highs, but even these lower forecasted prices are well above USDA's forecasts from just five years ago. Dairy prices are not forecast to rebound until 2020 or later.

Arizona Agriculture: What do Arizona farmers and ranchers need to do to hedge against these more challenging economic times?

Dr. Frisvold: Hopefully, farmers saved some of the extra income from the recent good years. Canada has a tax-deferred savings program for farmers where the government provides a match – something like the employer match in people's 401(k) retirement accounts. This creates incentives to save during good times to ride out the bad. Unfortunately, we don't have these types of programs in the U.S. In principle, farmers can diversify and switch to more profitable commodities, but that strategy is less effective when prices have fallen across the board as they have this year. Farmers can rely to some extent on off-farm income. More than half the farm households in the U.S. have more than \$70,000 in non-farm income. Farms can enter into forward and futures contracts to hedge against price risk and there also a variety of federally-subsidized crop and revenue insurance products they can access. A problem with federal crop insurance programs, though, is that they were not developed and designed with Arizona production conditions in mind. So, for example, Arizona cotton and wheat growers do not benefit as much from crop insurance programs as much as growers in other states. Finally, growers can keep abreast of the newest methods and technologies to control costs.

Arizona Agriculture: One commodity, cotton, has had poor commodity prices for a few years now. Does cotton still have a place in the Arizona agriculture mix and why?

Dr. Frisvold: In 2011, prices received for Arizona upland cotton averaged more than 87¢ per pound. In 2015, it was about 63¢ per pound, a drop of over 27%. Upland acreage has fallen a lot in recent years. Unfortunately, cotton prices are projected to fall in 2016. A concern is if cotton production falls below a critical level so that it becomes difficult to support local gins. Pima cotton acreage has come up in recent years, though. One of the goals of the largely successful Pink Bollworm Eradication Program was to help bring Pima cotton production back to Arizona. With near complete eradication in Arizona, we may be seeing the beginnings of this. I think cotton will continue to have a place in Arizona agriculture. We still have some of the highest cotton yields in the world. We also have ideal climate conditions for growing out cotton seeds to supply to the seed industry. This is a niche that Arizona can continue to fill. Arizona cotton is in better shape than California, which is facing greater water supply problems.

Under the current farm bill, producers are eligible for insurance payments under ARC (Agriculture Risk Coverage) or PLC (Price Loss Coverage) programs. While "other oilseeds" are eligible for payments under these programs, cottonseed was not explicitly listed as eligible. The House Agricultural Committee Chair, Michael Conaway, has asked the Secretary of Agriculture to consider cottonseed be considered as an "other oilseed" for the purpose of payment eligibility. Secretary Vilsack, though, has argued that he does not have authority under the farm bill to do so. Sides are continuing to argue back and forth on this. I am not a lawyer so can't speak to what can or cannot be done. But, I will point out that cottonseed and cottonseed oil are included in official USDA reports, statistics, and forecasts for oilseeds. I think a sticking point is where the money would come from if cotton producers were to become eligible.

Arizona Agriculture: What might University of Arizona and extension tell young farmers, especially when establishing their agriculture businesses, to prepare for uncertain economic times? Certainly during budgeting times.

Dr. Frisvold: Be very careful about how you manage debt. The mid-1980s was another time of low agricultural prices. Farmers then had a lot more debt going into that bad patch and it was devastating to many farm families. Since then, farmers in the U.S. have been relatively conservative taking on debt. USDA statistics suggest that over the past decade farmers could have taken on a lot more debt than they actually did. But when the recession hit and people were questioning the true value of certain assets, farmers were in a much stronger position because they were less indebted than many U.S. households and they were producing valuable and tangible products.

Times of good prices never last very long in agriculture. There is always a downturn after a few years. So, run scenarios for your farm or ranch. How would you weather a year of bad prices? Two to three years? There are more financial planning tools (and even Excel!) that you can use to go through "what if" scenarios.

