



ARIZONA AGRICULTURE

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Conversation about Crushing Arizona's Wine Grapes: Mark Beres

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

During their annual summer retreat, myself and about 20 Arizona Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers, along with Field Managers Christy Davis and Amber Morin met Mark Beres, President & CEO of Flying Leap Vineyards, Inc., an Arizona farm winery and craft distillery headquartered in Vail, Arizona. Beres and the Flying Leap team were gracious enough to host a wine tasting and discuss the wine industry in southern Arizona.

A native of Walla Walla, Washington, Mark is a 1991 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, with more than a decade of service to his country as a pilot in many roles, including special operations and developmental flight test before succumbing to combat injuries and retiring to Arizona in 2006.

Not done with an adventurous lifestyle, Beres took a flying leap into Arizona's wine business. Today, he, along with his business partners Marc Moeller and Tom Kitchens, crafts and executes Flying Leap's business strategy and oversees the company's sizable agriculture, production and sales operations.

While many identify three major regions of vineyards and wineries, Verde Valley, Sonoita and Willcox, the overwhelming majority of wine grape production is in the Cochise County area. Arizona's number of commercially-viable wineries, with farm wineries (people growing grapes, making and selling wine under a single banner), is about 40 to 60.

Says Beres, "In my view, the small size of Arizona's wine industry is what gives it its charm and character. Moreover, the small scale of the industry means the wines are rare - that is, limited supply. Because there is demonstrated strong demand for quality wine sourced from Arizona vineyards the limited supply of such wines means the prices are quite high."

And, perhaps why searching, selecting, purchasing and enjoying these wines is so worth it.

For a little history, viticulture in Arizona began in the 16th century when missionary Spanish Jesuit priests began to plant grapevines and make wine for use in religious ceremonies. So, while this resurgence in quality winemaking might be considered rather

recent, our legacy in wine grapes is almost as old as our legacy in cotton farming in Arizona that was begun with the Hohokam people in the 15th century.

Beres gave such an interesting talk to our young farmers and ranchers, highlighting some economic insights, that we felt his conversation deserved a larger audience.

Beres and his wife Michelle, along with their Siberian huskies Comrade, Indigo, Yukon and Balto reside in Vail, Arizona and enjoy classical music, cooking and travelling the world.

Arizona Agriculture: Tell the story of how Flying Leap got started?

Beres: Flying Leap Vineyards was founded in 2010 by three lifelong best friends: myself, Marc Moeller and Tom Kitchens. We met as freshmen in our late teen years at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the 1980s. Following graduation and commissioning, we all three served our country as Air Force pilots in multiple theaters of war and in a number of different roles and aircraft. I flew as a special operations pilot in the MH-53M Pavelev IV and later graduated from the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, serving as a developmental test pilot until succumbing to combat injuries. Marc, a native of San Diego, California flew Boeing 757s, serving two U.S. Vice Presidents, First Ladies and Secretaries of State as a distinguished pilot of Air Force Two for many years. Tom "Kitch" Kitchens, a native of Costa

Mesa, California, flew global airlift missions, flying the Lockheed C-17 for many years in both active duty and in the Air Force Reserve.

We performed a tactical rejoin in Arizona following our years of service to found Flying Leap Vineyards, which was incorporated in Vail, Arizona in 2010. Initially envisioned as a collaborative small business venture, primarily as a small-scale wine grape farming operation with the goal of selling wine grapes to the local wine industry, the company began in earnest developing what would later become its Block 1 vineyard in a small, rural agricultural growing area south of Willcox, Arizona known as the "Kansas Settlement." These initial vines were planted in April 2011 and developed and trellised over three full growing seasons.

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The Three Amigos: As lifelong friends and business partners, Marc Moeller, Mark Beres and Tom Kitchens may never have imagined themselves in the wine business when they were all pilots in the military. But they're knee deep in the business now.

Don't California Arizona with Higher Electrical Rates

Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona Initiative: Vote No!

By Chelsea McGuire and Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau

An average 2,200-cow Arizona dairy can easily run annual energy bills of \$500,000. A proposed initiative working its way onto this year's ballot might easily end up adding up to another \$200,000 to a dairy farmer's energy bill to run his dairy and keep his cows comfortable.

