

Conversation about Arizona’s Agricultural Mentoring Program: Keisha Tatem

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

A native of Southampton County, Virginia, Keisha Tatem began her professional career with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a Soil Conservationist Student Trainee in 1995. Armed with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture with a concentration in plant and soil science from Virginia State University she spent over 10 years working directly with farmers and ranchers, solving their natural resource problems as a Soil Conservationist and District Conservationist in Virginia and Florida and has held several positions with USDA in Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington, D.C.



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist Keisha Tatem says, “I know that farmers and ranchers feed the world and while life on this planet depends on them, they depend on our natural resources. I want to do all that I can to protect those natural resources so that farmers can continue to do what they do.”

In 2011, Keisha was selected to be the State Conservationist for Arizona where she currently leads a multi-level team of technical and administrative specialists. Keisha and her team provide technical and financial assistance to Arizona’s farmers, ranchers, and Tribes to address natural resource priorities focused on soil, water, plants, animals, air, and energy. Their work directly impacts drought resiliency, wind erosion, invasive plant species, and wildlife habitat.

Over her career, Keisha has worked on several special projects to improve agency operations and program delivery at the state and national level. Most recently, she was assigned to an 8-month detail in Washington, D.C. where she led agency conservation initiatives for the northeastern United States and coordinated the agency’s transition and reorganization efforts for the newly established Farm Production and Conservation mission area in 2017.

She has earned numerous honors and awards, including the Phoenix Business Journal 40 Under 40 Leaders of the Valley in 2014 and the Unsung Hero Award for Environmental Sustainability from the Governor’s Commission for African American Affairs in 2015. She makes her home in Chandler, Arizona, with her husband, Roy.

With the launch this last April of the Conservation Agricultural Mentoring Program (CAMP), in partnership with Arizona Farm Bureau, Tatem and her team have been front and center in enthusiastically driving this unique partnership. While several

other states have the CAMP program, Arizona’s is unique in the partnership effort with Arizona Farm Bureau.

At the beginning of this 18-month effort, Arizona Farm Bureau wanted to have Tatem shine a bright light on this exciting program. Her insights follow.

Arizona Agriculture: What was the Genesis of the CAMP Program?

Tatem: Our previous [NRCS] Chief, Matt Lohr, received feedback from both staff and producers as he traveled around the country on how we could improve our services. Our clients spoke highly of the technical expertise of our staff and our financial assistance programs but felt that our technical assistance could be improved with more practical experience surrounding the business of agriculture.

As we’ve seen a decrease in the number of farmers and ranchers in America, we seem to also have fewer and fewer employees with farm or ranch experience. To address that issue, Chief Lohr created the Conservation CAMP to grow critical relationships with the producers we serve, while at the same time advancing employee knowledge of production agriculture and natural resources in their local area, ultimately enhancing our ability to provide excellent customer service.

Arizona Agriculture: What excites you the most about the CAMP program and why?

Tatem: I’m most excited about the unique way we are implementing the program in Arizona. Instead of managing it on our own, we decided to partner with Arizona Farm Bureau to ensure the authenticity of the program. We have identified [NRCS] employees with less than five years of experience and Farm Bureau have identified local farmers and ranchers with decades of production agriculture experience. Mentors and proteges are matched and a dynamic duo is formed.

Arizona Agriculture: Having announced CAMP to the world and the unique partnership here in Arizona between NRCS and Arizona Farm Bureau, what do you see as the biggest intended outcomes of the program?

Tatem: Here in Arizona, we have a lot of new staff, and this program will provide a practical learning environment for employees to advance their knowledge of the common business practices, equipment, inputs and daily challenges and decisions producers must face. Our employees will also get to see firsthand, in real time, the impact of local natural resource concerns. Ideally, we want to see consideration of this experience incorporated into the conservation planning process our employees use with our clients. Sometimes the best technical solution is not always the best solution for the producer, and we want our staff to tailor conservation plan to the needs of our producers while addressing the natural resource concerns on their farm and ranch.

Arizona Agriculture: While there is much the proteges are set up to learn, the producer mentors can get a lot out of this program too. Can you give some insights on this?

See **KEISHA TATEM** Page 4

Arizona Legislature Authorizes \$100 Million in Wildfire Relief

By Chelsea McGuire, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

In mid-June, the Arizona Legislature met in special session to pass H2001, authorizing just under \$100 million in spending on wildfire relief.

This bill came as legislators were still at a stalemate over the Arizona budget. Seeing that it would be too long to wait for the budget to pass to provide fire relief funding, Governor Ducey called a special session directing the legislature to pass a separate appropriations bill for that purpose.

This bill, H2001, authorized just under \$100 million in spending. Of that, \$24.5 million was allocated to the Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) for personnel and equipment costs. Included in these costs is \$2.25 million for hazardous vegetation removal projects, which will be contracted out by the department – something that we know is key for both fire prevention and water conservation.