Even if you are young, start retirement and estate planning. Far too few Americans are saving adequately for retirement. Especially because farm income is so volatile and tax implications are important, you need to plan early and often.

Some measures like being meticulous to protect food safety or prevent pest or weed resistance cost extra in the short run. But consider the costs to your business of a food safety scare or resistant pests or weeds. It's a bit like maintaining your truck. If you don't do it, you're going to have higher costs later, often at a time when you can least afford it.

Arizona Agriculture: Do you see a bright or challenging future for up-and-coming farm and ranch families in Arizona? Explain?

Dr. Frisvold: Farming is *always* challenging. That's a pretty safe prediction. I think the brightest future is going to be in vegetable and other specialty crop production. Arizona is one of the best places in the world to do it and Arizona growers are really good at it. I have played around with different economic models where you can simulate certain "shocks" to agricultural industries. I ran some scenarios with massive water shortages in the Southwest and Yuma vegetable and melon production doesn't budge. That area is going to be an international center of food production far into the future. Because California has more severe water shortage problems, I think there is potential for expansion in Arizona. In Pinal County, I see another major agricultural area sitting right between two large metro areas – Phoenix and Tucson -- with 5.5 million people. Those areas are projected to grow by a million people over the next 10 years and another million 10 years after that. That's a big potential market. So there's potential for specialty crop and dairy production to feed that growing population. A shift to more specialty crops involves shifting production practices and new labor management issues. Older growers may not want to make such shifts, but there might be potential for younger farmers. Aside from labor management issues, there will be potential water supply issues in Central Arizona depending on Colorado River water supplies. For traditional commodities, I think focusing on quality and niche markets rather than focusing primarily on yields and bulk production will become more important. Ranching is always going to be challenging. Because grazing lands are so important, ranching is really the only "rain-fed" agriculture in the state and it is vulnerable to fluctuations in weather. I think there is a promise that advances in information technologies can help ranchers manage weather risk better, but I don't think we are there yet.

Arizona Agriculture: What else can you share that can help someone build their business around economic forecasts?

Dr. Frisvold: First, there is just so much more economic data available at your fingertips through the Internet than 30 years ago. So, in principle, it is much easier to stay informed. That said, only about a third of Arizona farmers report using a computer for their farm business while about a third of Arizona farmers do not have internet access. I have a young, bright graduate student working on agricultural computer and internet use and he was floored that these numbers for non-use are so high. We're just starting to look at this, but the Four Corners area of the Southwest has lower internet access for farmers. So one thing we are looking into is to what extent there is a "digital divide" between Indian farmers and other farmers in the Southwest. Farmers tend to be older on average, which may also be a factor. That said, my Dad was on the internet all the time back in the early "dial-up" days and he started when he was in his late 70s.

Second, if you are using the internet, the issue quickly becomes one of quality versus quantity. There is a lot of economic data and forecasts and attempts to "interpret" data out there. But if you are looking at a website, how do you know if you can trust the information. Personally, I look to see if sites end in ".edu" (universities) or ".gov" official government statistics. Even here, you have to be careful because different agencies report data in different ways. You can get very different numbers for what you think is the same thing, depending on where you look. There are also private services that do their own forecasting and some of these are quite good too. I would say, don't take any single number at face value without cross checking other information sources – especially if you are using it to make production or investment decisions. With the internet, there is a lot of information and advice out there, but a lot of it is bad.

Banks, farm groups, and commodity groups often host outlook forums. So, go to those and don't be afraid to ask hard questions. In my experience, though, growers aren't too shy about asking questions. Personally, I like to look up Congressional testimony from USDA's Office of the Chief Economist. These are available online, the USDA economists are on the hot seat, and Representatives and Senators are busy people, so the briefing materials get to point right away.

Arizona Agriculture: In evaluating the economics of Arizona agriculture, what should excite us about our state ... especially considering that our Dean considers us a "Nutrition state?"

