ARIZONA AGRICULTURE

www.azfb.org

JUNE, 2013 Volume 66 No. 6 Official Publication of the Arizona Farm Bureau

Conversation with a Chicken Farmer: Glenn Hickman

Pushing off agriculture advocacy to the next generation is as irresponsible as not doing estate planning contends this grassroots marketer.

By Julie Murphree, *Arizona Farm Bureau*

Glenn Hickman is a 4th generation native Arizonan, and a 3rd generation poultry farmer. His parents, Bill and Gertie (Valenzuela) Hickman, raised five children and produced millions of eggs from their farms.

Today Glenn enjoys working alongside his parents and three of his siblings – Billy, Clint and Sharman – managing the family farms. The family has focused on transforming the original "backyard" egg operation into a 6.5 million hen enterprise with farms in Arizona, California, and Colorado, and customers from Nebraska to Hawaii. Hickman's Family Farms have been providing fresh, safe eggs to consumers for 69 years.

Glenn and his wife, Audrey, have been married for 29 years, and are the parents of two young adult sons, Michael and Grant.

Glenn's views about public outreach are rooted in his conviction that we're all in this together and we're simply asking for help to tell our stories.

Arizona Agriculture pushed for him to share some of his personal convictions, and although we had to do a bit of coaxing, Glenn comes to the metaphorical microphone despite his initial hesitation.

In this context, Glenn and *Arizona Agriculture* visited about the individual public outreach each farmer, rancher and agriculture professional must do to make a difference for agriculture and the next generation.



Glenn Hickman, along with his family, runs Hickman's Family Farms.

Arizona Agriculture: Why do farmers and ranchers have to be their own advocates and marketers in today's world?

Hickman: Everyone in farming and ranching has to advocate for themselves because unless you make a concentrated effort, it's simply not going to get done. So, it's much, much cheaper to tell your own story in your own words and propose your own agenda than it is to hire someone to do it for you. Although the Farm Bureau and some of the other Ag lobbying groups do a great job advocating on behalf of farmers and ranchers, I don't think we can put the entire burden on our trade associations and other membership-driven organizations. Assigning the task of advocacy to anybody else means some compelling part of your particular story might go missing.

Arizona Agriculture: Fine. But how do we do it?

Hickman: I think the first step is to convince yourself that you are going to do it. And that you're not going to just stand there and hope the guy next to you carries the torch. Until you make that individual effort and embrace it yourself, it's not going to get done, or it's not going to get done as well as you could have done it yourself if you had only made an effort. It's the first thing everyone has to do. You need to understand you're an army of one and you need to show up to fight and go to battle every day.

Arizona Agriculture: Quoting from the title of a presentation you recently gave, why is our anonymity killing us? If we are not each our own army of one, is this really going to hurt the industry?

Hickman: Absolutely. I believe as agriculture has continued to concentrate on our efficiencies, we've become less effective in advocating in our surrounding communities for agriculture and our modern practices. Practices we employ every day to put food on all of our tables and shirts on our backs.

Ironically, our own success might kill us. There are so few of us**,** there aren't enough to make a good-sized group.

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AITC Teams with FFA for Success in and out of the Classroom

Staff Reports

As the Arizona Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom (AITC) Program celebrates its 5th year, the program reflects back on where it has been and looks ahead to the future. And according to Arizona Farm Bureau's Assistant Director of Education Katie Aikins, "the FFA plays a large role in that future." FFA members are not only an important audience to reach with presentations such as *Misconceptions*, *Arizona Ag*, and *Ag Issues* but they are also a key player in disseminating accurate information regarding the agricultural industry to the public.

Results from a 2011 study done by the Arizona Farm Bureau in partnership with the University of Arizona, showed that FFA students are just as far removed from the farm and ranch as the general public. This creates a whole new problem. According to Aikins, "this disconnect from production agriculture can contribute to the many misconceptions about today's agricultural industry." The AITC program is working to create presentations, curriculum, and materials that can help FFA Members correct these misconceptions. In the meantime, the FFA is taking that information and spreading it throughout the community at school events, community events and in local classrooms.



Chandler FFA visited 150 classrooms this year during AITC's three Ag Literacy events. Students last month learned about vegetables and were able to plant a class pizza garden.

The FFA

The FFA, once known as the Future Farmers of America, is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. One of the ways that the FFA accomplishes

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

KEVIN ROGERS, PRESIDENT, ARIZONA FARM BUREAU

Show Up!

In recent history, agriculture has become an industry where those outside our industry try to dictate what our culture and practices should be. At times these influences permeate into our own membership ranks. Our industry and our organization have to acknowledge these influences and develop clear and sound responses. I would also suggest that we should become more proactive and get ahead of our antagonists.