The remaining \$75 million is authorized for six different purposes:

1. fire suppression equipment and staff,
2. capital expenditures for fire suppression,
3. post-fire flood mitigation,
4. emergency sheltering and support,
5. repairs to infrastructure,
6. and cost-share reimbursement for claims eligible under emergency declarations.

Paragraph A(5) of the bill authorized “[f]inancial assistance to public and private landowners for emergency repairs for infrastructure damage resulting from fires or fire suppression activities.” This includes money to repair improvements including fences, water lines, drinkers, corrals, and other crucial ranching infrastructure. As we have heard all too often, relief available in the aftermath of a fire is inadequate to cover the improvements that ranchers need to get cattle back on the pasture. These improvements are not covered by insurance, and fed-

See **WILDLIFE** Page 5

in this ISSUE

Our Ranching Work
It’s Never Done
– Page 2

The Border Crisis
Ranchers Tell Their Stories – Page 5

Webinar Wednesdays!
You’ve Given Your Topic Preferences
– Page 7

Whether on The Ranch or at The Legislature, the Work is Never Done!

By **Stefanie Smallhouse**, *Arizona Farm Bureau President*

There is no question that work on the ranch is never done! Just as one water line leak gets fixed or that last mile of pasture fence is repaired, you begin work on the next leak and move to the next pasture.

You could say the same for advocacy. As elected officials change, markets expand and contract, social pressures shift, and consumer trends hop from one diet fad to the next, there is always work to be done to ensure our livestock producers are informed and their voices are heard. Your Arizona Farm Bureau has been hard at work on several issues which impact your bottom line.



Stefanie Smallhouse

While ranchers unfairly get the blame for climate variability and none of the credit for environmental stewardship, others use this misinformation to shift consumer trends away from eating beef. Our ability to sell our products to consumers at home and abroad is at risk in trade negotiations. In the name of protecting species, waterways and antiquities, the regulatory environment inhibits our ability to conserve those same resources. The pandemic has highlighted and brought back to the forefront serious issues in our beef supply chain. Agency decision-makers often render good programs useless while creating other programs that place huge burdens on ranchers, all because they do not understand how we as ranchers manage for risk and loss. The landscapes we manage are overrun with criminal activity on the border and wildfire throughout the state, and we bear the brunt of both while also offering respite and resources.

But as ranchers, we keep our heads down and push forward, no matter how never-ending the work may feel. Your Arizona Farm Bureau does the same. Farm Bureau is fighting hard to empower you and defend your livelihood against the many struggles that you face. While we work on issues for all of agriculture, here are some of the recent actions specific to the livestock industry:

- Providing staff support to the producer-led Livestock Processing Working Group to improve market access for members to direct market beef;
- Convened a diverse group of agencies, industry organizations and producer stakeholders to address issues with conservation project backlogs due to archeological clearances;
- Engaged with federal and state agencies to provide stakeholder input for and become a signatory on the Progrmatic Agreement Regarding the Effects of Vegetation Management and Rangeland Management Activities in Arizona;
- Convened a diverse group of agencies, industry organizations and producer stakeholders to highlight concerns and challenges in wildfire response on state and private lands;
- Hosted meet and greets at local sale barns to improve communications between ranchers and fire response agencies;
- Partnered with the University of Arizona and New Mexico Farm Bureau to host a livestock processing seminar;
- Spearheaded the creation of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) Cattle Markets Working Group;
- Staffed and supported Livestock processing capacity webinar/roundtable at Mortimer Farms;
- Participated in a national roundtable discussion with six other cattle industry groups to find consensus on marketing issues – garnered the immediate attention of beef packing companies and members of Congress regarding transparency in the beef supply chain;
- Hosted AFBF Beef Supply Chain and Market Update Webinars for Arizona Farm Bureau agriculture members;
- Advocated for increased beef trade with Asian Pacific Markets in the most recent trade agreements with China, Japan and South Korea;
- Provided producer advocacy content regarding the border crisis and support for the Farm Bureau Border States Working Group – followed by a recent call with the White House on border security issues;
- Currently working to develop and advocate for amendments to the current Livestock Indemnity Program in the next Farm Bill to provide more relief to ranchers in wolf transpland areas;
- Convened agency and producer meetings to highlight and provide solutions to USDA- Risk Management Agency as a result of harmful changes to the Pasture Range and Forage Program;
- Participated in the stakeholder group for the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Waters of the State discussions to ensure ephemeral washes on ranchlands will not be regulated like other Navigable Waterways;
- Supported \$100 million in fire relief (see article in this issue), including funding for ranching-specific infrastructure repair;