Dr. Frisvold: For those unfamiliar with the term "nutrition state" Shane Burgess, Dean of the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences has pointed out that if you just ate foods produced in Arizona, you'd be really healthy. We have meat, milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, even some aquaculture. That's a really balanced, nutritious diet.

As Arizonans (and Americans) age, we are seeing staggering increases in certain preventable health costs associated with diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and osteoporosis. Better nutrition is one of the lowest cost and effect ways to prevent these problems. When people compare the economic contribution of agriculture to Arizona (we did analysis placing this in excess of \$17 billion), that figure does not include

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Science and the Public Don't Mingle Anymore

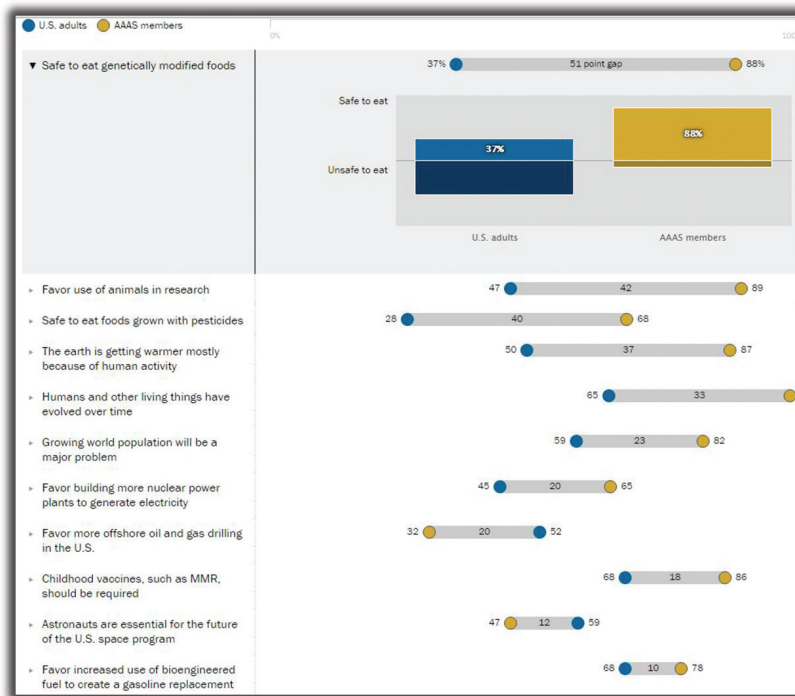
By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Communication Director

Last Year (July 2015), Pew Research Center conducted a study revealing major gaps between the public and scientists on key issues. This despite broadly similar views about the overall place of American science.

It's these gaps that are even more reason farmers and ranchers must regularly engage with the public and our network of friends.

Curious what issues Pew Research found major gaps in? On the scientific side, those interviewed for this study were scientists connected with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). I highlight their study within this article.

Note the huge gap for "Safe to eat foods grown with pesticides." The public supports by 28% versus scientists' 68%. Despite the fact that organic farming also uses pesticides, the idea that foods grown with pesticides is scary to the average American is one of these gap issues where we need to keep discussing the truth of this issue with the public.



The Rules of Engagement

So what do we do to engage? You might remember The Center for Food Integrity's (CFI) three-step process for engaging in meaningful conversation.

Listen— Actively listen, without judgment, for agreement and points of connection to understand how their concern is tied to their underlying values.

Ask— Ask questions to invite dialogue, clarify their perspective and I would personally add, hunt for those shared values.

Share— Share your values-based perspective and provide relevant information to foster understanding and reinforce connection.

Call it what you want, but in order for the science to align with the public's concern, we need to share the truth about today's agriculture. If we don't, we'll lose the public trust and science will be discredited.

ABCs continued from page 1

would come from increasing annual distributions, in fiscal years 2016 through 2025 from the state trust fund rises from 2.5% to 6.9% of the value of the trust fund. Please note, because of an earlier change to the Enabling Acts and the Constitution, distributions are based on the value of the fund – not earnings.