So, what is my point in laying out the obvious?

The Farm Bureau's policy development process is upon us. And, we are unique. We work to have a wide range of commodity interests debate and formulate policy that affects commodity issues and the general well being of agriculture. It does not take many to move the dial and if the dial turning impacts your business, you best have your hands on it.

Farm Bureau policy is formulated and decided by those who show up. It is an open system for agricultural members. We want you to show up and be heard on all issues important to your operation and your community. Our organization wants our policy proposals well vetted at the local level and through our state annual meeting's delegate sessions. We have been successful in the past in shaping state and national policy on several issues not the least being visa reform, border security and estate tax reform.

During the year I will take a few calls from members who ask me about a policy position that Farm Bureau has taken. Recently the calls are on the cotton program, dairy herd share, ag visas, border security and air quality. I am encouraged and become more engaged when I know that the person on the phone was involved in formulation of an Arizona position that may or may not have been what the caller had supported.

So, show up when you get the notice from your county Farm Bureau for a policy development meeting. Attend your county annual meeting. Volunteer to be your county's delegate to the state annual meeting in November.

Join me in being a Farm Bureau policy maker…not a policy taker…made by others who may not fully understand the culture or practices of your agricultural business.

Legislative Session: Not Quite Over Yet

By Ana Kennedy, *Arizona Farm Bureau*

The 100th day of the regular session has come and gone, yet the state legislators continue to meet, albeit three days out of the week–granted by the time this article goes to publication the session may be done.



So what's the hold up to date? The governor has two issues she would like favorable action on, Medicaid expansion and transaction privilege tax (TPT) reform (for more on TPT see the May 2013 issue of Arizona Agriculture). Both matters are complicated and carry varied degrees of controversy. While legislators and the governor work to sort out those two pieces of legislation, other bills important to Farm Bureau have made their way through the process and were signed into law.

SB1290- The **Office of Pest Management** will now be managed by the Arizona Department of Agriculture, resulting in the regulation of agricultural and structural pesticide use both falling under the same departmental umbrella. A number of reforms were also a part of the legislation, including simplifying the licensing procedure and creating a more equitable environment for all the entities regulated by the Office of Pest Management.

SB1127- The statutory life of the **Agricultural Employment Relations Board** is good for another eight years to July 1, 2021. The board provides an organized structure for resolving disputes arising between agricultural employers and labor.

SB1157- The **Grain Research Council** was extended for another ten years to July 1, 2023. The council uses grower check-off funds (assessments) for marketing, research, and other related programs.

SB1092- The **Cotton Research and Protection Council** bill makes changes to the administration and enforcement roles of the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the Arizona Cotton Research and Protection Council in the abatement and plow up of nuisance cotton fields.

SB1469- **Applying Aquatic Poisons-** Under this legislation the Game and Fish Department is prohibited from applying rotenone or antimycin A to any body of water unless an impact analysis of risk is submitted to the Game and Fish Commission. The Commission is required to approve the analysis if it is determined the application will not endanger the health of the environment, humans or livestock.

SB1107- The **Scrap Metal Theft** bill amends the classification of theft to include a person who, without lawful au-

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Arizona Agriculture
is published monthly, except December, plus three special editions, (ISSN 0274-7014) by the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation
325 S Higley Rd., Suite 210
Gilbert, AZ 85296
Periodicals postage paid in Higley, Arizona and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
Arizona Agriculture
325 S Higley Rd., Suite 210
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Subscriptions are included in annual dues.


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Chicken Farmer

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Arizona Agriculture: It's not the same for the cotton farmer that doesn't have an immediate connection to the end consumer. So, what do you say to them? How do you convince farmers and ranchers who might not have a direct connection to the end consumer? It's easier for you, isn't it?

Hickman: I think it's absolutely as critically important for the cotton and soybean farmer – or anybody else in agriculture. If you look back 75 years, 100 percent of the fabric for the clothing we wore came from a sheep or a plant, and our leather shoes from an animal. I will venture a guess that more than half of the fiber today is manmade, so loss of that market share alone should be cause for beating the drum of advocacy.

The other reason as to why this issue of advocacy and telling our story should be important to everyone is that even the smallest farmer today still faces a blizzard of regulations, paperwork, compliance and more that has to be filled out and maintained. No one could have foreseen this even just 30 years ago. Our silence in confronting these issues may speak louder of our acquiescence than anything else we are currently doing.

