

**A Conversation about Arizona's Local Beef Market: Matt Herrington**

*This year's policy development process reflects the various issues impacting Arizona's beef industry.*

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

Overnight during the height of the pandemic, certain local markets became popular. The big one was beef. If you couldn't get your beef cuts in the grocery store after a rush of buyers bought everything up in the meat case, maybe you could purchase from your local rancher who had been pitching his local, fresh beef for the last decade.

Problem was, there were supply chain challenges in the local market too. Now, eight months into the pandemic, everyone is still sorting out the issue.

This was evident in the Arizona Farm Bureau resolutions process last month, where member leaders proposed numerous and sometimes conflicting policies on everything from country of origin labeling, cash market purchasing mandates on large meatpackers, and ways to increase the capacity of small processing plants so that producers aren't so reliant on large meatpackers in the first place.

With a master's degree from New Mexico State University in Animal Science in hand, generational farmer/rancher Matt Herrington returned home to the Gila Valley and started Herrington Cattle a few years back. For some time, he'd been percolating on a unique business model to create a program to improve the quality and availability of local beef to Arizona families. He launched Copper Star Beef® a registered brand name under Herrington Cattle, LLC in early 2020 just as the pandemic was spreading globally.

Also, Graham County Farm Bureau President and active in Arizona Farm Bureau's Young Farmer & Rancher program, Herrington and wife, Kelsey, tell you upfront what they're passionate about: Family, Ranching families producing quality beef, Remembering our heritage, embracing the technology of the present, looking forward to the potential of the future and Win-Win Relationships.

Business models like Herrington's won't solve all our market issues in the complex and just-in-time food supply chain market, but they reflect a growing awareness of our pain points in the beef industry. Although the massive disruptions in the food supply chain that occurred in March and April are not likely to be repeated (or at least often), the numbers explain the drama of the situation as it occurred. Some market estimates

had meat production overall falling by 25% or more in April and May: Pork was down by 35%, beef was down by 33% and chicken was down by 10%.

Much of the drop was due to plant closures resulting from outbreaks of COVID-19 at some operations and fears at other plants of the novel coronavirus spreading. Additionally, as plants instituted protections for employees including spacing on the assembly line, output dropped. At the same time, retail consumer demand in the grocery store increased as much as 60% overnight in some regions of the country.

Amazingly, cattle, beef and chicken production levels are now back to near-normal, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which says beef and chicken production is at 98% of last year's levels and, pork is at 95% at last reported levels.

It's been stated that even if Arizona had more regional meatpacking plants, the disruptions experienced during the height of the pandemic could easily impact smaller plants. But increased options for consumers tapping into the "local" market would mean even during unusual disruptions both beef producers and consumers would have more flexibility.

So, since Herrington certainly had one view on what was going on with local markets, as things have settled down, I wanted to ask him how he thought the market was shaking out.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Talk to me about your take on the U.S. beef market.

**Herrington:** The demand for beef exists, but our system has some major issues. Although there are many different opinions about how to fix these issues, I think most would agree that it has some fundamental problems.

When four meatpackers control 80% of the beef in our country, any closure or other hiccup including a pandemic can cause a major ripple effect in the beef industry negatively impacting feeders and cow/calf producers alike.

This was magnified this year as plants closed due to the spread of illness and demand for beef increased due to supply chain uncertainty. Live cattle prices tanked, and



Matt and Kelsey Herrington launch a new business in the beef industry at the height of the pandemic, working to fill a local niche.

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**Propositions 207 and 208: Arizona Farm Bureau Weighs In**

By Chelsea McGuire, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

At its September Board of Directors meeting, the Arizona Farm Bureau Board of Directors made official our organization's positions on the two statewide ballot measures that will appear on November's ballot. In accordance with our policy, Farm Bureau is opposed to both Proposition 207 and Proposition 208.

**No on Proposition 207: Smart & Safe Arizona**

Despite its name, Proposition 207's legalization of recreational marijuana is not a smart move for the state.

Farm Bureau policy is unequivocally opposed to legalizing marijuana for recreational use. Our policy also supports wise and responsible state tax statutes. But Proposition 207 would lock Arizona into a potentially expensive program of enforcement and tracking for legalized marijuana without the ability to adjust the program's revenue to account for actual costs.