At present, the fund is approximately \$5 billion and consists of land sales, lease income and earnings from market investments.

For the past 20 years the trust has earned roughly 6.5% annually.

There is a trigger to protect declining trust values in a downside market: If the value of the fund falls below the average monthly value for the preceding five years, the distribution for that year would be decreased. Please note, in this event there is no obligation for the legislature to backfill the amount decreased from any other source of public monies.

This is a compromise and it would settle a five-year lawsuit that claims the legisla-

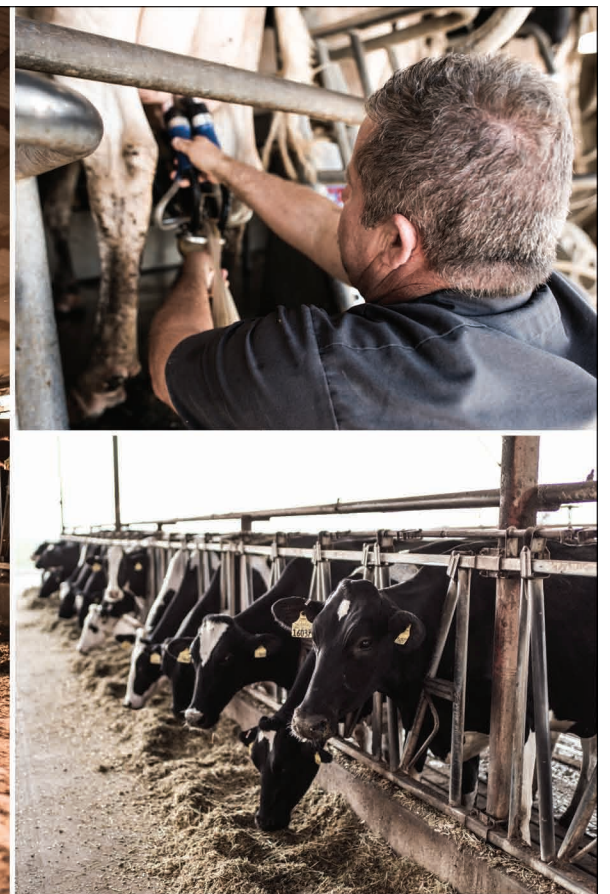
ture ignored an earlier ballot proposition requiring automatic inflation adjustments in state aid to education base levels. This lawsuit began after 2007.

Distributions would be to schools based upon enrollment and there is no requirement to use the funding for any specific purpose. However, given the teacher retention crisis in the state, the presumption is most boards would use the increased funding for teacher salaries, a prediction recently reported by *The Arizona Republic*.

Under this plan, about \$300 per student is added per year bringing totals per student to about \$3,600 annually.

Of course, whether the fund actually grows for the next ten years will depend upon land sales. Arizona is fortunate to have in excess of 9 million acres of state trust land.

For further information or questions, contact Joe Sigg at 480.635.3603.



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Farm Bureau Partners with local school to STEAM into Ag

By Katie Aikins, Arizona Farm Bureau Ag Education Associate Director

Arizona Farm Bureau's Ag in the classroom Program (AIRC) recently partnered with Gateway Polytechnic Academy (GPA), a Queen Creek Public Elementary School, to teach students about agriculture. A project that started with a simple conversation between a teacher and AIRC about a school garden, turned into a multi-month project that brought agriculture to not only every classroom but a community. Each semester, GPA teachers and students focus their studies on a specific topic; something that will bring STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) into their classroom. Last semester it was space. This semester is agriculture.

Preschool through 6th grade at GPA selected an area within agriculture to focus their studies. Farm Bureau AIRC directed teachers and provided the classrooms with lessons, resources and materials. In addition, AIRC also coordinated a pen pal for each grade level to correspond with over the 6-week-long project. At the end of the project, classes were able to Skype and have visits from their pen pals. Some classes even got to take a field trip to see their pen pal. To keep the students' love of agriculture growing, Farm Bureau coordinated with local donors Justin Perry, Jason Perry and A&P Nursery (Queen Creek) to provide the school with materials for a school tire garden. Part of the student activities included painting, filling, planting, watering and maintaining the garden. Students continue to work in the garden each day and become more and more excited with every inch their crops grow.

