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A CONVERSATION ABOUT AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY: ROBYN (OLLERTON) LAWSON

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Director of Strategic Communications

Robyn Lawson grew up in Casa Grande, Arizona where she spent much of her time on the family farm. Her parents are Paco Ollerton and Karen Geldmacher. Robyn previously held marketing and brand management positions for agricultural companies, working to create market strategies and agronomy and farm data management service packages for various markets and now sales manager for Summit Agro.

The Murphree, Ollerton, Geldmacher families have known each other for some time, nearly all related to agriculture. Karen Ollerton, and my mom, Pennee Murphree rode together in the women's rodeo drill team, Quadrille de Mujeres. I've watched Robyn and her brother, Byron, grow up and expand the family agriculture footprint in so many ways. Agriculture technology and its capabilities in all its forms are often a central topic even if the conversation didn't start out to be about agriculture technology.

Farmers and ranchers are always looking for a better way, if not simply to improve something for the farm and ranch business, to reduce costs. These technology discussions generate some of the best conversations. Robyn always has insightful comments on this topic. This one is no exception.

Robyn and her husband, Clayton, have two dogs; she also enjoys paddle boarding, hiking, snowshoeing, and her time spent as a PureBarre instructor.

Arizona Agriculture: Why does the public have such a hard time getting their minds around agriculture technology, and expecting that agriculturalists would use technology to improve?

Lawson: This is purely my own opinion here, but I think in general people have a hard time with topics of which they don't have a deep understanding. The general public has other priorities during their day. While agriculture fuels the day of each person in our communities and is essential to everyday survival through food and fiber, the public does not understand the **PRODUCTION** of the agriculture that serves them each day. When it comes to production, growers are the elite experts, but how many people in the public have access to experts to gain a deeper understanding of production agriculture?

Something else to keep in mind is the way in which we consume technology on a day-to-day basis and the rate at which we have seen technological advances is quite fast paced. Some of that fast-paced evolution translates to agriculture, but some do not. Frankly, we just don't have the luxury of starting over in the season because that time in the plant life cycle has passed for which we needed that technology. I think the public, within reason, has some concept of how technology can translate to a farm, but they can't wrap their mind around agriculture time; the amount of time in a crop season, the time it takes to implement a technology within a season, and that lost time cannot be made up for the crop.

Arizona Agriculture: What are the leading/overall technologies we need to be aware of?

Lawson: Irrigation technologies. Not just irrigation sensors/probes, but tools where you can potentially increase irrigation efficiency. Some of these are hardware-based for

sprinkler or drip irrigation systems. For example, there are opportunities to include pressure valves and switches that can be remotely managed. This could be helpful to further customize your irrigation management for your crop.

Do you have tank storage in a remote location? How helpful would it be to have a tank monitor to know when your liquid fertilizer was at a point where you needed to take action to order more or move the tank? Maybe implementing a tank monitoring system would be a good fit for your farm.

Arizona Agriculture: If a grower wants to make improvements in their business operation and even streamline processes or find ways to reduce costs, what are some of the first questions they need to ask?

Lawson: I would start with where do you want to prioritize your investment: time, money, resources? And then follow up with the questions of, with all that is happening on your farm right now, do you have the bandwidth to work together toward a solution? There are only so many hours in a day. And growers are the scientist, human resources, payroll, accountants, marketing, operations, and "you-name-it-they-do-it experts" for their operation. Oh, and expect the unexpected, ALWAYS.

And I mean that list as a positive. Growers are incredible. I ask those questions because to me, I want to help growers, and that means asking hard questions to understand where technology can have the most impact on a farm. There isn't a one-size-fits-all question to direct a grower to a fixed flowchart of technologies that are the best for them to use.

Each farm is custom. Continue your custom farm by selecting one technology that is the best for you - while keeping an open mind that you may add more in the future. When you find one technology that yields positive results the acceleration of success increases for you and your farm.

Arizona Agriculture: You've said no one has "won" in the farm management software arena. Talk about this.

Lawson: To put it simply, I think -- and this is predominantly in remote sensing and the software space -- no one has taken the time to create "the easy button." Right now, growers log in to five to 10-plus software systems almost every day - between operating their daily farm activities and paying bills. A few of those software systems "talk to each other" streamlining some of the process, but overall, it is cumbersome to login to multiple platforms. And when you log in, there is still some interpretation of data that must occur for the grower to take action on their farm. Think of it like we have the who, the what, where, and when -- but we don't have the "why" estimate to be able to take action.