See **SMALLHOUSE** Page 4

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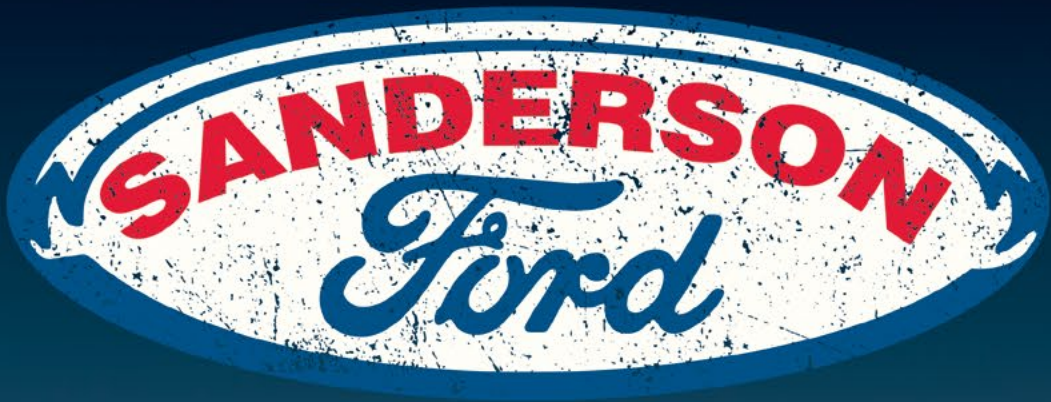
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Keisha Tatem *continued from page 1*

Tatem: NRCS’ conservation delivery system is the best in the world. We have an effective conservation planning process that can help producers identify natural resource problems and offers alternatives on how to solve those problems. Technology changes every day and our staff, especially our newer employees that have recently graduated from college, come to us with a wealth of knowledge on the latest science and technical tools in conservation.

These mentors will benefit from the one-on-one relationship they will develop with proteges who can help them not only identify practices to improve the environment but that can also contribute to their bottom line since many conservation practices help to reduce energy use, improve irrigation efficiencies, increase forage, and other improvements in the farm or ranch operations.



The partnership between NRCS and Arizona Farm Bureau means both agriculture producers and NRCS employees can exchange valuable information continuously learning from one another. Here, Tatem is flanked on the left by Arizona Farm Bureau President Stefanie Smallhouse and on the right by Arizona Farm Bureau CEO Philip Bashaw.

Arizona Agriculture: Beyond CAMP, what makes NRCS Arizona different or unique? Or should I say, the western states of NRCS?

Tatem: As someone who spent much of my career on the East Coast, I can personally attest to the unique challenges and opportunities of the West. Most obvious is the lack of water and all the politics that goes with access to the limited water we have.

The mixed ownership of the state also makes Arizona different and has created challenges in addressing natural resource issues.

Around the nation, NRCS is known for its locally led conservation delivery system on private land. Our primary local partner includes our conservation districts that set local natural resource priorities and the producers that implement practices across the landscape.

However, in the West, many of our farming and ranching operations include a mix of private, Tribal, Federal, and State-owned land. Therefore, partnerships are critical to our success. In Arizona, the locally led conservation model is still led by our Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCDS), but it also includes Forest Service, BLM,

State Lands Department, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and of course Tribes.

And speaking of Tribes, we have a government-to-government relationship with them that provides for each of them to manage their local led process as they deem appropriate so there may be many ways that we address local resource concerns around the State.

Arizona Agriculture: What are some of the biggest hurdles to overcome or challenges and how is USDA and your leadership tackling them?

Tatem: Internally, our biggest challenge is staffing because we have a great need for skilled boots on the ground. We have hosted several national hiring events this past year but have found it difficult to find applicants that meet our job qualifications. Most of our positions have specific education requirements and although degrees in environmental science, agribusiness, and animal science are popular, they usually do not meet the course requirements for our soil conservationist positions. We have even found that degrees that include the word “range” in the degree have fallen short of the plant and ecological science classes needed for our range conservationist positions.

Most difficult has been finding agricultural or civil engineers. The most recent employment study conducted by USDA and Purdue University indicate that although the total number of students graduating balance with the total number of opportunities in the industry, the specific fields of science and engineering are not seeing enough graduates to meet the demand.

Concerned by this, NRCS in Arizona is growing our partnerships with UA, ASU, and NAU to provide recommendations on course requirements and promote internship opportunities. We are also exploring high school developmental opportunities to increase interest in the science and engineering components of agriculture.

Arizona Agriculture: What encourages you about the future work of NRCS in partnership with producers?

Tatem: As people in society become more and more focused on their health and where their food comes from, as well as how we take care of the planet, I see opportunity for us to engage even more producers in our conservation efforts. Being able to tout participation in conservation programs could be a valuable marketing tool for our producers.

I also think there is a lot of opportunity to include the effects of conservation practices in environmental markets and carbon trading.