For crop farmers in southeastern Arizona, their well-pumping bills run around \$200,000 annually. Again, factor a minimum 40% estimated increase due to the requirements to be met under this initiative, they'll be paying an extra \$80,000 on energy costs to run their agriculture business.

Arizona farmers of all shapes and sizes rely on affordable power to run their operations. Whether it's pumping water to crops and livestock or powering the machinery that processes the food we eat, energy and



Experts estimate that your energy bill to run your farm operation could rise as much as 40% if the Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona initiative passes this November.

agriculture are inextricably connected. As a result, access to affordable power is essential to make sure our families have affordable, abundant food on our tables.

Spearheaded by an outside group from California, the Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona initiative has the potential to cripple the agricultural industry

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You Belong to One of the Few Truly Grassroots Organizations

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

When we're connecting with prospective Farm Bureau members, we're often asked what exactly Arizona Farm Bureau, a 501 (c)5, does. Sometimes, we're told "I don't have time to join another organization." You may not have time, but can you afford not to be part of this organization?

Arizona Farm Bureau is one of the few remaining "grassroots" organizations. Our farm and ranch leader members are the ones that drive our policy and do the advocating on behalf of our \$23.3 billion industry in this desert state.

In fact, the best way to explain our lobbying and outreach story is to give the highlights of a typical year. So, let's just leap back one year. While the current year still has a bit to go, 2017 was an instructive year in how much Arizona Farm Bureau gets done in 365 days.

In compiling this "highlight reel" I was struck by how much we do get done. And, remember, these are just the highlights.

The Accomplished Highlights from Last Year

Arizona Legislative Session Highlights:

- **Fallowing Bill**, which allows land in rural counties to remain classified as "agricultural" for tax purposes even following extended periods of fallowing due to lack of available water.
- **Hemp Bill**: would have legalized the production of industrial hemp without giving additional funding to the Department of Ag for research or regulation, as required by the Farm Bill. Vetoed by the Governor at the request of the ag community because the amended language would have placed an unfunded, untenable burden on the Plant Services Division and may have put the future of the industry in Arizona at risk. *Subsequently in early 2018, we did get the proper Hemp Bill and supported its successful passage.*

Regulatory Reform Efforts:

Letters were written to the relevant federal and state agencies on each of the following topics:

- EPA Reorganization and Reform
- BLM Land Planning and Use
- Neonicotinoid use in Agriculture
- Pyrethroid use in Agriculture
- WOTUS Repeal and Replace
- Mexican Gray Wolf Revised Recovery Plan
- National Monument Designation Review
- Organic Livestock Rule
- Carcass Beef Grading Standards Rule

Other Government Relations Highlights:

- Participating in the *re-boot of the Ag BMP/Air Quality committee*;
- Working with West Valley growers to avoid *unwarranted county citations and fines* for mud track-out
- Working with Pinal County growers to *develop solutions on water issues*, including the diminishment of extinguishment credits
- *Working with BLM* to solve a private land access issue in the Mount Tipton wilderness area
- *Multiple in-person meetings with state and federal legislators*, including Rep. Tom O'Halleran and Rep. Paul Gosar.

Communication and Organization: Outreach

- *Drove nearly 6,000,000 impressions* recorded in public outreach (5,865,161). These numbers represent Arizona families that have been exposed to the Arizona agriculture story through Arizona Farm Bureau's informational

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by limiting access to affordable power and vastly increasing the costs of producing food. And the feel-good title of the initiative belies the true intent of its authors. By ignoring the value of existing, reliable, sustainable energy sources and disregarding the realities of the current energy market, the initiative will make the cost of energy needed to produce our food exponentially more expensive – and that cost will place burdens on farmers and consumers alike.

Not only will the initiative make food more expensive, it is also expected to significantly increase the average household's electricity bill. This cost increase will be the most difficult to bear in rural Arizona, where small energy providers have less ability to diversify and modify their existing energy infrastructure. Many Arizona Farm Bureau members are also proud residents of rural Arizona. We cannot support a measure that would devastate their ability to power their homes and businesses.