All of us can look at the burden that the government imposes upon agriculture and on us and maybe understand how we got to where we are now, and see that we should have done a little bit better job at educating people about why we do certain things and why it's the right way to do them. Otherwise, the continued compliance and regulation will never stop increasing.

Arizona Agriculture: As a public persuader, you've talked about how nervous you get. You indicate that telling your own story petrifies you. However, you haven't let it stop you. Why?

Hickman: I'm nervous right now, but I think that if it's difficult for me and I can still get it done then everyone should be encouraged about telling their own agriculture story. My siblings and I don't wake up in the morning trying to be, or thinking about being, public persuaders. We simply do it, because if we don't this thing called advocacy won't get done.

Arizona Agriculture: Isn't the public trust fickle? Can't it make you a target? If so then why bother?

Hickman: I disagree that by being front and center you make yourself a bigger target. I think that you have to go into it understanding that you want to build a reservoir of public trust, openness and honesty. So when there is an issue, you're established as someone with a balanced, fair and informed opinion. If you're worried that if you get front and center, someone might discover that something that you are doing is wrong or incorrect, please consider making some corrections.



Photo by Carolyn Dryer

Former U.S. Sen. Jon Kyl recently presented the Hickman family with "Rotary's Business Owner of the Year Award" to celebrate free enterprise and capitalism. Family Bill and Gertie Hickman; Lisa and Billy Hickman; Audrey and Glenn Hickman; Jennifer and Clint Hickman; and Sharman Hickman are all cognizant of the importance of public engagement.

Having said that, I will add that nobody enjoys having their feet shot at, especially if an emotionally-charged issue has nothing to do with you or the way your operation is being run. But as somebody pointed out once, communication is still taking place, even if it's being initiated at the top of somebody's lungs. It's still a chance for a conversation to begin.

We don't see it as sticking our head out of a hole just to get whacked; we try to look at it as we're building a relationship with the public and the policy makers so that we have an established avenue to go down and a link to those same people that do have an influence and potential impact on our future.

Arizona Agriculture: How can we successfully negotiate with organizations like the Humane Society of the United State (HSUS) – who appear to have a kind of "public trust" – when tomorrow they might breach the contract, so to speak?

Hickman: It's probably not in our nature to walk up to the yard with the mean dog in it. None of us wants to stick our hand over the fence and pet that particular dog. When you have organizations like HSUS, Sierra Club and some of the other public policy influencers, I think it's better to have a relationship so at least you can talk and have some sort of understanding with them and understand where they are coming from rather than operate in a vacuum. HSUS, PETA, the Sierra Club, all of those organizations, are not going to go away. So just ignoring them is not much of a strategy.

Arizona Agriculture: It goes without saying that we're more exposed if we come out with a more public face. Convince me it's worth it.

Hickman: If we're all running the last generation of our enterprises it may not be necessary. But if we want to be able to turn over a successful farming enterprise that we're proud of to our kids and to our grandkids then we have to go forward and we have to start right now. Just passing on your burden to the next generations without trying to make some progress towards more positive public engagement is reckless and irresponsible. It's like not doing estate planning. "Oh, the kids will figure it out." That's simply ignoring our responsibility.

However, if you want your farming enterprise to expire during your generation of leadership, don't do anything. You will make that happen.

Arizona Agriculture: You have to take care of your customer. After all, your eggs are on store shelves within 24 hours. By default, it seems like this thing called engagement – connecting, relating, communicating – is much easier for the Hickman family than for some other farmers.

Hickman: The reality is that a very small percentage of our eggs are actually sold in our Hickman brand labels. Most of our product is sold in a store brand, like Bashas' or Albertsons or Safeway. So, whether they are in our brand or the store's brand, the retail chain is our customer. I don't think our outreach has ever been necessarily product related. Our outreach is to make sure that *consumer*s and the general public who are not our direct customers have a positive feeling about our company whether they buy our products or not. Our customers are the retailers that we want to service in order to reach our consumers.

It would be really easy for us to pack all of our eggs in a store brand and hide behind the store label. People would not even have to know where their eggs come from. It's more difficult to force yourself as a company to reach consumers who may or may not even know they're buying your product. It doesn't stop us from trying.

Arizona Agriculture: Are we behind the eight-ball on advocacy?

Hickman: I think that's always a fear that we all have but I still think you have to get started somewhere. Somehow we've got to get started or it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Arizona Agriculture: We've made inroads with efforts to encourage more farmers and ranchers to identify their ag businesses through truck wraps, specifically tailgate wraps. It's one marketing and outreach tool that I like to describe as having low cost but high impact on my marketing matrix. Another tool today is social media. What do you think social media's role might be in this mix of modern-day outreach tools to stay engaged with the public?