The "easy button" is an estimate of the "why" to be able to make swift decisions for the farm that are based on the sensor data. Lucky for us, technology - hardware and software - continues to evolve and we are seeing analytics emerge for agriculture which will help shape some easy buttons for the future.

Arizona Agriculture: List out and explain what technologies growers need to watch for.

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Says Robyn Lawson, when considering technological improvements each farm must remember its uniqueness. "Continue your custom farm by selecting one technology that is the best for you - while keeping an open mind that you may add more in the future."

NO GUARANTEES BUT WE CARRY ON

By Chad Smith, Arizona Farm Bureau Director of Government Relations

As I continue to settle into my role, I have enjoyed getting out to the county annual meetings and connecting with members. I want to thank you all for the warm welcome, and more importantly, thank you for your advocacy and support of the Arizona Farm Bureau.

Congress is in recess until early September, but the work does not stop. We have our congressional leaders hitting the pavement across the state meeting with constituents. I know some of you are hosting congressional visits on your farm, so thank you for opening your doors to help inform our members of Congress about how laws passed impact your livelihoods.

Focus over the last few weeks has been on labor, water, and air quality. Also, we saw this last month President Biden sign an executive order establishing the Baaj Nwaavjo I'tah Kukveni Grand Canyon National Monument. The following day a judge in the U.S. District Court for the District of Arizona issued a ruling on the Sonoran Desert National Monument that deauthorizes grazing on tens of thousands of acres. The monument was established by proclamation during the Clinton administration and specified that grazing is allowed in parts of the monument. So as much as we lobbied for language protecting grazing and access, there are no guarantees. Arizona Farm Bureau will remain engaged and involved in the process of developing the resource and travel management plans. I encourage you to stay tuned, informed, and ready to engage in the process. Below, I break out the issues in more detail.

AIR QUALITY

We have also been engaged in Ozone, PM10, and PM 2.5 discussions all of which impact agriculture. Later this year EPA is expected to issue a final rule revision to the annual PM 2.5 standard while the state government is in the process of developing a SIP for non-attainment of air quality standards. All three levels of air quality have an impact on how we operate and ultimately drive the costs of farming and ranching in non-attainment areas. Although between 1970 and 2020, we saw reductions in national ambient air quality pollutants, and just in the southwest region a 13% decrease in the concentrations, we continue to chase a moving target. As we all know, there are a lot of uncertainties that agriculture faces, and this is just another regulation where the goalposts continue to get moved, adding more uncertainty to your operations.

AG LABOR

Ag Labor continues to be a concern; however, I sense there is a new push to finally get something done. As Arizona Farm Bureau President Stefanie Smallhouse said in one of her county annual meeting speeches, "If you are always losing, then it may be time

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MENTOR PROTÉGÉ CAMP CLASS 2, PROFILE 7: KIM YAZZIE AND TREVA HENIO

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Director of Strategic Communications

The CAMP mentor/protégé series continues with this seventh profile for Class 2 with Apache County rancher Kim Yazzie and NRCS Master Planner, Treva Henio. They have already met, and both have exchanged insights and appreciation for the experiences as is evident by their comments below.

With the launch of the Conservation Agricultural Mentoring Program (CAMP) in Arizona, in partnership with Arizona Farm Bureau, The NRCS team has been front and center in enthusiastically driving this unique mentoring partnership.

While several other states have the NRCS CAMP program, Arizona is unique in its partnership effort with Arizona Farm Bureau.

The Yazzie Henio partnership, along with all the mentor protégé partnerships, works to understand Arizona agriculture and conservation opportunities, joining forces to provide firsthand experience of the conservation practices and agricultural happenings.

From the Mentor: Kim Yazzie



Kim Yazzie (right) invited Treva Henio to the first 2023 spring calf sale of 80-head with the Office of Navajo Hopi Indian Relocation-Padres Mesa Demonstration Ranch of Chambers, Arizona at the Livestock Hub Sale Barn in Navajo, Arizona, the birthplace of the Native American Beef program.

the program originated here in Navajo and grew into the Native American Beef program. Today the program runs with five other neighboring tribes of the Navajo: Hopi, Laguna, Acoma, and Jemez. We shared with her the building blocks of the program, and the details on how important every rancher, customer, and person involved plays an important key role.

Share specifics about what you got out of it as the farmer/rancher. As a result of Treva’s visit, I learned that the Natural Resources Conservation Service has a proud history of supporting America’s farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners. NRCS has helped people make investments in their operations and local communities to keep working lands working, boost rural economies, increase the competitiveness of American agriculture, and improve the quality of our air, water, soil, and habitat. This type of program can assist our Native American Beef producers who raise the utmost high-quality premium beef. NRCS can deliver conservation solutions so producers can protect natural resources and feed a growing and supporting social and economic good for those participating tribes.