In most states with legal cannabis, the revenue collected from the program



falls far below the cost of implementing it. But Proposition 207's 16 percent excise tax on marijuana is fixed – the legislature cannot adjust it, even with a 2/3 vote, and voters can't adjust it unless they pass an initiative to raises sales tax on every other product in the state at the same time. Moreover, the proposition provides that if cannabis is taxed federally, Arizona's tax collection on the product will ratchet down proportionally. Ultimately, if the federal government decides to legalize and tax cannabis, Arizona could be in a position where we must pay to enforce a program from which we collect no tax revenue whatsoever.

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boxed beef prices went up. I believe if more moderate regional plants existed, these ripple effects would be smaller and less dramatic and damaging to the industry.

**Arizona Agriculture:** What about Arizona’s beef market?

**Herrington:** More quality cattle are being produced in Arizona than ever before. We have good seed stock producers offering good genetics. We are also seeing improvements in herd health and other management practices. Overall, I feel like our industry is limited because of our distance from larger processing plants and feedlots.

**Arizona Agriculture:** What’s your take on the local beef market in Arizona and its potential?

**Herrington:** We have a robust urban population that is growing every year. The demand for beef, in general, is good in our state and the demand for local beef is growing. It seems like there has been an increased interest in fitness and nutrition over the last several years, with diets like the keto diet helping increase demand as well. I think there is a lot of potential to keep Arizona beef right here in the state. A local, quality, dry-aged beef product is something the traditional supply chain cannot produce. I think many people in Arizona want quality beef and are willing to pay a premium for it. But again, we have some major limitations and challenges when it comes to processing capabilities.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Tell me a bit more about your business, Copper Star Beef. What inspired you to see the need for it?

**Herrington:** The premise for creating Copper Star Beef was helping cattle producers and our industry to thrive. Developing a brand of local beef that producers can participate in is a big part of it. But we also offer other services such as breeding, feeding, and marketing cattle. The need that I saw is the need for more control over the market. Sure, there are plenty of ways to improve and maximize profit in the traditional market, but the more control producers can have the better.

**Arizona Agriculture:** While I understand that in your area a new harvest plant is being constructed, what’s the potential for other plants throughout the state?

**Herrington:** Potential for new Arizona plants exists but there are some good reasons why we don’t see them popping up left and right. Processing plants require a great deal of capital just to get them built. Regulations and labor are big challenges as well.

**Arizona Agriculture:** On our Fill Your Plate website, Arizona Farm Bureau has noted a surge in interest in local beef. Talk about current and ongoing demand?

**Herrington:** Most of the surge was probably a result of issues associated with Covid-19. The demand seems to have slowed from the peak several months ago, but I hope people learned not to take the food supply chain for granted.

**Arizona Agriculture:** What do you foresee for the Arizona beef market. Is local beef a helpful mix for our Arizona ranchers as they try to diversify in this challenging market?

**Herrington:** I believe that marketing local beef is a good option to mix in and help producers diversify. We are not set up to market all the cattle in Arizona locally. But we can start to market some that way and grow with the demand.



Herrington with his son, McCoy.

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No on Proposition 208: Invest in Education

Speaking of unwise tax measures, the Invest in Education Act would hamstring Arizona’s economic progress when it’s needed the most. The initiative would impose a 3.5 percent surcharge on all taxable income over \$250,000 for single filers and \$500,000 for joint filers. Money collected by the tax will be distributed to school districts and charter schools, proportionate to their student population, to fund increases in teacher salaries, hiring more teachers, and supporting new and prospective teachers to help them stay in the classroom. While we agree with the wisdom of finding a stable and adequate funding stream for Arizona’s educational system, Proposition 208 simply does not create that funding.



Small businesses will be the hardest hit, with a marginal income tax increase of more than 77 percent.

The ballot initiative process is just one of many things that make Arizona politics unique. While many states have a process that allows any voter to propose a law for the electorate to approve or reject, Arizona is one of only a handful in which those laws are subject to voter protection, meaning that the Legislature can’t modify or undo them without a 2/3 supermajority. This protection lends a weight to ballot-passed measures that makes each of them worthy of significant contemplation before you vote.

For more on Arizona Farm Bureau’s positions in the 2020 Election, go to the 2020 Election Resources tab on the Public Policy page of www.azfb.org. **Editor’s Note:** For our 2020 General Election Candidate survey also go to the 2020 Election Resources tab on the Public Policy page of azfb.org.

Because the tax is based on income, it’s not a dedicated funding source – it’s based on the most volatile tax brackets in the state and will be wildly unpredictable from year to year. Even more damaging, the initiative would increase Arizona’s overall tax rate to 8 percent, in the top ten highest nationwide. This would create a significant disincentive for business to relocate to Arizona, and the increased tax burden on existing businesses has been projected to led to significant job losses over the first ten years of the tax.