Hickman: I really think that everyone has to make their own cost benefit analysis as to how they most effectively pursue their outreach with the public. This includes whether you always have your business cards with you that have the farm name and logo, whether it's a tailgate wrap or whether it's simply a hat on your head (that by the way should have your farm's logo on it, not an ag supplier's logo). Everything has a cost associated with it; nothing comes for free. When you're talking about social media that may be one of the best cost benefit analyses that exist because a website, a Facebook page, Twitter – all of those things – are low cost and they allow you to get out in front of people for almost next to nothing. With my tailgate I get seen by hundreds of people every day.

On the Farm Bureau's Facebook, that has global outreach implications, I may reach thousands in a single posting. So I think there's tremendous cost benefit analysis that accrues to social media. I'm not sure that anybody – whether you're Google or Amazon or anybody in between – has really figured out how to monetize what social media is ultimately worth. The ripples go on and on when the pebble gets dropped in that pool. It's better to be in that water than not be in that water just because you can't figure out precisely what it's worth.

Consider that the agriculture industry is a $12.4 billion industry. Then calculate what an organization like yours is able to invest in public policy, public outreach, and education programs knowing that dollars are scarce and budgets are small. In other words, our program investments are a drop in the bucket to the size of the industry. So we're trying to advocate for a $12 billion industry with an unfortunately scarce amount of dollars on behalf of a very important industry. School districts have bigger budgets.

We can't expect anyone to advocate if almost everyone else is sitting in the pews with our hands in our laps. We've all got to be out there advocating for our industry. Preaching to the choir gets us nowhere. We need to be talking – all of us – to a public that's been misinformed about agriculture for decades now.

Arizona Agriculture: Get specific again on how we make this thing called public outreach work.

Hickman: You go back to the second point we first talked about. The first thing we have to do as individuals and as organizations is that we have to embrace advocacy. If you don't embrace engagement and public outreach yourself, everything else is nonsensical. We've shown as farmers that we don't want to put a lot of advertising dollars in advocacy. So if we're not willing to do it as a communal effort, and we're not willing to do it on an individual basis, then our history is going to get written for us.

It takes individual efforts. And then if we're all doing it in the aggregate, the real story of agriculture gets told. If I don't have a chicken logo on my shirt and a tailgate wrap on my truck how am I going to convince my kids that it's important to do it?

We should all feel lucky because of the gig we get in agriculture. Agriculture is more of a calling than a profession. Agriculture is the most honorable of endeavors. We've got passion and appreciation for it so we need to be talking about it.

Our next step is simply finding the tools that work best for telling your story. Advocacy is a process, not an event. So, find what works for you. Then simply begin.

ARIZONA
Grain Research & Promotion Council

Following the AGRPC's mandatory Sunset Review, the Arizona Legislature has passed and the Governor has signed legislation that authorizes the Council to continue its mission until 2023. AGRPC appreciates the efforts of Senator Don Shooter (R-Yuma), who introduced and championed the legislation, and of the many individuals who recognized the Council for its accomplishments and supported the continuation effort.

The AGRPC's appointed members appreciate the Arizona Farm Bureau's continuing support of the council's misssion and activities and are pleased to be a Gold Sponsor.

Into the Belly of the Beast: My Visit to Monsanto

By Julie Murphree, *Arizona Farm Bureau*

Though it shouldn't, this editorial feels like "True confessions." Yes, I did it … I went into the "Belly of the Beast" (as some think) … I went to Monsanto at the end of April, headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri.

Why I showed up at the Monsanto front door might be as intriguing as the fact that I went (so fun to tell secrets, right?): Because I was invited. Oh, sorry that's a little more benign than you might have thought.

Well, maybe it's about how important this is to me in my role as Arizona Farm Bureau's communication, education and marketing director. First, Arizona Farm Bureau represents all types of agriculture: small, medium and large, conventional and organic and everything in between. We celebrate it all; it's all good.

The diversity of the agriculture industry is more pronounced, I believe, than many industries because we're able to grow such a diverse set of agriculture products for all types of markets. But right now in one segment of agriculture the public is being told that not only is "big Ag" bad; "GMO Ag" is evil.

In stone pillars leading up to one of the main buildings, you found the word "Science" spelled out in various languages. On facing pillars was the word "Life" or "Vida" depending on the language.

So, did I do evil planting modified cotton in the mid-1990s when it first came on the market? (Murphree Farms planted biotech cotton for years until we retired from farming in 2005.) Another way to ask this question: Are all the farmers currently growing biotech crops evil, misguided or exploited? The way it's discussed in the public arena, you'd have to conclude one of the three. Again, some would contend that's the case. As cotton farmers, we never felt, nor do we feel, that way. Our biotech farmers have nearly as much knowledge of the science and value of the technology than many wearing the lab coats.