There is no one who better appreciates the importance of wise environmental stewardship than the farmer or rancher; after all, he relies on the sustainability of his resources not only for his livelihood, but for his very way of life. But by ignoring the needs of agriculture and rural Arizona, Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona would destroy Arizona's sustainability rather than improve it. Moreover, at a time when farm income has fallen by more than 50%, according to the USDA, the timing on this proposition will be brutal to Arizona agriculture's \$23.3 billion industry – all while providing no appreciable environmental benefit.

Join us in opposing the Clean Energy for a Healthy Arizona Initiative. Vote NO this November! 🚗



We Start Them Early in Farm Bureau: Begun last year, Gila County formed itself into a County Farm Bureau and had their first Annual Meeting just last month. (FBFS agent Aimee Mundy-Ellison's grand-daughter.)

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Arizona Farm Bureau Federation 97th Annual Convention

“Together Toward Tomorrow”

WHO: Ag Members of the Arizona Farm Bureau
WHAT: Farm Bureau members from throughout Arizona will set policy, hear informational and political speakers, attend awards and recognition events and the Ag Trade Show.

WHEN: November 7, 8 and 9, 2018

WHERE: Mesa Convention Center
 263 N. Center Street
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Hotel: Phoenix Marriott Mesa
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 Book your group rate for AZFB Annual Meeting or call 800.228.9290



Hotel deadline is October 8, 2018

Book your group rate for AZFB Annual Meeting - Attendees

HOW: To book your hotel reservation, call 800.228.9290 and ask for the Arizona Farm Bureau annual meeting group rate. The special Arizona Farm Bureau per night room rate is \$124 single/double. Book your group rate for AZFB Annual Meeting.



Use the form at right to register for the convention and pay by Oct. 24, 2017

Highlights



Wednesday, Nov 7

- YF&R Annual Convention & Workshops
- Financial Opportunities for Ag Operations workshop
- Registration opens
- County Farm Bureau Appreciation Dinner .

Thursday, Nov 8

- Registration Continues
- Trade Show Opens
- Auction Block Opens
- General Session Begins & Resolutions
- Keynote Speaker
- YF&R Competitions
- President's Luncheon
- Service to Agriculture Awards Banquet and Dance.



Friday, Nov 9

- Early Bird Breakfast
- General Session Reconvenes
- Meeting adjourns
- State Board Meeting

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2018 AZFB Annual Convention Registration Form

**** Submit before Oct. 24****
One Form for each family!



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 Address: _____
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Select Your Role:

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- Sponsor
- Guest
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- Attendee
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“Check box for **ALL** events you will attend!”

Adults	Self (check all that apply)	Spouse	Cost
<input type="checkbox"/> No Meals Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> County Farm Bureau Appreciation Dinner...FREE Wed., 5:00 p.m. (County Farm Bureau and spouses only)	_____	_____	
<input type="checkbox"/> President's Luncheon..... \$45 per person Thurs., 12:00 p.m.	_____	_____	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Service to Agriculture Awards Dinner \$55 per person Thurs., 6:15 p.m.	_____	_____	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Bird Breakfast.....\$35 per person Fri., 7:00 a.m.	_____	_____	\$ _____

Children

<input type="checkbox"/> President's Luncheon..... Child meal \$30 ea Thurs., 12:00 p.m.	# _____	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Service to Agriculture Awards Dinner...Child meal \$30 ea Thurs., 6:15 p.m.	# _____	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Bird Breakfast.....Child meal \$25 ea Fri., 7:00 a.m.	# _____	\$ _____

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Wine continued from page 1

During these years and as serendipity would have it, a very young, unknown and somewhat disorganized Flying Leap would purchase a small farm winery called “Canelo Hills” located in the heart of Arizona’s most scenic wine country. The purchase of this property in Elgin in February 2013 launched Flying Leap’s wine retail operations, and it was at this exact time that Flying Leap discovered Rolf Sasse, a European native of Bavaria with experience in the alcohol production trades and sciences who had recently relocated to Tucson after retiring from military service with the German Air Force. Initially hired as a tasting room manager, Rolf’s skills as a winemaker become readily apparent and he was quickly moved from sales to production. With a new portfolio of ultra-premium wines and a place to market and sell them, Flying Leap’s sales soared. The growing demand for the company’s wines required more planting, more expansion and the creation of more jobs.