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Arizona Agriculture

is published 9 months, plus two special  
editions annually, (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

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# The Complexity, Resiliency and Strength of America's Food Supply

By Philip Bashaw, Arizona Farm Bureau CEO

The last several months have been interesting to say the least. Many of us are navigating treacherous and uncharted waters as we attempt to protect ourselves and our neighbors from a worldwide pandemic. While there will be many lessons to learn from this experience, I would like to focus on one, the complexity, resiliency and strength of the food supply in Arizona and across America.

*For a moment imagine a world where that food supply came exclusively from a different state or a different country and whether we would have witnessed the same resiliency.*

It's something most people take for granted, and why not; we have the most abundant, affordable and safe food supplies in the world. But in the days leading up to and the days following the announcement that we were dealing with a worldwide pandemic and people faced the reality they may need to limit their interaction with the outside world, they showed us

what was really important: FOOD, and strangely toilet paper.

The run to stock up on essentials left the shelves empty of fresh meat, milk and eggs. Canned goods flew off the shelves and in some cases the volume of fresh fruit and produce purchased by consumers increased dramatically. At the same time, they were rushing to buy products from their grocery store, the volume of products purchases through food service (restaurants, schools and hotels) sharply decreased.

These recent events have peeled back the hood on our system and made people think about and recognize how complex it really is. There are numerous steps in the food supply chain from the production of the products, to the processing, warehousing, shipping, distribution and sale of those products.

To bring them to the final consumer, food products must be produced and distributed at a similar rate as they will be consumed. To reduce waste and offer the freshest product possible, our retail grocery stores stock only the product that they can reasonably expect to sell in a few days. In turn, the entire supply chain is built around that volume. When that volume goes up unexpectedly, and across the entire system, it takes time for that system to catch up and while the same amount of food is being produced, it takes time for it to be processed and distributed.

There is also capacity to consider. Our supply chains have been developed and refined over decades to create an efficient, just-in-time delivery system in the volume they are needed to the various market outlets. Large volumes of products destined for restaurants or cafeterias cannot be easily repackaged and sold for individual consumers. There was always enough food in the system to meet the demand, just not in the correct packaging, quantities, or step in the supply chain to pivot to meet the demand.

This too is remarkable given the production of food cannot be increased with the

flip of a switch. The beef that was brought to market often started that journey more than two years prior. After all, it takes time for cattle to grow and be ready for harvest. Milk comes from cows that have reached an age of maturity to produce it. We cannot grow more mature cattle overnight and we cannot tell a chicken to lay more eggs. In agriculture, we operate on the timelines Mother Nature gives us and she cares little for financial markets or fluctuating demand from consumers.

In the wake of these announcements, Arizona's farmers and ranchers continued to produce the products needed to refill the shelves. We worked with our regulatory agencies and decision makers to ensure the movement of labor necessary to harvest that product and continue the transportation of those products to the grocery store. Indeed, from the White House, to the Department of Homeland Security, to Governor Ducey, decision makers recognized the essential nature of the agriculture industry in emergency declarations, guidance and executive orders.

We were able to respond quickly and keep the products flowing to markets to the capacity our current system allowed with only temporary interruption. For a moment imagine a world where that food supply came exclusively from a different state or a different country and whether we would have witnessed the same resiliency.

So, now what do we do with this knowledge? Once we recognize the food we eat is the product of collective decisions made years ago we must also acknowledge the decisions we make today will impact that food supply years from now. As we consider new policies that may have an impact on agriculture, I would encourage all of us to remember the challenges posed by even a temporary disruption in the food system.

A resilient and local agriculture industry is essential to food security in times of crisis. Let's be sure our decisions are the right ones and that they don't jeopardize that system because we may well regret it the next time we face adversity. 🍷



**"The food we eat is the product of collective decisions made years ago. We must also acknowledge the decisions we make today will impact that food supply years from now."**

## Expected Record Harvest Causing American Pistachio Growers to Engage Robust Campaign

*Trade association unveils huge advertising/marketing effort in the U.S. and abroad.*

Staff Reports

With the likelihood that U.S. pistachio farmers will shake a record crop from their trees this fall, American Pistachio Growers (APG) is pulling out all of the stops to keep its wave of marketing success rolling in 2021 and well beyond. APG's marketing team has just put the final touches on a new advertising campaign that combines extensive television advertising in major markets across the U.S. as well as additional print and digital media advertising in all key export markets.