As journalists, we're taught to go to the source. So I went to the source of much of today's "GMO" controversy. And, by the way, I'm reading, talking and studying this issue from all sides. But there's no way I can feel comfortable discussing the biotech issue unless I go to the place where most of the stones are being thrown.



Ready to ask my questions, I taped my conversations while there. Never once did someone say, "Off the record."



Proof I roamed the halls of Monsanto. I'm keeping the name badge!

For Brief Background

Begun in 1901, the modern-day Monsanto is quite different from its beginnings when John F. Queeny and his wife, Olga Monsanto Queeny, launched the company. Their first product was saccharine. They really were not in the agriculture business until 1960 when an agriculture division was established. Biotech efforts begin in 1975 with a cell biology research program established in the Agricultural Division. And by 1982, scientists working for the original Monsanto are the first to genetically modify a plant cell.

The original Monsanto spins off its industrial chemical and fibers business as Solutia, Inc., in 1997. And then, over the years through mergers and acquisitions, Monsanto eventually becomes singularly "focused on agriculture and supporting farmers around the world in their mission to produce more while conserving more." In the company's literature and on its web, a core tenant becomes, "We're an agricultural company."

Reflections on the Visit

Every company has history; every company has people. And while I'm not quite sure what my initial expectations were except that I wanted to learn lots about biotech and Monsanto's operation, I wanted to meet the people. Would good people work for an "evil" organization? Would good people conspire to advance profit over positive health?

Those questions are certainly easy for detractors answer in the negative if they use words like coerce, force, manipulate, and threaten. But how sustainable is that over the course of a 100-year history?

The visit for me ended up being about the people, much more than the science. People like the Ph.D. from Ethiopia that after obtaining her education looked to her future and targeted a cure for HIV or eradicating hunger from the planet as her two primary goals. She chose feeding her people and found a home at Monsanto. Or, the tour guide who is actually a retired Monsanto employee but still comes and gives plant breeding tours and describes the company's "Chipping Technology" as something that Q from the James Bond Series would invent. There's also Monsanto's Chemistry Stewardship Lead (with the last name of Farmer) that's more excited about stewardship and sustainability than most environmentalists I've ever visited.

Yes, I'm wading into the biotech topic full throttle and excited to do so since our various audiences are asking about it. In the coming weeks and months, I'll be talking about Monsanto and the biotech issue in general. I owe it to my audiences that ask me the questions, and I owe it to myself, loving and previously living the agriculture life.

Most of all, we owe it to ourselves because I personally believe we don't need to be afraid of this thing called biotech. Future articles on what I learned will appear in azfb.org's The Voice and Julie's Fresh Air.

Full Disclosure: This trip was not underwritten in any way by Monsanto. Oh, wait, one of their employees did pick up my lunch in their cafeteria one day (future article on their cafeteria food). My invitation to Monsanto's headquarters in St. Louis came from Janice Person, who helps spearhead social media for the organization. I greatly appreciate her invitation and look forward to other opportunities to learn more about biotechnology in agriculture.





AITC

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its mission is by encouraging achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs, developing interpersonal skills in teamwork, communication, human relations and social interaction, and through promoting cooperation and cooperative attitudes among people.

"The secret to securing the future for agriculture here in Arizona is for like-minded agriculturally-related organizations to collaborate," says State FFA Executive Secretary Tyler Grandil. "To this end, Arizona FFA and the Farm Bureau's Agriculture in the Classroom initiative are a natural fit. FFA chapters have historically sought opportunities to help tell the story of agriculture and with the focus of the AITC program to educate students; there are endless possibilities for that to happen."





Highland FFA Members donated more than 172 hours cutting, counting, sorting, labeling and volunteering at AITC events this school year.

Preaching to the Choir

From an outsider's point of view, the FFA stands for Future Farmers of America. It is an "organization full of young men and women who will one day be driving the tractors and caring for the land that their parents have today." Though this 1928 storyline could make for a touching *TLC Sunday* night movie, it is definitely fiction. In fact, today most people, yes even FFA members, are 3 to 4 generations removed from the farm and ranch. The FFA of today fosters growth and leadership from students with a variety of backgrounds and career goals in and out of the agricultural industry. This can included everything from a veterinarian, to nutritionist, to plant biologist, to mechanic, to florist, to aquaculture systems, hydroponic systems, to geneticist, to a sales and marketing representative, or even a heavy equipment driver. In addition, students' desires to work with new technologies have taken them from the modern-day tractor cab to the lab. This transition has created a new breed of FFA member; one that might not know anything about farming and ranching and the practices that those jobs entail.