Talk about your first meeting.

We first invited Treva to the first 2023 spring calf sale of 80-head with the Office of Navajo Hopi Indian Relocation-Padres Mesa Demonstration Ranch of Chambers, Arizona at the Livestock Hub Sale Barn in Navajo, Arizona. The initial birthplace of the Native American Beef Program by Labatt Food Service. We shared with her how

For the remaining time with the program, what do you also hope to help with? Thank you for inviting me along on this project. My protégée was of great knowledge in sharing assistance and programs available for Ag producers. After learning about the details and concerns of NRCS, I hope to be of assistance to encourage producers to reach out to such programs to assist them along the way to improve their quality of investing in better ways for better days within their everyday operations.

From the Protégé: Treva Henio

What’s been the biggest takeaway from your first gathering? My biggest takeaway from my first meeting with Kim at the sale barn in Chambers, Arizona, was feeling proud loading up a calf crop onto a semi-truck headed to a feedlot; knowing the calves were raised locally on tribal land. I immediately wanted to absorb more about the Native American Beef program, as it initially began with Navajo producers inspired me more, and ten years later several Pueblo and Apache Tribes across Arizona and New Mexico established resilient partnerships. All the ranchers practice good stewardship of the land to produce quality grass-fed beef and onto marketing to Labatt Food Services. However, there are challenges: the program has ranchers faced with the ongoing drought, demand for quality water, abundant forage production, and engaging potential producers to have control of the land to expand the program.

Why have you felt this program has been helpful? I feel like this program gave me more respect and understanding of the demand for our NRCS programs to be promoted through outreach; to provide a thorough background on various funding programs that may be suitable for the rancher’s operation. Their program has qualified personnel to provide quality animal husbandry to fulfill the well-being of their finished product, and our agency has certified master planners to engage on behalf of conserving natural resources on tribal lands in addressing resource concerns.

What more do you hope to learn? I hope to learn more about the Native American Beef, especially their marketing system. With this assignment not only did I experience the sale portion of it, but I was also fortunate to receive a one-on-one presentation and a tour of the packaging facility at Labatt Food Services. My in-person experiences inspired me to share our agency funding programs with their producers, as the majority of their customers are schools, casinos, steakhouses, and local markets, all important to our local economy. Our agency programs are available to help people, help the land.

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THE LATEST AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM SCHOOL YEAR STARTS WITH A BANG!

By Sandy McNatt, Arizona Farm Bureau Elementary Education Manager

The 2023-2024 Agriculture in the Classroom school year started off with a bang when we filled all 2,400 Fall Dr. Seuss and Spring Ag Literacy presentation spots in less than two weeks. We continue to collaborate with teachers to schedule other presentations and will soon have a full calendar.

August and September find us busy in Elementary schools talking about Apple Trees and the job of a farmer incorporating the books, Who Grew My Soup? and How Did That Get in My Lunchbox?

Watch your student’s classroom for our Curriculum Kits. These kits contain lessons that meet Arizona teaching standards for kindergarten through sixth grade, and some into high school too. Everything teachers need to complete these agriculture-themed lessons and activities is in the kit. Best of all, they are FREE for teachers to use. Kit themes include Apples, Pumpkins, the Arizona 5Cs, Cotton, Cattle, Dairy, Poultry, Plants, Arizona Fruits and Veggies, and more. Spread the word about these and other great FREE resources available from Agriculture in the Classroom to teachers you know.

VISIT WWW.AZFB.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.

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The Voice of Arizona Agriculture

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AGRICULTURE TECHNOLOGY continued from Page 1

Lawson: EQUIPMENT MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE: Equipment and operational management is part of a farm that sometimes escapes our minds when we think about sensor technology. Sure, we talk about laser leveling, we talk about utilizing AB lines for efficient planting, variable rate seeding or nutrition application, nozzle-specific spray prescriptions, and the displays and features in the cabs can feel like they require a special certification to operate. I’m not discounting the technology that is included with equipment, or the technology that you can purchase aftermarket in displays and controllers. But what if you had sensors on your equipment to track the most effective routes? Collected insights for efficient maintenance? Elevated your farm operationally because you could cover more acres with your current bandwidth? I think it would be worth looking at these sensors. One option is FieldIn. <https://fieldin.com>

IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT: Soil moisture probes are not new technologies to agriculture. There have been innovations to probes that make certain sensors more accessible and increase the value to your farm. Depending on crop needs, not only can you use your probe to design irrigation management customized to your farm and crop, but the weather data can also be indicative of environments for disease. What if you could look at temperature and humidity levels and infer that microclimate was trending towards a disease and you were able to act sooner due to this localized data? There is one soil moisture monitor that completely submerges in the soil, or you can place it in a canopy. This workflow creates an ease that wasn’t previously available with other probes which you had to worry about breaking during installation or breaking it by running over with a piece of equipment. Taking it one step further, depending on your crop, you can also dig up the sensor and transport it with your crop to measure data points to discover the least destructive routes and confirmation of temperature control in transportation or storage. For this example of an innovative soil moisture sensor, check out Soiltech Wireless. <https://www.soiltechwireless.com/home>

IMAGERY ANALYTICS FOR CROP HEALTH: Collectively, our agriculture space has an opportunity to increase available analytics for remote sensing data. What I mean by this is that right now most remote sensors can point out a problem, but they can’t tell us how to fix it. With analytics, there could be situations where specific sensor data could not only be visualized in software, but it could also visualize the state of the crop and suggest actions to take for a solution, or no action to maintain. An example of software that uses multispectral imagery analytics for plant health is: Regrow: <https://www.regrow.ag/>

Arizona Agriculture: Talk about the economic constraints of implementing the latest technology. This was a great discussion earlier this year with one of our alfalfa farmers, Wade Accomazzo. What’s your take?

Lawson: Hardware implementation and software subscriptions can be economically challenging. However, can I share a rebuttal of what isn’t economically challenging in agriculture? I think like anything in life, we prioritize what is most important to us - whether we realize that in a conscious decision, or not. When I talk with growers about technologies on their farm, there are plenty of technologies that are exciting and if we could implement them all and have ourselves an agriculture technology fiesta, that would be fantastic! But that just isn’t reality. I talk with growers about what keeps them up at night, where there have been challenges to overcome and areas in which they have tried to elevate their operation but haven’t seen the results of which they know their business and their crop is capable. Then, we get to work. We look at the technologies – hardware, and software - that could provide a truly actionable solution. Once we identify the technology which the grower wants to implement, we do a general economic analysis. Cost is always the first thing that comes to mind, and it is a very real barrier, but cost is not always the barrier we make it to be. We take a holistic approach

to what the “cost” is for the grower. Time, assets, depreciation, and of course, money. What happens if technology were to save you time? And not just a little time, I’m talking hours a week. Hours you can spend with your family at the Little League game, making it home for dinner, being at a dance recital, or just getting to enjoy some extra time with friends? What if that technology meant less wear and tear on your other equipment? What if a specific technology meant maximizing the effectiveness of your employees? What if that technology had a price tag that also has an opportunity for crop yield or quality increase? The answer to all these questions is not always positive for all technologies for every grower. But, when we do find positive answers to the questions in which the grower feels the most value, that is when I know we have created an opportunity for technological success for the grower.

I know I am answering a question with more questions here, but to have a singular answer to the economic constraints of implementing technology is doing a disservice to our growers. Hey, some technologies that work for other growers might not work for you. That is ok, even expected. Ultimately, I want what is best for that grower on their farm.

Arizona Agriculture: What excites you the most about today’s technology and enabling it for the next generation of growers?

Lawson: Nothing makes me more excited than knowing I get to help growers. When I bring technology to the farm gate, it is because I believe this technology can help a grower find a new solution for their operation with the simultaneous goal of maximizing the acre for yield and quality. Maybe I’m helping a grower get more time with their family, or the ability to prioritize and focus on another part of their farm, or maybe I can help give them a little peace of mind and eliminate the smallest amount of stress. And if I can help a grower make their today a little better than yesterday, then does it get any better than that?

Arizona Agriculture: I liked your point in an earlier discussion that technology has a vast meaning across all agriculture. Talk about this.

Lawson: Technology can mean seed traits, a new way in which a coating is applied to a fertilizer prill, a new active ingredient for a pesticide. Technology can be a new mechanism that is used on an implement, an upgrade to AC in the cab of a tractor, or a new spray nozzle, Technology can also mean using a phone to call someone instead of writing a mail-posted letter. Technology can be multi-spectral satellite or drone data, it can mean pressure switches, software on our computers, apps on our phones, and drones, and we can keep going.

My point is technology can be what you want it to be on your farm. I don’t say this to be ambiguous, but I say it to bring the reality of the best technology for your farm is the one that works for you. As I mentioned above, it can be easy to get overwhelmed with the options available for solutions to implement on your farm, and it can feel like the only way to be successful with technologies is to make sure investments or be on the bleeding edge of adoption. Not always true. Pick one and make that one great for you and your farm.