Arizonans annually drink 19.2 million gallons of wine. In 2016, Arizona wine growers produced no more than 190,008 gallons of wine. This means our local wine makers have the potential for a lot more grape crushing.

Flying Leap’s Block 2 vineyard was planted in 2012 and the estate vineyard was restored and expanded from 2013 to 2016. In 2016, we planted the Block 3 vineyard, and Block 4 is already designed and slated for planting in 2020.

Recognizing the folly, frivolity and sure economic foolishness of fruit sales in the small Arizona wine market (where fruit is selling for a small fraction of its worth), Flying Leap chose instead to design and build a distilling capability so that surplus fruit could be distilled into immediately salable products rather than sold off to other wineries or converted into wine (at great expense) and wholesaled at a huge markdown. Thus, Flying Leap began distilling in the fall of 2016 and opened its distilled spirits tasting room at the winery estate in April 2017.

Today, Flying Leap produces between 3,000 and 8,000 cases of wine annually depending on market demand and fruit allocations to the winery and distillery, which share the company’s annual harvest. Flying Leap operates seven wine tasting rooms and one distilled spirits tasting room in our market, with two new venues planned for 2018. Our products are wholly grown, produced and bottled by Flying Leap. Our wines and brandy-based spirits, including vodka are made from wine grapes harvested by hand at our southern and southeastern Arizona vineyards. They genuinely express the distinctive terroir of Arizona’s unique growing sites and our microclimate, as well as the skill and patience of our production staff.

Arizona Agriculture: Why the wine business and why Arizona?

Beres: In short, there is strong demand for wine in Arizona, and 99% of this demand is being satisfied by out-of-state wine producers.

In 2016, Arizona wineries produced 190,008 gallons of wine¹, or 79,835 cases. In 2015, wine consumption in the United States rose to an all-time high of 2.73 gallons per resident (The Wine Institute). In FY 2015/16, Arizona’s Department of Revenue collected \$16,160,560 in wine sales transactions (Arizona Department of Revenue).

The Arizona tax on table wine is \$0.84 per gallon (Tax Foundation). The approximate amount of wine sold in Arizona in 2015 is therefore 19.2 million gallons, or 8.1 million cases. Arizona’s per capita wine consumption is then estimated to be 2.8 gallons per person, slightly higher than the national average but consistent with the national trend towards higher wine consumption.

In-state wine production is a glaringly tiny fraction of the state’s demand, with in-state producers meeting just under 1% of the state’s demand. The record high in-state demand for wine is being overwhelmingly satisfied by out-of-state wineries.

Arizona Agriculture: From your perspective as a business founder and owner and viticulturist, what makes Arizona wine special?

Beres: Arizona wine is special because of its unique character. This uniqueness derives from the fruit grown here enjoying two key benefits: *extended hang time and wine grapes whose juice has a wonderful balance of sugar and acid attributable to a meteorological phenomenon known as diurnal shift:*

1. Being situated at 32deg north latitude, Arizona’s southern and southeastern growing sites enjoy a 257-day growing season. The long growing season produces bolder fruit that can hang on the vine much longer than in colder climates to our north. “*Extended hang time*” is the primary reason well-made Arizona wines tend to be richer, bolder, denser and more flavorful than similar wines from similar varieties grown elsewhere.

2. Arizona’s southern and southeastern growing sites enjoy 30+ degree diurnal shift during the grape ripening season, defined as a meteorological phenomenon for the difference between the daily high and nightly low temperatures. Wines produced from grapes grown in climates with large diurnal shift *are more balanced*. Daily heat promotes sugar accumulation, while chilly night air preserves the fruit’s natural acidity.

Arizona Agriculture: And on that point, where is the wine industry in Arizona and where is it going?