Arizona Agriculture: You seem to have a passion for agriculture. Why?

Tatem: It’s pretty simple. I like to eat. That alone should motivate everyone to have a passion for agriculture. I was also raised in a family that honored the bounty provided by the land, especially since it was such a large part of my family history. My grandfather and great-grandfather raised hogs and growing up we grew much of the food we ate.

I know that farmers and ranchers feed the world and while life on this planet depends on them, they depend on our natural resources. I want to do all that I can to protect those natural resources so that farmers can continue to do what they do. 🍴



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Smallhouse *continued from page 2*

- Supported ag nuisance legislation to protect ranchers from frivolous lawsuits;
- Currently supporting and actively lobbying Congressional delegation to support Cattle Market Act of 2021;
- Lobbied for inclusion of HAULS Act (hours of service exemptions) for livestock haulers in transportation bill language;
- Supporting budget funding for two additional state meat and poultry inspectors;
- Supporting budget funding for upgrades to state agricultural laboratory;
- Supporting budget funding for \$200 million in drought mitigation;
- Provided congressional testimony on the importance of grazing on public lands;
- Provided testimony in a Western Caucus Hearing supporting ESA Reforms;
- Provided congressional testimony as to the importance that ranching plays in carbon sequestration.

Some of these things you may already be aware of because you have stepped forward to engage in these efforts. But we know that not everyone can be on the front lines of every fight and still fix the fences and water leaks, haul water and repair the water truck, keep the calves fed, market your beef and tend to your families. That’s why we have the Arizona Farm Bureau; through it, we can be involved in every effort and be on the front lines of every fight and help join the fray when it can have the most impact.

It is a privilege and an honor to stand at the gate on your behalf and provide you with the tools to succeed in a rapidly changing environment both politically and economically. In our 100th year serving our members, we look forward to the next 100 years! 🍴

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Arizona Ranchers Tell Their Border Stories

By **Chelsea McGuire**, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

“It’s never been like this before.” It’s a sentiment shared by too many of our Southern Arizona ranchers when you ask them about conditions on the Arizona-Mexico Border.

The recent surge in illegal crossing activity at the border has been the cause of significant hardship and distress for our members. As border-state Farm Bureaus, Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas have joined together to compile the stories of our members – convincing and powerful narratives that explain to Congress that now is the time to act to secure our borders.



With no regard for the environment, land, land managers, landowners and families living nearby, border crossers leave behind evidence of their crossings.

Those stories, which can be found on Texas Farm Bureau’s “Border Crisis Impacts” webpage, are striking in their similarity. For example, one common thread in each of these stories is the change in the kind of border crossers our ranchers now encounter. As Arizona rancher Frank Krentz explains, in the 1990s, large groups of people seeking work in the U.S. were the most common groups

coming across the border. But today, less-organized employment seekers have been replaced by coordinated drug traffickers. Jim and Sue Chilton, southern Arizona ranchers, noted that there is even a uniform: matching camouflage and massive backpacks (filled, ostensibly, with illegal drugs like fentanyl). A few days later, they will see the very same group heading south, back to Mexico, with smaller backpacks after having dropped off their contraband.

And it’s not just out in the countryside that our ranchers encounter potentially dangerous border crossers. Southern Arizona ranchers David and Tina Thompson had a group of two, again in matching camouflage, ring the doorbell of their home last December. Border Patrol came to the house, but ultimately left them there alone with no assurance that these men were in fact gone from her property.

Border crossers also have significant impacts on our natural resources. As Arizona goes into what’s shaping up to be another record fire year, the risk of crossers setting signaling fires that then turn into wildfires is at the top of our ranchers’ minds. As the Thompsons reminded us, this has been a problem before: illegal crossers were likely responsible for the Horseshoe 2 fire, which burned nearly 223,000 acres in the Chiricahua Mountains.

Perhaps the most frustrating part of this narrative is that it is a tale as old as time. Though the cast of characters might change, our ranchers have stories from the last 30 years that illustrate just how uncontrolled our borders really are, and just how difficult (and dangerous) that makes their lives on the ranch.

It is not just our border-state neighbors who care about this issue. Last month, border states penned a letter to the US Secretaries of Interior, Homeland Security, and Agriculture, pleading with them to take action to address the surge of illegal border crossers that our members have seen over the last 9 months. All 50 state Farm Bureaus and Puerto Rico Farm Bureau signed on in support of this letter, and it prompted a meeting between White House staff and border states Farm Bureau presidents in mid-June.

While we’re glad that our elected officials are listening, it’s now time for them to do something about it. As our members tell their border stories, we will continue to amplify them, giving Congress no choice but to listen, and, most importantly, urging them to act.