Arizona Agriculture: If you have a vision for the farmer of the future, what will it look like?

Lawson: I see a grower waking up and being able to log in to one software to look at a dashboard of directive information to help them plan their day/week. I see trying new technologies and failing smarter, so we move on at a faster rate that doesn’t disrupt a production season. I see us being able to better evaluate technologies for the market, so growers have accessible data sooner. I see more time spent on evaluating the best crop inputs for maximizing the acres, and less time coordinating schedules and delivery. I see an increased opportunity for crop uniformity. It is hard to believe what incredible crops growers have already accomplished, but I also see a continued increase in yield and quality.

I see challenges, but also rewards. I see utilizing the acre-to-max capacity with fewer crop inputs in a way that feels comfortable instead of restrictive - again maximizing profitability for the grower. I see today’s growers and future growers as one - innovative, doing the absolute most with the resources they have, and building an incredible future for the next generation of agriculturalists.

Arizona Agriculture: What happens when things go wrong?

Lawson: There has not been one day in my agriculture life where it has been the same as the next day. Not one. Now, some days on the farm or meeting with growers all day fall into place with no challenges. Most days are smooth with minimal troubleshooting needed on the farm – at least for my small part on a farm. But there are days when technologies - remote sensors, hardware, and/or software, just don’t work. It happens. Are these anyone’s favorite days? Most likely never. Ha! But again, I ask - has anyone spent a year on a farm where each piece of equipment, each employee, and each plant exude traits at the top of their performance with no disruptions? That picture is not our experience. Equipment breaks, weather out of our control can create challenges, fertilizer doesn’t arrive on time, and a tire on your truck goes flat. You think it, and it happens. I suggest being hyper-aware of the support you receive when talking with companies about their technologies. How responsive are they to you when you reach out with questions? After you have done a hardware install or software login and you reach out, do they answer your questions in a timely and digestible manner so you can continue your work? Notice the customer service - it is the service that will get you through the hard days even more than the easy days.

But you know what is incredible about Arizona Agriculture? Our resiliency. We deconstruct barriers, we build ourselves up to new heights, and we lead our communities and our industry. Just like anything else in our lives, there are challenges and accountability for when things break or go wrong, but we are resilient, and we persevere. Even if we grumble or shout some curses along the way. 🚗

LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2023: A SUMMARY

By Daniel Harris, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Manager

The first regular session of Arizona’s 56th legislature was anything but regular. With it being the longest session in Arizona history at a staggering 204 days, and the sheer number of bills introduced at 1,675, and 348 of them passing, even fewer survived going through the office of first-term Governor Katie Hobbs, who vetoed a record 143 bills while only signing 205. At the beginning of the 2023 legislative session, we called it the year of divided government, and the year certainly lived up to that expectation.

Legislation that we’ve been tracking this year has certainly not gone unnoticed by some, the most prominent of all being SCR1015, our geographic distribution legislation which will help ensure statewide support for statewide voter-led initiatives. Of course, there were many bills that succeeded with our support and failed due to our opposition either to the *See LEGISLATIVE SESSION Page 5*



NATIONAL BANK OF ARIZONA®

With over 100 combined years of experience, Matt Eyrich, Carrie Morales, Cody Stephan, Candilee Struble and Sonia Quinn bring a wealth of knowledge to their roles as Agribusiness Relationship Managers. The team comes from farming families and has hands-on experience in the agriculture industry. They understand the complexity of farming/ranching operations and the diverse financial needs of farmers across the Southwest. NB|AZ® is committed to serving the agribusiness community of Arizona.



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ANNOUNCING OUR NEWEST BENEFIT: PRIORITIZE YOUR HEARING

By Staff Reports



Hearing loss is a common problem that affects millions of Americans. In fact the experts say about 2% of adults aged 45 to 54 have disabling hearing loss. Hearing loss is a significant occupational health concern for agriculture producers. Farmers and ranchers are exposed to various noisy activities, such as operating machinery and equipment to loud noises from animals, such as livestock, which

can lead to permanent hearing damage over time. As a result, agricultural producers should take measures to preserve their hearing. Or, if you are already experiencing hearing loss, it's best to address the problem before it worsens.

Hearing aids can be costly, which makes it difficult for many to afford the devices they need to improve their quality of life. Fortunately, Arizona Farm Bureau members can get discounted prices on hearing aid devices from Great Hearing Benefits. Great Hearing Benefits has become our newest member benefit. Great Hearing Benefits provides you and your immediate family members access to hearing care and hearing aids at discounted rates.

Determining If You Have Hearing Loss

Are you not sure if you have hearing loss? Ask yourself these questions to help determine if you are experiencing hearing loss.