**According to the United States Department of Agriculture in 2019, the value of U.S. tree nut exports to the world was \$9.1 billion, a 7% increase over 2018 with pistachios bringing in \$2 billion of that market.**

"The anticipated record harvest and the concerted effort to bolster domestic marketing, focus on increasing the export market, as well as focusing on the healthy aspects of this important nut crop emphasizes the need to continue to reach new

buyers of this and other healthy nut crops, including Arizona pecans," Says Agricultural Services Co. Inc. President Harold Payne and president of Arizona Pecan Growers. "The renewed efforts in the advertising campaigns which have been upgraded from traditional new media venues to now include social media access through 'influencers' and campaigns targeting 'foodies' and their audiences which promote the healthy benefits of nuts in the diet. The efforts by the APG to expand and enhance the export market has direct benefits to Arizona growers, as the export market, particularly into China, was responsible for creating several years of excellent nut prices, which have diminished during the past couple of years of retaliatory tariffs between China and the U.S."

U.S. growers are keenly aware that their success depends on keeping export channels open in major countries around the world. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, pistachio and pecan exports were running strong. In the 2018/19 marketing year, U.S. pistachio shipments set a record despite stiff retaliatory tariffs imposed by China, according to the Rabobank report.

"The ongoing expansion of pistachio and pecan acres in the western U.S. means

increased production over the next decade, and millions of dollars of funds from Arizona nut growers are being dedicated to enhance the reach of advertising and research to reach new consumers of American nuts," adds Payne. "The recent Federal Marketing Order approved by U.S. pecan growers is an example of industry donating funds to increase the market share of pecans, following the success of this type of program in the pistachio and almond industries."

### The Pistachio Market

Worth more than a \$2 billion dollars, the U.S. pistachio market will need a keen marketing strategy. While Arizona and New Mexico have growing acreage in pecans and pistachios, the largest share of U.S. pistachios comes from California. As a California commodity, pistachios have been on a tear in recent years and now occupy sixth place on the state's list of more than 350 commodities with a value of \$1.94 billion, according to California Department of Food and Agriculture 2019 data. Pistachios rank as the state's second leading export with a value of \$1.1 billion. As interest in pistachios has grown in California as well as in Arizona and New Mexico, so has the need to market larger crops to a growing international market.

APG's strategy is to keep consumer demand running strong ahead of what appears to be a large 2020 crop. According to APG President Richard Matoian the U.S. pistachio crop that growers are currently harvesting could hit the 1-billion-pound mark --- setting a new production record.

"We are investing in our biggest advertising and marketing campaign ever to capitalize on this expansion in U.S. pistachio production," said Judy Hirigoyen, APG Vice President, Global Marketing. "We have great synergy from all of the work we have done in recent years collaborating with great partners in professional sports, the research community, and with some of the world's leading nutritionists and researchers."

Even with the effects of the pandemic and ongoing trade tensions with China, Rabobank analysts state that market demand for pistachios remains strong in both domestic and international markets. Although total demand could be affected by a global economic downturn due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they state that the demand outlook is still "favorable" and is set to keep pace with the anticipated expansion in U.S. pistachio production in the years ahead, citing the nutrition research and promotional efforts as contributing factors to their prediction.

There is also heartening news contained in the pages of APG's April 2020 consumption/share of market report. The report's data found that total consumption and market share from 2016-2019 are on an upward trajectory in several key markets. In China, for example, total consumption is up 573% and market share has surged to 57.5%. In Germany, the report found total consumption had risen 288.5% and market share was 65.7%. In India, total consumption and market share were up 74.3% and 58.6% respectively.

For the first time ever APG is employing an advertising and marketing push that combines television, print and digital advertising in major export countries as well as in major television markets in the U.S. Beginning in mid-November and continuing through next summer, ads extolling the virtues of U.S. pistachios will appear in 44 U.S.

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# Meet Arizona Agriculture's Barnard Family

*An ongoing series of our Arizona farm and ranch businesses.*

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

This young family is a delight to get to know. Like so many of our farm and ranch families in Arizona, they have a story to tell they didn't realize needed telling. Fortunately, their loving network of friends and family helped them see the light and they're telling their story now, through the eyes and adventures of their children. Haidyn and Hannah have written a fabulous book about life on their farm, where they grow alfalfa and corn, feed calves, and have a cow/calf operation.

WhiteBarn Hay & Cattle began in 2004. But really, you and I need to go back to 1952 to get the whole story. Jason's grandparents moved to Sulphur Springs Valley on January 1 of 1952 from Oklahoma, and Candice's grandparents moved from California in 1953. Both families farmed chile, cotton, corn, and alfalfa. And both families have succeeding generations still farming in southeast Arizona today. Haidyn and Hannah tell us this story in their book, *Farm Kids, Growing Up WhiteBarn*. Readers discover for themselves what growing up on a farm in southern Arizona is like.