Want to be featured in a border story? Contact Chelsea McGuire at chelseamcguire@azfb.org to learn how. To watch for more stories as they emerge, go to the “Border Crisis Impacts” website at texasfarmbureau.org/border-crisis-impacts/

WILDLIFE continued from page 1

eral aid takes months, even years, to come through. And, when it does, it often is not enough to cover the true replacement costs. Seeing state funding for these purposes included in the bill was just one more reason that Arizona Farm Bureau was pleased to support it.

The sponsors and champions of the bill, Rep. Gail Griffin (R – Hereford) and Sen. Sine Kerr (R – Buckeye), were effective and passionate advocates who highlighted its benefits for all Arizona, but especially for our ranchers and other natural resource stewards. It passed with only a handful of elected officials voting no. And Governor Ducey signed the bill alongside key legislative leadership less than a day after it was passed.

Our coalition of agriculture partners all testified in support of the bill and specifically highlighted the need for financial support for our public and private landowners after the damage is done by a devastating fire. Southern Arizona rancher and Arizona Farm Bureau President Stefanie Smallhouse gave boots-on-the-ground insights into the day-to-day challenges Arizona ranchers face pre-and-post a catastrophic fire.

Now that the money is authorized, we will continue to work with DFFM, the agency responsible for administering the appropriation, to make sure the money is used as effectively as possible. As our ranchers run into need for this money, we will make sure there are open lines of communication and that the critical need for and beneficial impact of projects on ranches is made clear.

We are grateful to our legislative leaders for making this bill possible and continue to join all our farm and ranch members in praying for rain.



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Right Out of the Gate, Arizona Farm Bureau Protected Markets, Land and Labor

By Fred Andersen, Arizona Farm Bureau Historian

In November 1921, an article in the Arizona Republic made an appeal: “Benjamin Franklin once said, ‘If we don’t hang together, we shall all hang separately.’ To a farmer this new-old proverb means agricultural cooperation, and agricultural cooperation means only one thing, and that is Farm Bureau . . . whose aim in existence simmers down to getting a fair percentage on money and labor invested and risks taken.”

Cooperatives allowed farmers to sell a specified quantity of their crops for a guaranteed price, and they could bargain with distributors and railroads for fair rates and prices. The Arizona and county Farm Bureaus were instrumental in helping set up many co-op associations, including the Pima Cotton Growers’ Association, the Roosevelt Hay Growers’ Association, the Potato Growers of Coconino County, and livestock associations in Navajo, Apache, Santa Cruz and Cochise counties, and many more. And in 1921 Arizona Farm Bureau members successfully lobbied for the cooperative marketing bill which established the legal framework for co-ops. Arizona was one of the first sixteen states to pass such a cooperative marketing act, a Farm Bureau effort to standardize marketing nationwide.

The biggest issue facing co-ops was shipping rates on railroads. Farmers regarded railroads with suspicion. Highways were too primitive and motor vehicles too slow and unreliable to make truck shipment feasible over long distances. And in many parts of the country, the single railroad in the area held an effective monopoly. One way to combat high rail freight rates was through co-operative marketing. A striking example of the power of a co-op in dealing with the railroads occurred in the mid-twenties. The Salt River Valley cantaloupe crop in the summer of 1925 generated gross sales of \$3 million. But railroads charged growers \$1.48 million to ship the crop east. That, along with other charges for icing the shipments, meant that the melon growers barely broke even. That same year, citrus growers, who had a strong co-op, bargained as a group and received a much better rate.

Proving the Early Power of Legislation and Lobbying

Another weapon against freight rates was legislation. One analyst in 1922 noted that while farm prices for many products had fallen forty percent below those obtained before the World War (pre-1917), railroad rates had risen to eighty percent over the same period (Henry C. Wallace, “The Farmers and the Railroads”). Lowering of rates became the national Farm Bureau’s highest priority, along with supporting road improvements and the opening of waterways such as the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Mississippi River system, which act as important alternatives to railroads. In 1923 the

American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) successfully lobbied the Interstate Commerce Commission for \$1 million in freight rate cuts.

The AFBF helped pass a farm credits bill through Congress that created a fund of \$666 million in one of the first short-term farm credit programs. AFBF also took a stand against “government price-fixing for agricultural commodities, which has heretofore failed to serve the purpose for which it was created.” Co-op marketing offered “the most practicable means of stabilizing agriculture on a profitable basis.” The issue of price supports and government-set quotas would wax and wane for the better part of the century, becoming especially contentious in the 1950s and ‘60s. Farm Bureau would remain a consistent advocate for free, competitive markets, with minimum government support except in times of disaster.

The Arizona Farm Bureau also had its share of wins, including appropriations to reduce numbers of pests such as prairie dogs, gophers, rabbits and coyotes, and to help prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis. Other Farm Bureau policies that were passed included a fruit and vegetable standardization act, an egg grading act, and increased budgets for county agents. But Farm Bureau lobbying could not secure creation of agricultural inspection stations at the state’s borders. Border inspection would become another long-running saga.