1. Do you struggle to understand words, especially in crowded or noisy situations?
2. Does speech sometimes sound muffled, or do you often find yourself turning up the volume on the TV?
3. Do you frequently ask the people around you to speak more slowly and clearly?

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

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content or intent of the legislation as consistent with the Arizona Farm Bureau Policy developed by our grassroots membership.

Our list of the successful legislation that was passed follows:

SCR1015 - Initiative, referendum; Signatures; Legislative districts. (Sen. J.D. Mesnard)

The 2024 general election ballot is to carry the question of whether to amend the state Constitution to require statewide initiative measures to obtain signatures from 10 percent of the voters from each legislative district, instead of from the entire state, for a statewide measure, and from 15 percent of the voters of each legislative district, instead of from the entire state, for an amendment to the state Constitution. Transmitted to the secretary of state for inclusion on the ballot.

HB2507 Grain Research Council; continuation (Rep. Lupe Diaz)

The statutory life of the Arizona Grain Research and Promotion Council is extended eight years to July 1, 2031. Retroactive to July 1, 2023. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SB1053 Veterinary Medicine; Electronic Means (Sen. "T.J." Shope)

A veterinarian is allowed to establish a veterinar-

See LEGISLATIVE SESSION Page 6

If you said yes to any of these questions, you might be experiencing hearing loss.

Understanding the Benefit Overview

Arizona Farm Bureau members can get up to 25% below retail pricing on Jabra consumer electronics, office and communication technology. Members also can receive up to 50% off retail pricing of today's top hearing aid technology. If you are unsatisfied with your new hearing aids within the first 60 days, members can return them for a full refund. Your hearing aids also come with a 3-year warranty and service plan. Members can visit participating partner locations for free hearing aid service or warranty repair. Great Hearing Benefits will also replace your hearing aid if they get lost or stolen.

Getting Started

Getting started is easy. Contact Great Hearing Benefits at 1-877-684-8885 to schedule your hearing evaluation at one of their many hearing care locations. Make sure you provide your Farm Bureau membership number.

During your hearing screening appointment, your hearing care professional will review your health history and lifestyle. These professionals will use these details to determine which type of hearing solution would be best for you if you have hearing loss.

Secondly, the hearing care professional will use an audiogram to diagnose whether you have hearing loss. After completing the evaluation, your hearing aid provider will review your results. They will recommend a hearing aid solution that fits your needs, lifestyle, and budget.

Editor's Note: Please take advantage of all our healthcare benefits and our wide array of statewide and local benefits. Visit [AZFB.org/benefits](https://www.azfb.org/benefits). The Member Benefits page is categorized by benefit type and lets you quickly see what's available. Also, be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

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LEGISLATIVE SESSION *continued from Page 5*

ian-client-patient relationship through electronic means if a list of specified conditions applies, including that the veterinarian obtains informed consent from the client and is able to refer the client to a local veterinarian who can see the animal in person. Veterinarians are authorized to prescribe drugs or medications after establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship through electronic means, with specified limitations. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

We pushed to get livestock and agriculture included in this bill but were content with allowing the bill to succeed to amend in the next session.

SB1390 – Water Infrastructure Finance Authority; Amendments (Sen. Sine Kerr)

Various changes to statutes relating to the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA). WIFA is not a public service corporation subject to regulation by the Arizona Corporation Commission. The WIFA Board is authorized to prescribe the terms and conditions of the Director’s and staff’s employment as necessary and is required to adopt written policies and guidelines regarding employee compensation and leave. WIFA employees may participate in the Arizona State Retirement System. The definition of “eligible entity” for loans from the Water Supply Development Revolving Fund is modified to mean a water provider that



The first regular session of Arizona’s 56th legislature earned the historical record of being the longest session in Arizona history at a staggering 204 days.

distributes or sells water outside of the boundaries of an initial active management area in which part of the Central Arizona Project aqueduct is located, instead of outside of the boundaries of an active management area located in Maricopa, Pima, or Pinal County. SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

Among the legislation we opposed this session was SB1306, which signals a trend of seeking to regulate groundwater going into next year. We are actively working with legislators to ensure that any legislation that seeks to regulate groundwater outside of an AMA is something that our policy supports and that is advantageous for our members.