Beres: In the past decade, Arizona’s wine production has grown at an average rate of about 16% per year, but its growth *has not been constant*. Rather, in the past decade



the industry’s production has increased in two distinct steps – the first from 2011-2012, and the second from 2016-2017. The steps coincide with two significant increases in planted acreage, which occurs usually 2 to

3 years before the step increase in wine production. Thus, the state saw a significant increase in new vineyard plantings in 2009-2010, and again in 2014-2015. I’ve plotted out the state’s volume production by year over the last decade to illustrate these step increases in production. [See box above]

Clearly, in Arizona production follows planting and the industry has grown in distinct spurts. We know that about 75% of all wine grapes grown in Arizona are grown in the Willcox region, thus the agricultural issues facing Willcox will impact the future growth of the Arizona wine industry. No reasonable discussion of that can be made without focusing on water rights and the ongoing over drafting and depletion of the groundwater in the Willcox basin, as well as the prolonged impact of drought in our region. On July 25th, 2018 the Arizona Department of Water Resources published a report titled, “Groundwater Flow Model of Willcox Basin Completed.” In this report, the ADWR reported that modeling showed the water table dropping as much as 917 feet in the aquifer system near the Kansas Settlement, which is right in the middle of Arizona’s premium winegrowing acreage. The same report concluded that a “*significant portion of the remaining groundwater in storage is found at considerable depth and may not be practical to remove.*” Thus, given the prolonged drought and significant depletion of ground water resources, it is highly-unlikely that there will be significant development of new vineyard acreage in the region going forward. What increases there will be will likely come from existing growers with established and demonstrated water usage for vineyard crops, because legislative action to put a stop to new well drilling the region is very likely in the coming years. Given the likelihood of diminished new vineyard development in the state’s largest winegrowing region, it is probable that Arizona’s wine production will level off in the 180,000 – 300,000 gallon volume over the next decade.

Arizona Agriculture: Water and labor are two of Arizona agriculture’s biggest issues. Hearing you talk to a group of young farmers and ranchers recently, you highlighted this same point. In your area, what does all this mean to wine grape growers?

Beres: As to my comments above, water is the big one, and over drafting of the aquifer in Arizona’s largest winegrowing region (Willcox), combined with ongoing drought will tamp down new vineyard development. Existing growers with demonstrated usage will survive forthcoming legislative restrictions on new development, especially those who had the foresight to drill their wells deep. For others, they will need to deepen their wells considerably to remain viable as grape growers.

Arizona Agriculture: What advice would you give up-and-coming agriculturists, especially if they had a keen interest in the wine industry?

Beres: Learn about the economics of wine and viticulture before embarking on a career in the wine industry. Too many wholly ignore the economics and end up woefully under-capitalized in a capital-intensive business that can – and has on many occasions – bankrupted many.

Arizona Agriculture: What’s the future for Flying Leap Vineyards?

Beres: Flying Leap is planting a new vineyard (“Block 4”) in 2020 and making a significant expansion in the wholesale market. We are also considering expansion into the California wine industry. 🍷

Editor’s Note: Economic information from *Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau: Statistical Report – Wine (Reporting Period: January 2016 - December 2016), 17 May 2017* (PDF). Retrieved 5 June 2017.



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Grassroots

continued from page 2

- and educational messaging.
- Generated more Targeted “Connect & Convert” with new Influencer Blogger Tour:** February tour connected 8 bloggers with Arizona agriculture and netted a variety of stories including KTAR radio programming and support for our industry.
- Increased marketing outreach to Arizona Ford Dealers** resulting in a new platinum sponsorship thereby adding \$5,000 more to the annual AZFB sponsorship total.
- Added six new statewide benefits** in 2017 while managing the website and app with over 270 state and local member benefit providers.
- Launched Rural Entrepreneurship “Seed Your Growth” Project:** Generated greater awareness in Arizona counties of AFBF Challenge competition. Four Arizona Competitors this year; prior years zero participation.
- Updated & Revised County Handbook:** revised version available to all county presidents via thumb drive.
- Spearheaded Government Relations Updates to Field Staff twice a month:** Keeping field staff informed on the issues and projects that the Government Relations team manages.
- Provided Field Staff with a Congressional Directory** for county Farm Bureau’s to use in contacting their respective members of Congress.
- Supported Effort to establish a new Farm Bureau County:** Gila County Farm Bureau becomes a reality. Subsequently in August 2018, this newly formed county held their first Annual Meeting to great success!
- Created informational document for Counties with information on programs and events and the “Why” behind them.** Document is an easy reference to our programming and purposes.
- Created easy-to-use “Recipes for County Event Success”** aimed at helping county leaders more efficiently and effectively plan and create events more members want to attend.