Representative of its early focus on protective and advancing a prosperous agriculture industry, a high point for the Arizona Farm Bureau was a 1929 study done for the AFBF that showed the battle for fair railroad freight rates was not over. The research found that railroads were using freight rates to subsidize passenger service and would often ship produce in a zig-zag pattern to justify higher charges.

“Farmer Brown” Became One of Arizona’s Best Promoters Even Speaking on National Radio

Land value has always been a concern to farmers, since, even in the 1920s, it was often the basis for credit needed for farm operation. The issue in Arizona was the lack of population, and lack of demand for the land, which held down its value. In the mid-1920s, the entire state had a population of 400,000 people, but farmers were hoping for a continuing influx of new residents. The ideal, they considered, would be to encourage new farmers, “preferably experienced” who wanted to buy land, which would lead to “more intensive agriculture on smaller holdings.” And the key to attracting those farmers was seen as tourism. As a well-known Arizona character put it, “People encircle the globe in order that they may breathe Arizona’s air and grow strong in its remedial

See **PROTECTED MARKETS** Page 7



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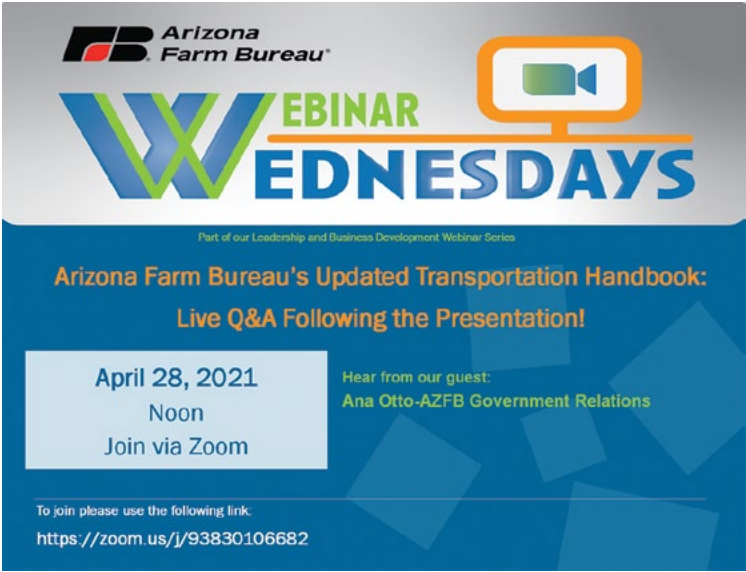


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Our Webinar Topics: We Are Listening!

By Elizabeth Rico, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Manager –Leadership and Business Development

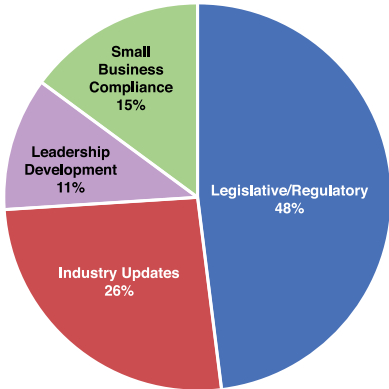
The idea of a webinar series wasn’t a new concept to Arizona Farm Bureau (AZFB). A desire for years, a series of online seminars didn’t come to fruition until after a year of virtual meetings, conferences and telecommuting thanks to 2020’s COVID-19 and other previous factors.



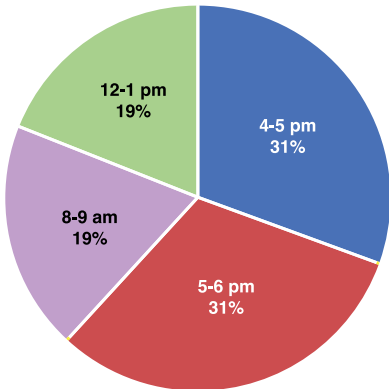
Our April webinar reported on the release of the latest Transportation Handbook we make available to our agriculture members for free.

Since the official launch of the Arizona Farm Bureau online seminars in January, Webinar Wednesdays, as part of our Leadership and Business Development, the effort has come a long way. We switched to a user-friendly platform, added a robust group of panelists each month, and are working towards giveaways and drawings to generate more participation. Each webinar is also recorded and put on azfb.org so our members can access past sessions on their own time and at their own convenience.

Webinar Wednesday Topic Preferences



Preferred Webinar Wednesday Times



We kicked off the series with a set of leadership targeted videos and live panelists focused on the leadership development training priority our volunteer leaders often ask for. We featured videos from American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) featuring guests ranging from our own AZFB staff to county leaders of different backgrounds and geographic locations around the state.

Because this training tool in our toolbox is somewhat new, we understand that the right topics for our members to access become one of the most important aspects of Arizona Farm Bureau’s leadership and business development. So, we sent out a survey.