SB1306 Local Groundwater Stewardship Areas (Sen. Sonny Borrelli)

County boards of supervisors in a county with lands that are outside of an Active Management Area (AMA) are authorized to designate by resolution one or more groundwater basins, subbasins, or portions of those basins as a Local Groundwater Stewardship Area (LGSA) if a list of specified conditions exists, including that the use of groundwater exceeds the estimated recharge rate. The Director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) is authorized to designate an area that is not included within an AMA as an LGSA if the same specified conditions exist, and

the establishment of an AMA is not necessary. Establishes a process for the board of supervisors and a process for the ADWR Director to designate an LGSA. An LGSA is required to be administered by a 9-member LGSA Council. The powers and duties of an LGSA Council are specified, including adopting an LGSA Plan for groundwater programs and policies for the LGSA. The ADWR Director is required to adopt rules governing the location of new wells and replacement wells in new locations in an LGSA. A county board of supervisors is prohibited from approving a final plat for a subdivision composed of subdivided lands that is located within an LGSA unless the ADWR Director has determined that there is an adequate water supply for the subdivision, and the subdivider has obtained a written commitment of water service for the subdivision from a municipal or private water company that is designated as having an adequate water supply by the ADWR Director. Died in Committee.

In summary, the 204 days of the 2023 legislative session have not gone to waste. As Arizona along with the other western states look to the years ahead and the water issues to come between the Governors Water policy council and the western states preparing for the Colorado River negotiations, the Arizona Farm Bureau will continue to be at the table during the interim to represent our members and continue protecting the agricultural prowess of this great state.

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Gilbert, AZ 85296-4770

ONLINE
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☐ President’s Luncheon - Thursday Noon..... #ppl _____

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☐ All other counties \$142.00

☐ Registration Fee Per Person.....\$185.00 x _____ = _____
#ppl

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NO GUARANTEES
BUT WE CARRY ON

continued from Page 1

to do things differently,” and that is where a lot of folks are at when it comes to addressing the labor issue. House Agriculture Committee Chairman GT Thompson has convened an ag labor working group and should have recommendations by December. American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) has also convened its own ag labor working group and will wrap up its work next year, all in hopes of bringing meaningful policy. In the meantime, the 13 western state Farm Bureaus have committed to working through some of the challenges in hopes of finding common ground to bring sensible reform.

WATER: THE COLORADO RIVER AND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

I want to briefly mention water as we have both leadership and staff resources dedicated to finding solutions to the water challenges Arizona is facing. From groundwater to the re-consultation on the Colorado River, the Arizona Farm Bureau is engaged and working to come up with solutions to both protect and mitigate the impact of future water management. This will be no easy task, and I know the next year will be tough navigating solutions that will ensure agriculture’s viability for the foreseeable future. On the re-consultation, the Bureau of Reclamation is accepting comments on a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Notice to Solicit Comments on the Development of Post-2026 Operational Guidelines and Strategies for Lake Powell and Lake Mead, which will be submitted on August 15th. On the groundwater management challenges, both President Smallhouse and Arizona Farm Bureau CEO, Phil Bashaw, have been engaged with the Governor’s groundwater committee. There are a lot of discussions around various strategies to address the challenges. One thing we do know is that something must be done, and Arizona Farm Bureau is being proactive in trying to bring together industries and producers to find solutions before a statewide, one-size fits all approach is taken.

WOTUS

While we had a huge win with the United States Supreme Court ruling, striking EPA’s overreaching definition of WOTUS, we do anticipate a new rule being published in early September. We will continue to watch for the new rule and prepare to provide comments. The court ruling should put some sidebars on the new rule, but we must remain vigilant to ensure we protect agricultural water in the arid west.

FARM BILL

Conversations on the next farm bill continue, and with Congress on recess returning in September, they will have to tackle government funding bills when they return, which



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will distract from the hopes of a farm bill. With a projected price tag of \$1.5 trillion over the next decade, both House and Senate staff are working with each respective ag committee. We are hopeful and optimistic to have a draft farm bill by September 30th when the 2018 Farm Bill expires.

There is a strong likelihood that we will have an extension with hopes of passing a new farm bill in late 2023 or early 2024. Arizona Farm Bureau leadership and 6 Directors will be in our nation’s capital September 10-14th, meeting with lawmakers, agencies, and ag committee staff, stressing the importance of passing the next farm bill and our priorities. Congressman Greg Stanton did put an appropriation into the ag appropriations bill that would increase funding for the Livestock Indemnity Program, increasing depredation payment from 75% to 100%. While in D.C., we will be focusing efforts on the Wolf Act that is included in the farm bill to ensure it remains part of the package while also discussing other priority issues affecting Arizona agriculture.

