



Arizona Agriculture's **CHOICES**

Winter 2022 Vol. 75

Providing Farm Bureau Members CHOICES for Informed Decisions

## Hopeful about American Agriculture's Future

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director



Simply put, Larkin Martin is passionate about agriculture mostly because she likes to grow things. Reading her profile and assessing her answers to my questions, you'll also conclude she likes to grow relationships, technology use and business management advances. (Photo courtesy of The Cotton Board.)

A graduate of Vanderbilt University, Larkin Martin is managing partner of a family farming operation in northern Alabama, Martin Farm. The farm's principal crops are corn, wheat, soybeans, and cotton. In recent years they have also raised canola, sesame, peanuts and sorghum. The operation covers around 7,000 acres of owned and rented land. She's also Vice President of The Albemarle Corporation, another family business, and both positions she's held since 1990.

People who know her will tell you she is the daughter who tagged along with her dad, the late Sykes Martin, going everywhere with him infusing in her a sense of what it takes to run a family business and perhaps

what produced a recognition in the industry as one of the most recent innovative young cotton producers, in addition to understanding the grand scheme of things when it comes to American agriculture.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Tell us about your farm?

**Martin:** Our farm has been in continuous operation through multiple generations, I am the 7th. Over the generations it has changed with the times. Today we are a row crop operation, raising primarily corn, cotton, soybeans, and wheat but we will try other crops. Recently that list has included canola, peanuts, sorghum, and sesame. Martin Farm farms land we own and then we rent additional land on both cash and share leases.

**Arizona Agriculture:** What inspired you to get into farming and share a bit about your family's farming history in Alabama?

**Martin:** I got into farming by generational chance. I am the oldest of four daughters. My father was diagnosed with cancer in 1990 when he was in his 50s and I was in my 20s, working in Washington, DC.

I moved home to help while he underwent treatment and have been here ever since. My father's family has roots in our community

dating back to the early 1800s and some of the land we farm has been in continuous crops since that time.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Regarding your company, what have you brought to the farming operation that's different from past generations, specifically as it relates to management and the whole scope of your day-to-day?

**Martin:** I think the biggest changes that have occurred during my tenure have been brought by the technology that has become available over the last 30 years and our ability to adopt the ones that best fit on our farm.

When I began managing the farm in 1990, land lines were the only kind of phone and fax machines were modern. We had a desktop computer, which was still a little unusual in a farm office and I used measuring wheels in the fields and a planimeter on large maps to measure acres. Saving seed and moldboard plowing every year was the norm. Revolutions in digitization, communication, automation, genetics, telematics, soil health awareness and more have all happened since then and dramatically changed how we farm and the cost structures for raising the same crops.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Farming in Alabama is quite different than in Arizona, obviously. Highlight the biggest difference but talk about the commonalities?

The biggest difference is climate and availability/necessity of irrigation; we average 55-60 inches of rain a year, but it does not come when we order it. Less than 10% of our cropland is irrigated.

The commonalities are many. We all try to farm keeping an eye out for the best options for our operations and putting together the puzzle of economics, people and natural resources.

**Arizona Agriculture:** We all talk about technology advances in agriculture and how on-the-farm application continues to create advances. But what's still the biggest challenge for U.S. on the farm as it relates to data gathering and management? Maybe a better question, what's holding the U.S. back?

**Martin:** The sources of data for farms to use to improve farm financial and operational records, as well as field operations and machine efficiency, are exploding, as is the complexity of organizing and managing it all. Agriculture suffers from a lack of data interoperability. Pieces of software are often special purpose. File formats are not standardized, often proprietary, and often incompatible across different pieces of software. Software that is marketed for helping farm offices with recordkeeping can be too narrowly focused and/or while

See **HOPEFUL** page 2

Go to [azfb.org](http://azfb.org)



Arizona Agriculture's **CHOICES**

### The Faces of Arizona Agriculture Becky and Mike Gross

- Mike and Becky come from generational farm and ranch families.
- Their children have pursued careers in agriculture.
- They ranch in Mohave County.
- Mike and Becky are active in Arizona Farm bureau and other Ag-based organizations.
- They are active in their community and busy grandparents

Arizona Agriculture is a \$23.3 billion industry.