Participating Pen Pals

- Lindsay Statler (Flowers/parts of a plant)
- Dave Petersen (bees and pollination)
- Mark Loghry (greenhouses)
- Marguerite Tan (Swine)
- Kurt Knolte (Precision Ag/Drones)
- Sharman Hickman (Poultry and Eggs)
- Nature Sweet (hydroponics)

In-Kind Sponsors

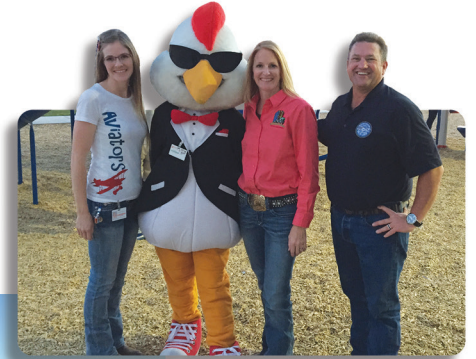
- A&P Nursery – Queen Creek
- Arizona Farm Bureau AIRC
- Arizona Beef Council
- Arizona Pork Council
- Blucorp Construction
- Danzeisen Dairy
- Farm Bureau Financial Services
- Jason Perry
- Justin Perry
- The Pork Shop
- Scooptacular Ice Cream Shop
- Queen Creek 4-H

This curriculum project was celebrated last month with a school-wide event that invited parents to see what their students had been learning. In addition to student projects, parents and students were also able to learn even more about agriculture from activities provide by AIRC, Arizona Beef Council, Farm Bureau Financial Services and Queen Creek 4-H. Local farmer, Jason Perry was also in attendance to interact with attendees. Over 800 BBQ meals were served up by Farm Bureau Financial Services and Highland FFA Members on the Farm Bureau Grill. Attendees then sampled dessert from Scooptacular Ice Cream Shop and delicious flavored milk from Danzeisen Dairy.

"Queen Creek Unified School District is incredibly fortunate to have such a diversity of resources at Gateway Polytechnic Academy," said QCUSD Superintendent Dr. Perry Berry. "The STEAM into Agriculture event is an engaging way for the community to learn about our partnership with Arizona Farm Bureau and the wealth of opportunities offered at GPA for their children."

Turns out pigs, poultry, pollinators, hydroponics, greenhouses, decomposers, and plant parts have a way of getting people involved. 🐷

GPA Teacher Sarahbeth Belvado and GPA Principal Mr. Shultz are all smiles with AIRC's Katie Aikins at the STEAM Event that drew an estimated 800 students and parents from the school and community. Hickman's very own Funky was even in attendance.



Arizona Farm Bureau Member and local producer, Jason Perry brought out one of his tractors to show students and parents about the technology being used in agriculture today.

Farm Bureau Financial services grilled up 300 hotdogs, 400 hamburgers and 100 bratwursts for families to enjoy.



A student from GPA paints one of the tires for the school garden.

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Frisvold continued from page 4

the economic benefits of improved health from better nutrition. So agriculture may come off as looking small compared to other industries in the state, but agriculture and nutrition's role in reducing health care costs and improving the quality of people's lives are enormous.

Arizona Agriculture: With all these exciting considerations about Arizona agriculture's future, what area is our "cautionary concern?"