CAMPAIGN SCHOOL

Lastly, I would just like to remind and encourage anyone interested in running for office, involved in political campaigns, or even advocacy campaigns that we are gearing up to host a campaign school this fall. Anyone, whether you are just interested in running or have chosen to seek an elected position, whether it be local, state, or federal, we welcome you to join us November 16-17th at the Arizona Farm Bureau office in Gilbert. The campaign school is non-partisan, so all political parties are welcome. More details can be found on our website at www.azfb.org.

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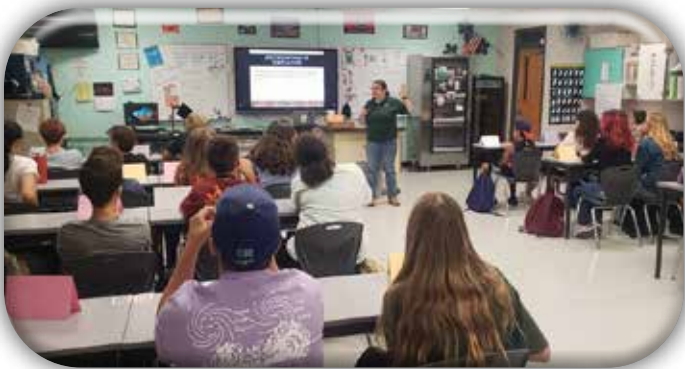
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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT WHERE THEIR FOOD COMES FROM

By Alicia Gutierrez, Arizona Farm Bureau Education Manager

When most people think of Arizona Farm Bureau’s Ag in the Classroom team giving presentations, they imagine us dancing around like bees with kindergarten students demonstrating pollination. And although we do love dancing with our elementary students, we are a little more serious about food and where it comes from when working with our middle school and high school students.



We currently have five different presentations that focus on all areas of agriculture tailored to older students.

Did you know federal law prohibits the use of hormones in poultry and swine? Or that there are only 10 different GMO products that are grown in the United

States? What about the fact that Arizona agriculture employs 162,000 people?

Well, if you popped into any one of our 7-12 grade presentations you would be learning all those facts and more. We have been having amazing discussions about the difference between animal welfare and animal rights and how students can correctly source information to make educated decisions. Students have been actively engaged while evaluating what labels on products truly mean and the ways they influence consumer purchasing habits. Our schedule is jam-packed with presentations all over the state and we are so excited to get into agriculture, culinary, and science classrooms to share our love and knowledge of agriculture with them.

Make sure to visit our website to find out more about our presentations at azfb.org website. 🚲



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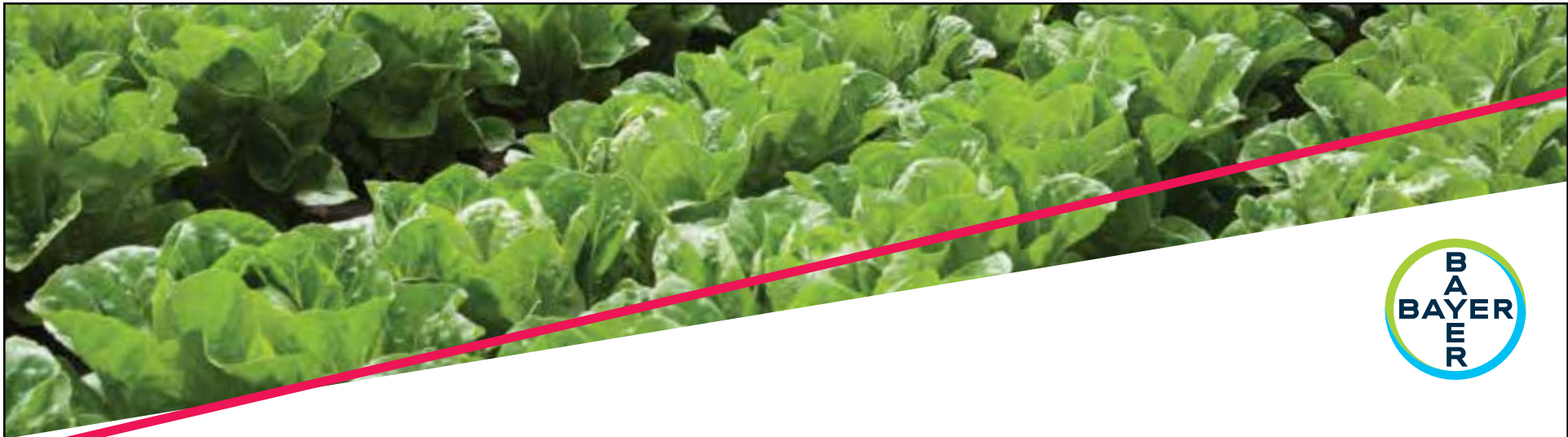
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