**Tell us about your agriculture business?** We are farming, ranching and cattle feeding operation. In 2002, Jason's granddad, Noel Curry, was helping Jason transition into farming on his own. Papa, as he is known, told Jason, "We'll see if you can make it work."

When Candice and Jason were married in 2004, two farming families, who were generational Sulphur Springs Valley farm families, were brought together as more than just friends and neighbors.

When Jason was working to secure his first operating loan, the bank president told Jason with a chuckle, "Well I don't know why anyone would want to farm, but I'll loan you the money!" He knew that he was participating in a dream that was going to continue to develop and grow.

We have grown several crops: green and red chile, pumpkins, pinto beans, corn, alfalfa, wheat, barley and cotton. We bought our first set of calves to feed our under-valued hay in 2009. To do that we leased a little feedlot from a neighbor in Elfrida. He didn't even charge us any lease because he had lost enough money in that feedlot that he was anxious to see someone else do something with it. We have continued feeding and running calves on wheat pasture since then.

Currently, we grow alfalfa, corn for silage, and grass hay of many kinds, including triticale, wheat, barley, oats, teff, and Bermuda. We have a cow/calf operation, pasture outside cows and yearlings, and wean and background calves for ranches and customers from many ranches around Arizona and New Mexico. We always have room for one more set of calves.

**Tell us about some of your Conservation practices/improvements:** The most important thing that we have received as a generational legacy, besides our faith in God, is the idea of always continuing to learn, always continue to seek to improve and grow, starting with yourself, and continuing into every area of life.

It is a core value for us to continue becoming better stewards of the land and resources, and to become better producers to produce more without increasing our farm size. Our goal is to maximize profitability and sustainability without adding more land to the operation. Efficiency is so important in today's economic environment.

We have participated with the NRCS to make many improvements on the farm. We have updated and installed the most efficient pivots when possible, updated and improved nozzle packages and irrigation application methods. Minimum tillage, cover crops and grazing have been integral parts of our system since 2006.

**Tell us about your inspiration for a book?** The inspiration of the book project came from our good friend Wink Crigler, owner of the X Diamond Ranch in Greer, Arizona. We have done a lot of business with Wink since we met in 2012, and she has a special relationship with Haidyn and Hannah. Wink had an idea that the girls had a story to tell about growing up on a farm/ranch/feedlot operation, and that there would be a lot of folks who would love to read about kids growing up in agriculture in Arizona in 2020.

It took a little convincing because we, just like most people in agriculture, don't

think anything of our story. In fact, we think it's rather boring, or uninteresting since it's what we live. But the girls got on board, and before long, they were taking pictures, writing notes, and making preparations to share their story.

Wink had an idea, a vision of what it might turn into, and as she has said, the girls took off with it, made it their own, have done a fabulous job of telling their story of a year on their farm. We are so thankful that Wink, Barb Denny, and Scott Baxter took the girls under their arms and turned this into such an amazing book.

**Tell us something nobody really knows about the family:** When Hannah was very little, she referred to "rocky mountain oysters" as "grits." So anytime we were branding, she was more focused on "cooking grits" on the branding pot than whatever her job was...it was always really funny.

Haidyn and Hannah are amazing singers! It's getting out more now, but wow. We sure are proud of their willingness to bless others with the gift of singing that God gave them.

Many people don't know that we feed and pasture cattle. We can help a lot of ranches during dry years like we are experiencing right now.

**More and more farm and ranch families are telling their own story. We need more of this. What's your advice to anyone in farm and ranch country wanting to do the same?**

As I mentioned earlier, it took some convincing for us to want to share our story. Mostly, because we didn't think anything

of our story. But as more and more Americans are getting further and further from the farm and ranch heritage of their ancestors, it has been received so amazingly well.

The girls were asked if they had any thoughts regarding the book project recently. Their reply was that they hoped that this would help inspire other farm and ranch kids and families to tell their story. And surprisingly, we have had several tell us that it is an inspiration to do just that. We didn't write this book because we have a special story, it's just ours and everybody has a story to tell!

When asked what their favorite part of the book project was, Hannah will tell you that she learned that you can do anything you set your mind to. Haidyn says every time that what she enjoyed most is that our family spent a lot of time together working on the book.