Ag in the Classroom

This is Not Your Grandparents’ ATV

By Amber Morin, Field Services Manager and Safety Coordinator

All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV) - 4-wheeled beasts on the track or back trials - loved by the off-road enthusiasts and treasured by farmers and ranchers first made their appearance in the 1960s. The amphibious 6-wheelers like the Jiger in 1961 look nothing like what are parked in American’s garages and barns today.

The Old and New

1960s	2018
 <p>adventuring anywhere anytime any weather in your VERSATREX JIGER</p>	

Insurance companies are seeing an increase in ATV accidents in Arizona involving underage operators. Children under 16 should not be driving ATVs.

The first ATV as we know it emerged as a 3-wheeler in 1967 and was manufactured in 1968. However, it was Honda that made 3-wheelers a household name and set the path for today’s ATV. While the look, speed, and all-terrain abilities of these vehicles have certainly changed, one thing has not, they are dangerous and safety precautions should be followed, especially by children and youth.

According to Bruce Cain of Farm Bureau Financial Services, “The company is seeing an increase in ATV accidents in Arizona involving youthful operators, children hurting children. Warning stickers on the units generally advised that children under the age of 16 should not be operating the units. When these losses occur, it is usually a roll-over accident that causes injury to the occupants. These injuries can range from damage to arms or legs to more serious and debilitating injuries. When parents allow underage children to operate ATV’s with other young passengers the damages are compounded.”

Operating ATVs is not something to take lightly, especially for the safety of your children, on or off the farm and ranch. Accidents happen quickly and are more dangerous in remote areas without first responders nearby. According to U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, below are some safety requirements that should be followed by all ATV owners and operators.

- Do not drive ATVs with a passenger or ride as a passenger.
- Always follow the manufacturer’s minimum-age recommendation warning label on the ATV.
- Wear a helmet or protective gear.
- Do not drive ATVs on paved roads.
- Adhere to the manufacturer’s safety warning on your ATV.

Each state has its own guidelines and laws regarding ATVs. Arizona’s laws can be found under Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 28 – Transportation.

Stay safe, don’t hope for a miracle! 🚗

⚠️ WARNING

Improper ATV use can result in SEVERE INJURY or DEATH

ALWAYS USE AN APPROVED HELMET AND PROTECTIVE GEAR	NEVER USE ON PUBLIC ROADS	NEVER CARRY PASSENGERS	NEVER USE WITH DRUGS OR ALCOHOL

NEVER operate:

- without proper training or instruction
- at speeds too fast for your skills or the conditions
- on public roads - a collision can occur with another vehicle
- with a passenger - passengers affect balance and steering and increase risk of losing control

ALWAYS:

- use proper riding techniques to avoid vehicle overturns on hills and rough terrain and in turns
- avoid paved surfaces - pavement may seriously affect handling and control

LOCATE AND READ OWNER’S MANUAL. FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS.

Read all safety instructions before using your new ATV.

- 94,352 students, teachers and consumers reached directly through AITC presentations and programs in the 2016-2017 School Year.
- From Farm to Football was in 579 classrooms and reached 17,667 students in its first year.
- AITC continues to educate consumers about hot button issues.
 - Biotech, What the Heck was given to 1,700 consumers throughout the state in 2017.
 - The Buzz on Bees is a consumer booth that will make its debut this Fall to allow for interaction and conversations with consumers regarding the honeybee.
- New materials for the classroom
 - Beef Ag Mag (partnership with Beef Council)
 - Energy and Ag AgMag (partnership with Grand Canyon State Electric Cooperative(GCSEC))
 - Energy and Ag Curriculum Kit (partnership with GCSEC)
- AITC has joined the fight to help recruit and retain Ag Teachers. There was a shortage of 20 Ag Teachers last year in the state. Ag Programs that either closed or had an unqualified teacher in the classroom just trying to keep the program afloat. In 2016 \$ was paid out as an incentive, in 2017 that number rose to \$. Arizona Farm Bureau, along with many other industry groups are working together to find a solution and funding source to help bridge the gap for ag teachers and teacher-less programs.

Even this one-year sampling shows how hard our volunteer leaders work on behalf of the Arizona agriculture industry. These are only a sampling and doesn’t represent everything we do.