The survey queried preferred time of day, topic preferences and even ask for suggested guest speakers.

Survey results showed that nearly half of the respondents wanted us to feature webinars around regulatory and legislative issues, and over a quarter said they would tune in to hear about industry updates. The next two most popular topics were small business compliance and leadership development.

We all know how valuable our time is. For our farm and ranch members, in each day, you wear many hats. When surveyed, the results of preferred time to attend the webinars was a tie between 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm, confirming our thoughts that the end of the day would be most ideal for most participants. Our latest Webinar Wednesday was held June 30th at 5 pm, titled ‘What’s the Yield with Drones?’ - Practical application, legal implications and how to make them as efficient to your operation as possible. Participants had to register to attend since we gave a drone away. Registrants were entered into a live drawing that at the conclusion of the webinar, were randomly selected to receive a drone valued at \$450. Participants had to be on the webinar when selection was made.

We would love to hear from you on what you’re interested in hearing or learning. Email your ideas or suggestions to outreach@azfb.org

PROTECTED MARKETS

continued from page 6

sunshine.”

That well-known character was the Arizona Farm Bureau’s first vice-president and second president, C.S. “Farmer” Brown. Brown was born in Utah in 1874 and began farming in the Tucson area in 1914. He is sometimes credited as the first president of the new Arizona Farm Bureau, but other sources give that honor to Dr. James C. Norton of Phoenix, a former state veterinarian.

In any case, “Farmer” Brown (he unofficially adopted the nickname about this time), became a widely known spokesman on agricultural issues and Arizona. Though lacking a formal education, Brown was a constant seeker of knowledge from books, lectures, classes, and life experience. He was also a writer and speaker of some gifts. By 1925 he was featured on national radio programs originating at station WLS in Chicago, where he shared his “Arizona Philosophy.” A few years later his column, “Farmer Brown’s Philosophy,” appeared in the Arizona Producer. It was discontinued after a few months (replaced by “Uncle Jack, the Bee Doctor”), but Farmer continued to find outlets for expression on agricultural topics. During the early 1930s he became a national spokesman for Farm Bureau, touring the country to appear at fairs and picnics.

Long past what some consider the age of retirement, Farmer was still active, and still learning. The year before his death (age 88) in 1962, he took a course in public speaking.

Labor Issues Show Common Theme Running Through the Decades

Many of the farm labor issues of recent years have very deep, and familiar, roots. A common theme is that the politics and federal policy on immigration and employment change, and agriculture deals with the changes. In 1924, new U.S. laws drastically reduced immigration from southern and eastern Europe. However, Mexico and Latin America were not affected by these restrictions. Farmers in the Southwest and elsewhere began encouraging and recruiting Spanish-speaking immigrants, and U.S. border policy facilitated this. Not all the workers were Mexican. In 1926, for example, 500 “Porto Rican” laborers were employed to help with the cotton harvest in Arizona.

Once the full effects of the Great Depression became apparent, the attitude toward imported labor changed, resulting in the precipitous deportation of over 300,000 Mexican laborers and family members. This labor force was largely replaced by a domestic supply: unemployed single men and dispossessed families from the Midwest and South. When the military and industrial demand of the Second World War strained every sector of the economy, the U.S. and Mexico cooperated in creating a guest worker, or bracer program, again welcoming Mexican labor.

The longer-term effects of these tides of workers included the permanent relocation of many American families to the West, and the growth of a Mexican American population determined to assert their claim to the U.S. as their home. As these groups and others, including Japanese and Filipino immigrants, put down roots, many became part of a new generation of farm managers, farm owners, and agricultural business entrepreneurs.

Editor’s Note: Excerpted from our recently released history book, “A Century of Progress, 1921-2021.”

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Teachers Become Students

By Katie Aikins, Arizona Farm Bureau Education Director

Teachers became students this past month as the Arizona Summer Ag Institute took teachers from across the state for an in-depth look at Arizona agriculture. The program, usually a week-long event that keeps teachers on a chartered bus to travel agriculture in-person, was a hybrid event this year. Participating teachers still received a once-in a lifetime opportunity to engage and interact with Arizona agriculture.



The Farm Bureau Grill Team served an amazing lunch from the grill.

Our tour stops and speakers gave our Arizona teachers a “up close and personal” understanding of agriculture in our state.

MONDAY – In Person

Teachers travelled to Yavapai County and learned about the importance of agricultural careers and the opportunities afforded by Yavapai Community College. Equine, aquaculture, aquaponics, hydroponics, outdoor gardening, transplanting, and lineman programs were the morning’s highlights.