One might think that between all the work that happens around here, much of it together; homeschooling, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, going to church, and all the regular traveling we do (it's over an hour drive one way just to get groceries or parts), that time together would not make the list. It is a reminder that no matter how much time our kids have with us, they are always ready for more.

That is our favorite part of the life that we live, and if we're not careful we take it for granted, because it's the way we live. Having the freedom to farm and ranch and feed cattle. To watch the sun come up over the Peloncillos, and watch it go down on the Chiricahua's. To plant a seed, and watch it emerge out of the ground, to become a plant, produce its fruit, and be harvested. To pick out the right bulls for the right cows, to get the right calves. To make an adjustment on the feed ration to squeeze out a little more gain. To give some kiddos the responsibility to grow food, to raise cattle, to learn that life is not just about us, it's about serving others. That's what we love about this life we live.

What's the best piece of advice you were ever given? These are lessons for anyone but these we are teaching the girls, too.

- Never take opportunity for granted.
- Always be thankful!
- Regardless of what happens, don't ever think you got yourself there alone.
- Do what is easy and your life will be hard. Do what is hard, and your life will be easy!

We are all standing on the shoulders of the generations who went before us who worked hard, fought, bled, and died for us to have this opportunity, whatever it may be. And of course, every good gift comes from God. 🙏

**Editor's Note:** If you're interested in your own copy of the book, go to <https://whitebarnhayandcattle.com/place-an-order/>.



The Barnard family (from left) Candice; Ethan (being held by big sister), Haidyn, Jason, Hannah standing in front of a tractor and grain drill used for planting seed. Photo courtesy Scott T. Baxter.

## CFAP 2.0 Released Late Last Month

President Trump and USDA Secretary Perdue announced a second round of aid through the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). Up to \$14 billion will be used to help farmers devastated by the economic disaster caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Almost \$10 billion from the first CFAP provided much-needed support to livestock, dairy, non-specialty and specialty crop producers throughout the country.

Many farmers were initially left out of CFAP, and although the program was expanded to include more commodities, aid was only made available for losses suffered before April 15, 2020. The deadline for most producers to apply for the first round of CFAP assistance expired on September 11. CFAP 2.0 began September 21 and runs through December 11, 2020.

Flat-rate crops, including alfalfa, long-staple cotton, and hemp, will receive payments based on eligible acres for 2020, multiplied by a rate of \$15 per acre.

Sales commodities are mainly specialty crops, including nursery crops and floriculture, and payment calculations will use an approached based on sales. Producers will be paid based on their 2019 sales of the same commodities.

"Farmers and ranchers saw demand for their markets disappear during the initial shockwave of the pandemic. Even though concerns over food supplies have now subsided, the economic hardships are still taking their toll on farm families across the country," said American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall. "We don't know when this pandemic will end and we are still feeling the effects of trade imbalances and severe weather. This lifeline will keep farmers and ranchers afloat as they continue to keep America's pantries stocked."

Signup for CFAP will run from September 21 through December 11, 2020. For more information, go to [farmers.gov/CFAP](https://farmers.gov/CFAP). 🙏

## Presidential Candidate Questionnaire 2020

For the past 40 years, American Farm Bureau (AFBF) has asked every presidential candidate to provide responses to issues likely to impact and affect farmers and ranchers and rural communities in the next 4 years. Both President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden have provided their answers. The responses have been unedited and are shared with you in the same style that they were provided to us. We are sharing the responses so you can read directly from the candidates on their policy positions and direction for our country.

The Advocacy team at AFBF did the same this year too. They asked each candidate to cover the following topics.

- Food System Resiliency
- Farm Policy Programs
- International Trade
- Tax Policy
- Energy
- Regulatory Reform
- Endangered Species Act
- Clean Water
- Biotechnology
- Rural Life and Health
- Agricultural Labor
- Sustainability and Climate Change

To discover the candidate views on the above topic, we encourage readers to go to <https://www.fb.org/land/presidential-candidate-questionnaire> on AFBF's website.

**Editor's Note:** For Arizona Farm Bureau's own 2020 General Election Candidate survey go to the 2020 Election Resources tab on the Public Policy page of [azfb.org](https://www.azfb.org). 🙏



## Harvest continued from page 4

television markets ---- from Honolulu to Washington, D.C. Included in the U.S. advertising effort is APG’s sponsorship of New Year’s Eve countdown celebrations in Las Vegas, Nevada and Dallas, Texas --- covering 26 key television markets.

“Consumers here in the U.S. as well as abroad are embracing the powerful stories of pistachios --- that they are packed with important nutrients and have been recognized as being a “complete” protein source, putting pistachios in the company of other plant-based complete proteins, such as quinoa and soy,” Hirigoyen said. “We think these stories will really resonate with TV viewers across the nation.”