Finally, if you think you must make a time commitment if you join, you don’t. You just need to be part of the united front if you work in agriculture or happen to be a farmer or rancher contributing to our multi-billion-dollar industry in this state. It needs protecting and you’re best suited to help protect our agriculture.

And, P.S., there’s more to come. (See “The Mission Stays the Same” on page 7 of this issue). 🚗

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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona is proud to support the Arizona Farm Bureau and all of Arizona’s farmers. Your tireless dedication to feeding and clothing our state, and the world, helps ensure an abundant supply of good things for all of us, from the ground up.



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Students Thrive in Hands-on Learning Lab at Yuma's Arizona Western College

By Sarah Berner, Professor of Agriculture Science, and Mariah Hall, USDA Activities Coordinator/Advisor, both with Arizona Western College

In the fall of 2015 Arizona Western College (AWC) Science and Agriculture Division was awarded the USDA ACIS Grant with the intention of addressing Climate Change through Integrated and Applied Learning Opportunities for Underrepresented Students in Science (ACIS). This is a critical endeavor to increase the number of underrepresented students attaining natural resource and agricultural science degrees related to sustainability in Southwest Arizona.

The USDA ACIS Grant serves to improve facilities and equipment in eleven key science classes on the AWC main campus and to reach out to local K-12 students as well as community members to grow awareness. As part of the equipment upgrades the AWC Agriculture Program received two industry standard weather stations to aid in measuring soil moisture, EC, temperature, ambient temperature and humidity, and wind speed and direction. The Plant Science, Vegetable Crop Production, and Soils classes utilize the weather stations to develop irrigation plans and implement methods to improve water conservation on the 10-acre land lab. Thanks to local industry partners, students were able to evaluate the benefit of conservation techniques such as polymer beads, drip irrigation, and heat tolerant crop varieties. Also provided by the grant were ATPase testers that can be utilized to determine microbial presence on surfaces. The students will be able to use these testers to identify colony changes in many different temperature regimes. With an increased

need for educated, experienced, food safety specialists, the AWC Agriculture Department is thrilled to be able to provide this type of hands-on experience to the students of Yuma County.

Outreach is another large piece of the USDA ACIS Grant. Grant staff had the opportunity to educate over 1,065 students of all ages about science, agriculture, and the importance of a sustainable future by visiting eight K-12 Schools within Yuma and the surrounding areas. It is through programs such as this that students have the opportunity to be exposed to science-specific Sustainable Agricultural Science, and to gain interest in a future career involving these pathways. Community schools as well as individual community members have had the opportunity to utilize industry standard equipment and analyze data that effects the production of their food and environment. Everyone eats, so everyone can relate to food; this way of thinking enables students of all ages to see how large a role Agriculture and Sustainability play in their everyday life. This grant has allowed AWC to propagate over 927 community members excitement and knowledge about natural resources and agriculture.



Grant staff educated over 1,065 students of all ages about science, agriculture, and the importance of a sustainable future by visiting eight K-12 Schools within Yuma and the surrounding areas.

For more information about this grant visit <https://www.azwestern.edu/institutional-research/acis>. #5

The Mission Stays the Same

By Philip Bashaw, Arizona Farm Bureau CEO



There is an old saying that you can never step into the same river twice. This idea that the world around us is ever changing certainly fits for Arizona Farm Bureau and the overall agriculture industry. I started my career lobbying for Farm Bureau and advocated for rural utilities before returning to the Farm Bureau family a few months ago. Having observed the organization from multiple vantage points over a period of time, I can attest to the validity of an ever-changing organization.

Over the last several decades we have adapted to a changing industry and a changing economy. The technological advances utilized by the industry have grown exponentially and have allowed the agriculture indus-

try to do more with less. Our access to technology and communications opens new markets and new possibilities for our producers every day. Our ability to adapt modern technology to increase efficiency allows us to keep up with a growing population and provide access to an abundance of food year-round.

Just as these new opportunities allow us to make the industry more efficient, technology allows us to carry out the mission of the Farm Bureau with equal efficiency. The way our staff works, the way we communicate with the public and the way we advocate for our positions has become faster and more efficient. Social media and digital communications have changed the way we interact with our members and the public. Teleconferencing, which was once considered science fiction, is now available for our leaders to use in participating in Farm Bureau business meetings. Technology is allowing our leaders to minimize time away from their operations while still serving the industry. Skyping into meetings has become the natural order of things.