Beneficial for all Involved

Though it might seem that Arizona Farm Bureau's AITC is reaping all the benefits of this relationship, with the FFA serving as a major volunteer force, those involved might disagree. AITC provides FFA members with more than just extra work and weekend booths to run. It provides them with service hours towards scholarships and graduation requirements, it provides them with teaching experiences they will never forget, it encourages them to utilize the leadership skills they learn through the FFA, it encourages them to share their passion for agriculture and most importantly it reinforces to them that they have a voice and that people are listening.

In addition to the "warm fuzzies," volunteering for AITC also offers FFA Students the chance to hone their skills for some of their career development contests. FFA members are trained in the classroom and through career development events (CDE). One of the contests requires students to develop lesson plans and video record themselves teaching a lesson. According to Brooke Griggeory, State FFA Secretary and AITC assistant, "the partnership between AITC and Arizona FFA is a win-win for both groups. Having FFA students volunteer allows AITC to continue to increase its presence in classrooms across the state while FFA chapters now have another outlet to serve the community, which aligns directly with what the FFA is all about."

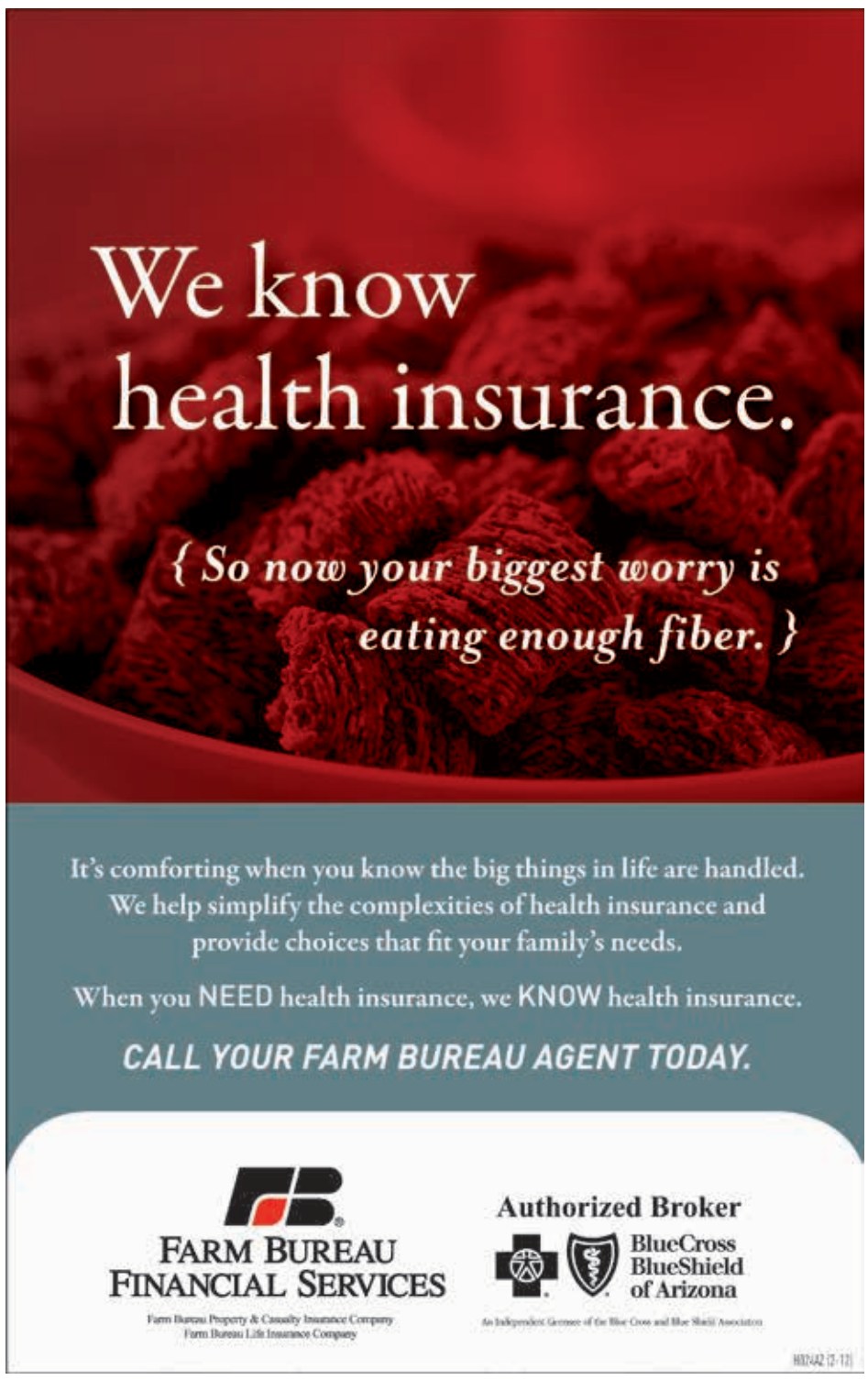
The Players

This year AITC saw more participation with FFA chapters than ever before. In fact, 19 FFA Chapters participated in Arizona Farm Bureau's AITC's *Misconceptions* and *Arizona Ag* presentations. Another eight – Buckeye, Campo Verde, Chandler, Globe, Highland, Payson, Sabino, and Yuma Chapters – volunteered and presented to classrooms during the three *Ag Literacy Events*. Another 5 Chapters borrowed AITC resources and materials to use at their own community and school events.

"Katie has done a wonderful job working with our state's FFA chapters to meld the two programs," says Arizona Farm Bureau's Director of Education, Julie Murphree. "She's made the partnership generate tremendous lasting impact that will have ongoing influences on behalf of Arizona agriculture."

To recognize participating chapters, AITC will attend this summer's State leadership conference in Tucson and recognize chapters who have volunteered for and work closely with the AITC Program. To see who wins the AITC Chapter Awards and a new award on the table this year, the AITC Outstanding Volunteer Award, be sure to attend the FFA State Leadership Conference June 6th – 8th. Can't attend? Check out the winners on our website at azfb.org. Winners will be posted by Monday, June 10th.

If you would like to volunteer or see what opportunities are available for your local FFA Chapter contact Katie Aikins at katieaikins@azfb.org or call her at 480.635.3608.





The New and Improved www.azfb.org!

By Julie Murphree, *Arizona Farm Bureau*

In case you haven't already noticed, Arizona Farm Bureau has a new look and feel to its website, www.azfb.org. But more than that, our hub for online communication via azfb.org has more functionality.