“On top of the expected record harvest this year, with the expansion of new acreage comes into bearing, we know that will present greater marketing challenges in the years ahead,” said Alison Nagatani, Chair of the APG Marketing Committee and a pistachio grower from Earlimart. “The Rabobank report projects bearing acreage could reach 372,000 acres by 2024/25 --- about 30% greater than in 2019/20. Clearly, we have our marching orders to keep blazing the marketing trail, both here at home and in our key international markets.”

“Marketing ahead of production and capitalizing on the contributions of our industry partners and the incredible array of research that touts the unique and powerful health attributes of pistachios will all play a role in continuing our marketing success,” Nagatani said.

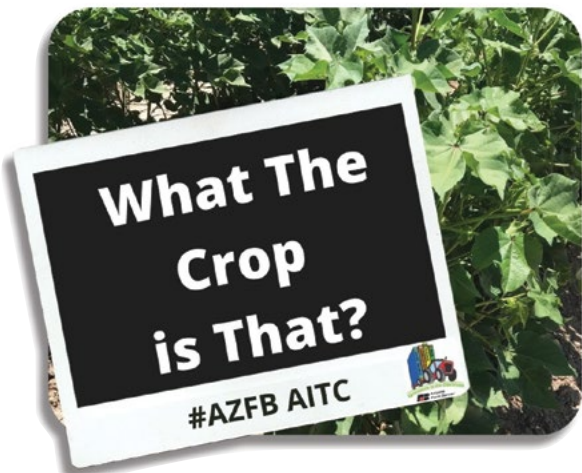
An Arizona pistachio farmer concurs with the overall assessment of APG’s targeted marketing efforts. “We are members of the APG and I was honored to serve on the APG board of directors and its predecessor organization Western Pistachio Association for nine years,” says Jim Graham owner with his wife, Ruth, of Cochise Groves Farming in Southern Arizona. “From the time Ruth and I became involved in the pistachio industry in 1998, we have seen the U.S. production increase dramatically. U.S. acreage and production have increased more than three-fold. Arizona acreage and production have also increased rapidly in the last decade. Fortunately, pistachios have become a popular snack for domestic and foreign consumers. Well over half of the U.S. production is exported, primarily to Asian and European countries.

“Despite tariff conflicts with important market destinations like China, shipments of U.S. pistachios continue to be relatively strong. Worldwide demand has kept market prices to producers comparatively strong as well, although concern exists about the impact of how a billion-pound 2020 crop will affect producer prices. An important focus on pistachio marketing has been the nutritional benefits of pistachios as a snack. As consumers become more aware of these benefits, the consumption of U.S. pistachios will need to keep pace with increasingly larger crops. Thus, the APG marketing efforts will be critical to the success of the U.S. pistachio industry.”

Jim and Ruth Graham also have a vineyard and winery, Golden Rule Vineyards. 🍷

## What the CROP is That?!

Have you ever been driving down the road and wondered what was growing in that roadside field? Chances are you might know exactly what that crop is, but there are many who have not the slightest idea. Here is your opportunity to help us educate them!



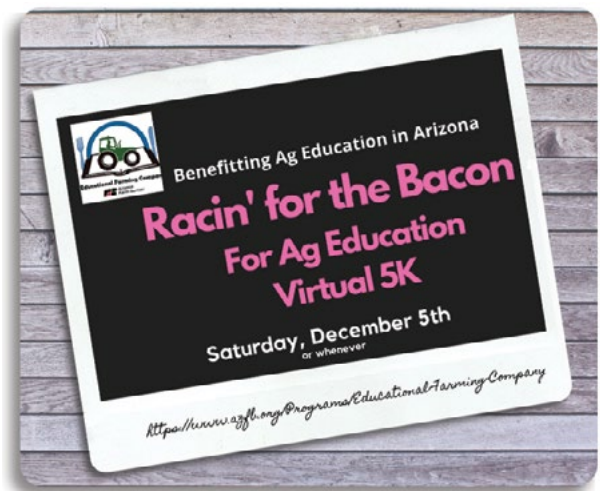
The Arizona Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom program has launched What the Crop is That?, a social media series to help all of those who have ever wondered what was growing in that roadside field. But we need your help! We are asking for members to take pictures of those roadside fields, a close-up and road view, and email them to [aitec@azfb.org](mailto:aitec@azfb.org) for inclusion in our series. The What the Crop Is That series will follow our Arizona crop growing seasons. Pictures can be of any stage of the life cycle. 📷

## Racin’ for the Bacon for Ag Education

Although Covid 19 restrictions are preventing us from hosting the Racin’ Bacon Derby Dinner this year, we are still going to be Racin’ for the Bacon to support Ag Education in Arizona. The Racin’ For the Bacon Virtual 5K will allow participants to walk, run, bike, hike, or ride 3.1 miles for agricultural education. All proceeds will benefit the Arizona Farm Bureau Educational Farming Company and help to further ag education in Arizona.