See **MISSION** Page 8

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Mission continued from page 7

Despite all the opportunities, these changes bring about challenges as well. We have fewer producers, more consumers and a demographic that is trending more urban every day. As the Information Age drives on, we have consumers that are more removed from agriculture and our rural communities. These consumers demand more of the industry with less understanding. The same dynamics exist among lawmakers and bureaucracies that are increasingly unfamiliar with our industry or where their food comes from.

That is why the Arizona Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations are so important and why we are so committed to our mission. We know that it is not enough for us to be good at feeding and clothing the world. We know the survival of the industry depends upon us to communicate with the public about what we do, educate our children about where their food comes from and advocate for policies that allow us to continue to provide safe, abundant and affordable food supply to the world. Oftentimes this feels like a battle.

For a grassroots organization like Farm Bureau, we exist not to fight the battle for the industry, we exist to prepare our producers to fight those battles and fight alongside them. Our role is to train our members to become leaders, help our producers become advocates and amplify their message to the public. The role of our organization is not to charge into battle but to shape the battlefield and assist our members in the fight.

Our mission relies upon the active participation of our members in county meeting, advocacy and media response. We facilitate our membership's ability to reach out to students in the classroom, discuss issues with their lawmakers, engage with the public on social media and respond to media requests.

Since coming back, I have been crisscrossing the state and I am encouraged by the participation of our membership in the policy development process, annual meetings and advocacy calls to action. In just the last few months, the organization has testified before Congress, answered numerous media calls, participated in state-wide water discussions, held joint meetings with numerous federal agencies and engaged daily with students and the public. We have worked on issues like fire response, endangered species, crop insurance, Ag labor, the Farm Bill, duplicate brands, budget issues and a multitude of other issues in just the brief time since I returned. In all these activities our members have led the charge and Arizona Farm Bureau has been by their side assisting them in their efforts.

I cannot wait to see the challenges and opportunities the future will bring and the ways we adapt to meet them. But rest assured, whatever changes the future brings or whatever challenges wait for us around the next river bend, the mission stays the same. 🚗

Membership Matters: Your FB Benefit App

As a Farm Bureau member, are you taking advantage of the many valuable benefits? We can help you with that since the FB benefit mobile app was designed to give you quick and easy access to all your member benefits. These include remarkable offers by dozens of retailers, automotive, dining, pet care, beauty, local entertainment attractions and exclusive access to home, auto, farm/ranch, and life insurance tailored to fit all stages of life.

Why Use the App?

1. Your membership card will always be with you since it's part of your "FB Benefits" App.
2. If you carry the insurance benefit, your Farm Bureau Financial Services Insurance card will also be handy and with you always because of the "FB Benefits" App.
3. The App is available on both Apple and Android devices.
4. The App lists all the benefits alphabetical and categorically that are available in Arizona.
5. A convenient mapping feature helps you identify member benefits near you at any time, just pull up the app on your mobile device.

Here's how to download your FREE "FB Benefits" app.

- Go to the App Store or Google Play and look for the "FB Benefits" App.
- The FB Benefits App will have the Farm Bureau logo
- You will need to enter your eight-digit Arizona Farm Bureau membership number (example: 28079499).
- Call 480-635-3609, if you need your Farm Bureau membership number. 🚗

We're Looking for Our Creative Types from Farm & Ranch Country!

Enter the 2018 Arizona Farm Bureau Photography Contest

Contest Dates

Send electronic entries by 11:59 p.m. PST, September 15, 2018 to Peggy Jo Goodfellow at peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org. Entries become the property of the Arizona Farm Bureau and will not be returned.

Winners will be contacted via email by October 15, 2018 with details regarding awards. Winning photos will be framed, displayed and auctioned off at the Arizona Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in November.

Prize Winners

First prize: \$ 500 (Displayed in Washington D. C. at American Farm Bureau's Wall of States)

Second Prize: \$ 200

Third Prize: \$ 100

Fourth Prize: \$ 50

For contest details go to azfb.org's homepage under "Top News."



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