If you're a frequent visitor of azfb.org, you've already noticed that we've updated our site to accommodate our growing cadre of interactivity on the web while still maintaining our ongoing commitment to provide you with the latest news and intelligence about Arizona agriculture.



Simplicity is Key

Navigation of the updated website was designed to keep you moving in and out of our pages with ease. For our members, we've also made it easier to renew your membership. And, for potential members, we've made it easier to join our family online. Additionally, to help you stay connected with us on our social media channels, we've positioned all social media icons (buttons) up front. While we continue to have a running list of featured articles, we also post articles in the upper right that are significant to our public policy issues, educational features and information for our retail farmers.

Our "Events" section of the website is much more robust than before. The monthly calendar will highlight Farm Bureau events and can get county specific. You can view in either a calendar or as a list too. Additionally, if you have Farm Bureau-related events or an event industry event contact us and we'll share on our calendar. Your contact person for calendar information is Melissa Hogben at melissahogben@azfb.org or give her a call at 480.635.3616.

Still to Come

In the coming weeks and months, we hope to roll out more information related to "Ag & Your Life," county information and additional program information. In the "Public Policy" section of the website, we hope to keep you up-to-date on local, state and national issues in as timely of a manner as possible. You'll find information on our policy development process and the current issues we're addressing based on recommendations from our commodity advisory committee members.

Finally, we will be rolling out a "Members Only" section of the website in the coming months to address issues, information and intelligence we intend to keep exclusive to our members. You're important to us and we want to make a special effort to provide you with data that's exclusive to the family. Plus, we want your feedback!

"The Voice," Our Newest Blog

Additionally, we've launched a new blog (web log) for azfb.org. This weekly blog will address policy issues and articles specific to Arizona agriculture. Often we'll profile our state's farmers and ranchers on this blog.

If you want to contribute to this weekly blog, contact Julie Murphree at juliemurphree@azfb.org. Or, you can call her at 480.635.3607.

Legislature

continued from page 2

thority knowingly (1) controls the metal of another with the intent to deprive the other person, (2) controls metal while knowing or having reason to know that the metal was stolen, and (3) purchases the metal of another knowing that the metal was stolen.

HB2262- **Scrap Metal Dealers Registration** requires a person to register with the Arizona Department of Public Safety in order to conduct business as a scrap metal dealer and establishes related requirements and penalties.