ISSUE IN THIS



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FOR THAT - Page 5**





## Hopeful

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designed to provide a service, also designed primarily to quietly gather information from the farmer rather than assisting the farmer with private business decisions.

Plus, the recognition and valuation of the carbon sequestration done by growing crops becoming an economic consideration for farmers in the next 10 years is a big win.

**Arizona Agriculture:** On regulation, what concerns you?

**Martin:** I believe there are good regulations, especially in areas of product safety, worker safety and environmental matters. However, I become concerned when the atmosphere around regulation is excessively aggressive or uninformed and misses the mark on what is workable or reasonable for achieving a stated goal.

**Arizona Agriculture:** Where are we a decade from now in American agriculture?

**Martin:** I certainly don't know, but I see continuing trends towards consolidation of farming operations and corporate investment in farmland in some regions at the same time as an increase in "non-traditional" agriculture, things like vertical and urban farming. I believe the use of biologicals and robotics will grow quickly.

**Arizona Agriculture:** What encourages you about the future of agriculture in America?

**Martin:** The general productivity of the land and the spirit of innovation among U.S. farmers and the U.S. business community.

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

**Martin:** I enjoy growing things.

## New Year, New Home: Farm Bureau Bank Mortgage

Welcome to the new year. Will 2022 be the year you finally get the remodeled kitchen you have been dreaming of? Or, planning on purchasing a new home?

Allow us to introduce our newest member benefit: Farm Bureau Bank Mortgage. Farm Bureau Mortgage offers a wide range of purchase and refinancing options on residential properties. In addition, Farm Bureau Bank gives its members personalized service and competitive pricing. Farm Bureau Mortgage is committed to being the mortgage provider of choice for Farm Bureau Members.

Farm Bureau Mortgage offers you an exclusive, limited-time

## Safety Tips To Help Protect Your Family

Each time I cook and get my kitchen a little too smoky, the smoke alarm in my house goes off. While I am always annoyed at the alarm ringing, standing there fanning smoke out the open door and opening every window, I must remind myself how grateful I am for the life saving device in my kitchen if something were to really go wrong.

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) someone in the United States dies in a house fire every three hours, averaging approximately 3,000 deaths each year. Arm yourself with the right equipment to help prevent a small self-contained fire from spreading out of control.

Don't be a statistic. Be Safe.

**Here are a few tips that can help shield your family from danger at home.**

- Replace Smoke Alarms every 10 years
- Place a fire extinguisher within reach on every level of your home
- Install carbon monoxide alarms on each floor and near bedrooms
- Create an escape plan with your family

Farm Bureau members are fortunate to have Grainger as a member benefit provider. Members can receive 10% off plus free shipping on everything they order at Grainger.com. Not just smoke alarms but fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors and a wide variety of home improvement items.

To get the member discount code, log on to [www.azfb.org](http://www.azfb.org) and search Grainger under benefits. For questions, contact our member benefits coordinator by email at [joelcarr@azfb.org](mailto:joelcarr@azfb.org) or call 480-635-3609.

**Editor's note:** For more information on our member benefits including our regional benefits go to Arizona Farm Bureau's member benefits page online. Or, download the Member Benefits app to your smart phone for easy, everyday access to your benefits

promotion to celebrate this new Member Benefit. This offer includes no processing or underwriting fees. You will also receive up to \$500 credit towards closing costs.

For more information, go to <https://www.farmbureau.mortgage/>. Or call 877.388.5354 to speak to a loan consultant today.

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## It's Soup Season

**Danielle Sharkey**, a recent ASU Nutrition Student

It is winter in beautiful Arizona. Temperatures are dropping, skies are cloudy, and the furry clothes are on! It is finally winter and... soup season! Winter is my favorite season in Arizona as it is a short period of time in the state that we can start incorporating soups, teas, and warm broths into our diets. Below I have provided a simple broth recipe that I just made for this season.



I love having bone broth. There are so many health benefits to ingesting bone broth. It is the broth derived after slow cooking animal bones in water with spices and herbs. It is known to have gut healing properties,

helps with bone and joint issues (or to just keep them strong), helps with hair skin and nail health, and so much more! This is because the collagen is derived from slow cooking the bones. I highly recommend giving this bone broth recipe a try!

Prep Time: 5 Mins Cook Time: 40 Mins Total: 45 Mins

\*I try to use organic ingredients as much as possible!