After a lesson at the College, teachers travelled to Mortimer Farms in Dewey for an ag fair. Although teachers could not visit all the farms because of transportation challenges, the farms came to them! Teachers engaged with and learned from Michael Peirce all about wine and viticulture, from Tim Petersen and Keith Cannon about cattle, ranching, and marketing, from Dr Isaac Mpanga about programming for small scale farmers, and received a fabulous tour from Ashlee and Sharla Mortimer.

TUESDAY- Virtual

Teachers stayed home and joined us online to learn about wheat production from our very own John Boelts, Yuma farmer and Arizona Farm Bureau First Vice President. AZ Queen Bee also gave the teachers a lesson on bees and her sweet honey. Speaking of insect, teachers learned about more of our beneficial insects and pests and how agriculture uses integrated pest management



Teachers headed inside to learn about hydroponics and greenhousegrowing.

programs, and the role biotechnology has played in eradicating the Pink Bollworm. Precision agriculture, ag technologies, and the science of agriculture were on display as teachers were taken virtual into the Bayer Marana Greenhouses.

WEDNESDAY- In Person

It may have been 118 degrees, but that could not keep our teachers off the farm! Watermelons with Rousseau Farms, cattle feeding at Heiden Land and Cattle, and the birth of a calf at Grandview Dairy filled the morning. Carrie Mayfield treated the teachers to a fabulous on-the-farm lunch and education on onion transplants. A sweet treat of flavored milk and a tour of milk processing at Danzeisen Dairy rounded out the day.

THURSDAY-Virtual

Teachers headed back to their homes and computers for the final day. Dates, nuts, greenhouse gases, and a sustainability panel rounded out the event.

Editor’s Note: Arizona Farm Bureau is honored to serve on the Summer Ag Institute Committee and help in the organization and execution of this educational experience! 🚗

Virtual Site Tours for Members of Congress

By Victoria Okula, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Manager

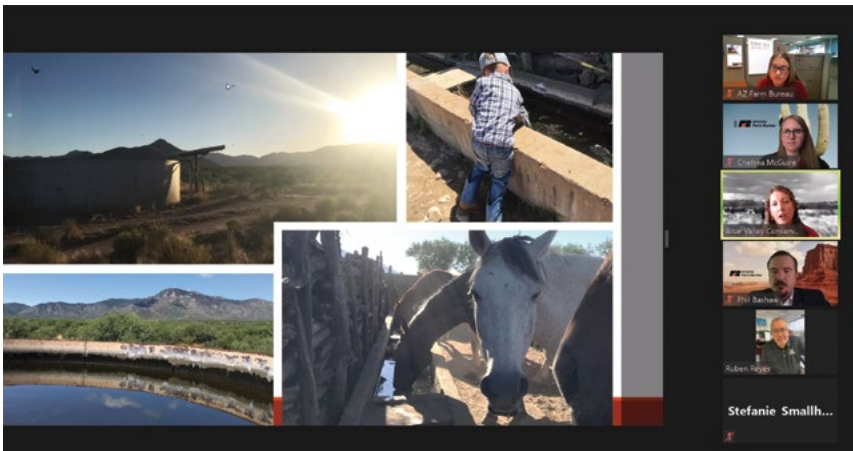
In the spring, Arizona Farm Bureau leaders typically travel to Washington, D.C. to attend in-person meetings with members of our congressional delegation. However, nothing about this year was typical and due to travel restrictions an in-person trip was not possible. With a little creativity, Arizona Farm Bureau was still able to facilitate meaningful discussions between Farm Bureau leaders and members of Congress on pertinent policy topics by hosting virtual site tours.

Farm Bureau leaders who volunteered to host a virtual site tour provided staff with photos and videos of their operation. This content was transformed to mimic a tour of a real farm, ranch, or agritourism operation. Conversations surrounding pending legislation and policy concerns were tailored to match the presentation for each virtual tour, which allowed for engaging discussions on issues that were important to each Farm Bureau leader and member of Congress. This offered an opportunity for our members to share their wide range of expertise along with personal anecdotes. This also meant that our elected officials heard about a wide variety of topics including grazing on public lands, water infrastructure, agriculture labor, tax reform, wildfire prevention, and stewardship of public lands.

Another benefit of the virtual format is that our

members did not have to take much time away from their busy schedules to hop on a plane to travel to D.C. All virtual tours were attended from the comfort of their farm or ranch.

Thank you to Representatives Kirkpatrick, Gosar, O’Halleran, Representative Grijalva’s staff, and Senator



Kelly for taking the time to meet with Arizona Farm Bureau. And thank you to Sarah King, Sonia Gasho, John Boelts, Ashley and Ben Menges, Sharla Mortimer, and Paul Brierley for volunteering your time and expertise to host a virtual tour.

While many of us are looking forward to our next trip to Washington, D.C. to attend in-person meetings and events, we think this virtual site tour format will be a wonderful way to continue to connect with elected officials – all without having to leave the farm or ranch! 🚗



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