Covid got you down? Check out the many resources that were made available to teachers and parents during virtual learning. All made possible because of the Foundation!

Additional details and a registration link can be found at <https://www.azfb.org/Programs/Educational-Farming-Company>. Let’s get out and support ag education! 📷





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U. S. Representative	
U. S. Senator	
State Senator	
State Representative	
State Representative	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	
Other:	

Propositions	Farm Bureau	I will Vote
Position <i>Proposition 207: Smart &amp; Safe Arizona</i>	No	
<i>No on Proposition 208: Invest in Education</i>	No	

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# We Need To, But Do We?

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

During County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting season last August, one of our county leaders reminded fellow farmers and ranchers, “we need to communicate better with the public about what we do.” Impassioned and clear, he was telling us you are not doing enough. So, what’s your excuse?

I must confess, Farmer John or Jane, your story and your telling of “ag life” will always resonate with the public more than me telling your story for you. At



Julie Murphree

Arizona Farm Bureau, the Advocacy, Outreach and Ag Education teams take pride in elevating the Arizona agriculture story to our various audiences. And we’re constantly told we’re doing a bang-up job (thanks for all the encouragement and compliments). But it’s not quite enough.

And somehow, on a social media channel when Rancher John or Jane speaks, it’s so much richer, in reality, originality and contextuality. Content counts (it’s also King) and from the source, it matters the most. Farmer Jonathan Dinsmore, on Instagram for example, is more popular than anything Arizona Farm Bureau could put out. He’s the farmer!

### Steps to Getting to the “Do”

Our family farmed up until 2005. So, I get how hard it is to even conceive of launching a social media channel (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and more). Or, tolerating a media query. Or, pausing long enough to go into your child’s classroom to read to the class an ag-accurate book (even virtually today and amid a pandemic).

There is hope though and for even the busiest of us, it can be done.

1. **Be original, be you.** Your best focus for the con-

text of telling farming and ranching is your story. Begin to accept that even what seems mundane to you is fascinating to someone in the public who has no concept of farming or ranching. Saddled up a horse all your life to ride fence? Boring to you?! Not to Joe or Jane Public.

2. **Pick just one channel in Social Media:** Decided if you are more comfortable using Instagram, Twitter or Facebook. Not to brag but Arizona Farm Bureau is on every channel imaginable, well except Tic Tok and Snapchat. If you have questions, call one of us on staff.

3. **Dedicate a time each day or week or month:** One of our winegrower members once told me, “Julie, I devote about 15 to 20 minutes early in the morning to my social media channels then I’m done for the day and I don’t worry about it for the rest of the time.” Most in the retail farming and ranching space get it, but others should too.

4. **Especially for Retail farmers, make a small sign that you always place next to the produce and/or animal ag when you are on your channel or about to take a photo.** Don’t just take a picture of tomatoes. They could be anyone’s. But, if you grew them, place the sign by your wonderfully grown tomatoes so viewers know for sure they are yours.

5. **Engage.** So I can’t convince you to open up a Twitter account (or use the one you opened but never post on). Fine. But remember every conversation you have with a supplier, family friend, colleague or new acquaintance might be an opportunity to talk about your farming and ranching life. Don’t preach, just listen and find that opening to tell your agriculture story.

6. **Celebrate.** New achievements on the farm and ranch? Are market prices finally coming up? Anything new or different becomes something to tell. Even if you don’t want to explain it call us at Arizona Farm Bureau and we’ll help you celebrate a win. We need more of those in agriculture right now.

Just can’t tolerate the idea of engaging the public? Arizona Farm Bureau and your commodity-specific associations will still be here for you and help you. We always want big wins when it comes to connecting with the public but like dating, it’s usually a series of tiny steps that lead up to helping the mutual parties discover there is truly something there. 🍷

**Editor’s Note:** To get your story told, contact Julie Murphree at juliemurphree@azfb.org. She’ll help you determine a plan of action.



Instagram live!

Remember talk to a farmer/rancher occurs every Friday morning.



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