Bills that are dead…. Maybe

Bills have no real shelf life – they keep cropping up – even when the idea appears dead. Both good and bad bills (ideas) never really go away. Until sine die (the motion adjourning the legislative session) takes place, bills can be revived as striker amendments where all the language of an existing bill is struck out and replaced with new language.

The seven "animal" bills introduced during this session fall under the not-permanently dead category. Each of these bills would result in unintended consequences and problems for livestock producers. Each of the animal bills were either defeated or never made it out of committee.

Then of course there is *HB2338* **Regional Water Augmentation Authorities**, which to us seemed more about creating opportunities for increasing water supplies in one area by transferring water from another. Agriculture came together to oppose this bill, along with several members of the House who testified against the bill in committee.

It Ain't Over 'til It's Over

With summer heating up state legislators will be working to resolve the remaining issues regarding the budget and transaction privilege tax reform. In addition to monitoring that action, we will be watching for the return of things for which we might see problems.

Don't hesitate to regularly check out our "Public Policy" section on azfb.org. We will regularly highlight public policy issues within these pages of Arizona Farm Bureau's website.

If you have questions regarding public policy issues or want more details about the coming summer of policy development contact Ana Kennedy at 480.635.3614, Joe Sigg at 480.635.3603 or Paul Brierley at 480.635.3612.







News Briefs

Arizona Farming & Ranching Hall of Fame is Accepting Nominations for 2014 Inductees

Arizona's Farm & Ranch Experience Heritage Center at Lakin Farm has a mission to preserve Arizona's rich agricultural history. Each year an average of eight individuals or agricultural families who have made significant contributions at the local, state or national levels are inducted into the Arizona Farming & Ranching Hall of Fame. Five of the inductees are living and the other three are honored posthumously. Honorees come from all sections of the state and are selected for their contributions in the fields of farming, ranching, Agri-business, education, science or in selected instances they are individuals who have made other contributions that have directly impacted agriculture in the state.

The deadline for nominations is September 2, 2013. Honorees will be introduced at the annual Arizona Farming & Ranching Hall of Fame Honoree Dinner on March1, 2014.

Nomination forms are available on the Arizona's Farm & Ranch Experience, Heritage Center at Lakin Farm website www.heritageatlakinfarm.org or by contacting Carole DeCosmo at codeco2@aol.com or by calling (623) 695-9614.

Send completed nomination forms and accompanying information/pictures no later than September 2 to Arizona's Farm & Ranch Experience, Heritage Center at Lakin Farm at 289 N. Litchfield Road, Goodyear, Arizona 85338.

Businesses: Grow Customers with a Discount!

The Local/Regional tab on azfb.org/member benefits is your link to the member benefits available in your county or area of the state. Since the addition of the local/regional tab to azfb.org the site has grown, but we still need to fill the site with more offers from counties across the state.

If your business would like to offer a discount to Arizona Farm Bureau members all you have to do is complete a short form that gives us the information to build your portion of the site. This is a FREE service.

For a copy of the form or additional information, contact Peggy Jo Goodfellow at 480.635.3609 or email her at peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org.

New Book Available



Obtain Your Own Copy of the Book by going to Amazon.com and searching for the Book Title, *A Farmer's Guide to Marketing the Direct Market Farm*.

AZFB's Public Relations Team Realigned and Refocused

Staff Reports

Providing the public and our school children the opportunity to learn what farmers and ranchers do is becoming a larger part of the mission of the Arizona Farm Bureau. Communicating our story is no longer simply putting out news releases, visiting with editorial boards and doing radio and TV interviews. Communication now includes social media, which is growing every day in ALL age groups.

For these reasons we are realigning and refocusing our current Public Relations Team headed by Julie Murphree. Julie's new title will be Director of Communication, Education and Marketing, a title that better reflects the responsibilities under her management. Julie is also being assigned the responsibility to provide administrative and fund raising assistance to the Educational Farming Company, Farm Bureau's 501(c)(3) for education outreach. To assist Julie in these new education responsibilities, Katie Aikins will take on the new title of Assistant Director of Education. Katie will maintain her current responsibilities as Ag in the Classroom Manager and will give additional focus to fundraising and curriculum development beyond our current K-6 target.

Peggy Jo Goodfellow continues as Marketing Manager under the new Communications, Education and Marketing Team. She will serve the Women's Leadership Committee, manage the more than 30 economic services to member programs and outreach to our more than 20,000 associate members and 70 Farm Bureau Insurance agents.

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FENCE LINE
Arizona Farm Bureau®

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This is a free service offered by the Arizona Farm Bureau. Call 480.635.3609 or email Peggy Jo Goodfellow at peggyjogoodfellow@azfb.org