Dr. Frisvold: Water. Is there going to be a shortage declaration for the Colorado this year and what does it mean for agriculture? Quick answer: things look a little better for 2016 than it did a few months ago, but there is still a lot of uncertainty about 2017 and beyond. Farmers relying on CAP water should keep an eye on this, especially as our recent, low energy prices start to rise over the next couple of years (energy prices affect groundwater pumping costs). In the north and east of the state that relies on groundwater, how are we going to balance economic and population growth with water for agriculture? We're quickly starting to get into issues that could take up an entire article. I don't have the answers, but agriculture is going to be at the center of groundwater management issues in areas outside the major agricultural production areas of the state. Other questions could be about food and agriculture beyond the farm gate. Computers and electronics are Arizona's largest manufacturing industry, transportation equipment is second. Food and beverage manufacturing is third. There has been a lot of talk lately about the loss of manufacturing jobs in the United States. Many of these food manufacturing jobs pay pretty well, especially for people in supervisory positions. So, agriculture in the state is more than just what happens on the farm or ranch. It is an entire system, linked to other key downstream industries and human health. 🐷



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Leadership Conference on Target for the Future

By Peggy Jo Goodfellow, Arizona Farm Bureau Marketing Manager

Mark your calendar for the 20th annual Women in Agriculture Conference to be held at the Wigwam Resort in Litchfield Park, July 14-15. The Conference is hosted by the Arizona Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee, the University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arizona Cattlewomen, Arizona Beef Council, Arizona Milk Producers and the Arizona Department of Ag.

This annual conference is open to anyone, male or female, interested in improving leadership, professional and personal skills. The conference theme is On Target for the Future.

Join friends for a tour of Danzeisen's Dairy the evening before the conference on Thursday July 14. Danzeisen's was the first to offer glass bottles to grocers in the Phoenix market. Don't forget to sample the milk flavors!

Thursday, July 14

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Danzeisen's Dairy tour

Friday, July 15

7:30 a.m. Registration
 8:00 a.m. Welcome from Sine Kerr, Arizona Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee Chair
 8:30 a.m. "Begin your Day with Egg-celence! By Sharman Hickman, Hickman's Family Farms
 9:30 Mark Killian, Director of the Arizona Department of Agriculture
 "On Target: the Future of Arizona Agriculture
 10:30 Break
 10:45 "A Women's Place is in Control" by Mike Kyashi, M. Ed. Take Control, Media and Speaker



Friday, July 15 continued

11:45 p.m. Networking Luncheon
 1:00 p.m. "The Survival of Arizona Agriculture in the Age of Food Safety," by Paula Rivadeneira, PHD University of Arizona, Yuma Ag Center Assistant Professor Extension Specialist, FoodSafety and Wildlife
 2:00 Dessert Break and Raffle drawing
 2:30 "Self-Care in the Digital Age: How to live a mindful life in our digital, future-focused world," by Melissa Estavillo, PsyD, Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Biltmore Psychology and Counseling
 3:15 "Get Your Social Media On," by Breann Bierman, Director of Communications, Dairy Council of Arizona/Arizona Milk Producers
 4:00 p.m. It's a Wrap! By Sherry Saylor, Chair of the American Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Committee and Buckeye farmer
 4:30 Adjourn

Location: Wigwam Resort, 300 Wigwam Blvd, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340

Hotel reservations: Call 800-327-0396 to book your hotel reservation by June 23, 2016 To receive the special group rate of \$97 (single & double) or \$162 for large Suites, identify yourself as a member of "Women in Agriculture."

Conference registration: Registration begins April 5, 2016 on the azfb.org website. For more information, contact Peggy Jo Goodfellow at 480.635.3609 or email her at peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org.

Spring 2016 Washington D.C. Trip



Arizona Farm Bureau's spring trip to Washington D.C. netted the Farm Bureau leadership delegation a meeting with nearly every Arizona congressional representative and an opportunity to discuss the issues including the GMO labeling bill and other important topics. Here, Arizona Farm Bureau First Vice President Stefanie Smallhouse, Maricopa County Farm Bureau leader Bill Kerr, Congresswoman Martha McSally, Arizona Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Chair Sine Kerr, Arizona Farm Bureau Young Farmer & Rancher Chair Cassie Lyman and Arizona Farm Bureau Second Vice President John Boelts gather at the entrance to the congresswoman's office.

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