### INGREDIENTS:

- 5 cups of Local bone broth (if possible). I like to use the Epic brand from sprouts when I cannot get local.
- 1 cup canned full-fat (or low-fat) coconut milk
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 1 Carrot (chopped)
- 1 Bell Pepper (your choice of color)
- 2 Tbsp Minced garlic
- 1 red onion (chopped)
- 4 Large Tomatoes
- Sea salt and Black Pepper (for taste)
- 1 lime cut into quarters

Garnish: cilantro, hemp seeds, micro greens

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a large pot add olive oil, onion, pepper, carrot, and some salt. Cook until veggies are soft. Stir every so often.
2. Add curry and garlic and cook for about a minute. Cut up tomatoes and add to the pot. Cook for another minute.
3. Add bone broth and simmer for about 10-15 mins. Make sure tomatoes are cooked.
4. Remove from heat and blend in a high-speed blender until smooth.
5. Return pot to stove (medium heat) and stir in the coconut milk.
6. Add some lime juice (to taste).
7. Season with salt and pepper to your preference!
8. Serve to family and friends and enjoy!

## Working full-time but Want Your Undergraduate or Graduate Degree? Online Might Be For You

### Staff Reports

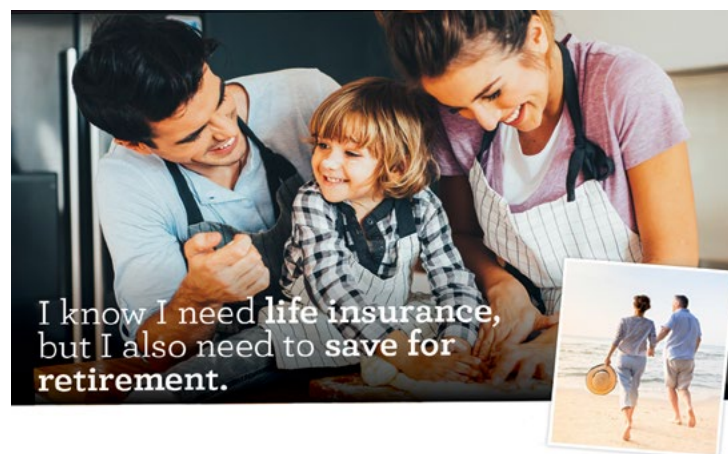
A recognized leader and innovator in distance learning and on-line education, University of Arizona-Global Campus (UAGC) can meet the needs of working students, offering programs most often sought by those whose primary educational goals relate to developing professional and career-relevant competencies.

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See **Online Campus** page 7



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As a Farm Bureau member, you gain access to many valuable benefits. The FB benefit app gives quick and easy access to all your member benefits. These include special offers by dozens of retailers, automotive, dining, pet care, beauty, local entertainment attractions and special access to home, auto, farm/ranch, and life insurance tailored to fit all stages of life.

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The Farm Bureau Member Benefits App allows you access to member discounts and special offers right in your pocket. Here's how to download your FREE FB Benefit app.

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

Both Apple and Android devices offer accessibility to the app. The free FB Benefits App includes your membership card, your Farm Bureau Financial Services insurance cards and both alphabetical and categorical listings of member benefits available in Arizona. It also features a convenient mapping feature to help you identify member benefits near you at any time.

Download the app today and get the most from your Farm Bureau membership!

## Every Friday You Can Talk to An Arizona Farmer or Rancher

By **Julie Murphree**, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

Through Instagram's "Live," split-screen feature, we're taking the time to visit with our Arizona farmers and ranchers. We go all over the state.

Arizona Farm Bureau's Talk to a Farmer Friday program launched so Instagram followers to our @AZfarmbureau social media account can talk to Arizona farmers and ranchers live on their farms and ranches by posting a question on the Instagram Live feed.

During the first Instagram Live, 100+ Instagram followers logged on to view the conversation we had with Trevor Bales, an alfalfa and Sudan grass hay farmer from Buckeye, Arizona. Bales has already attracted quite a following with friends and fans that watch

## Bringing Pork into the Classroom

The Ag in the Classroom Program is excited to bring pork into classrooms across the state, thanks to funding by the Arizona Pork Council. Fifteen high school teachers, a mix of both agricultural and culinary, have received \$100 to purchase pork to use in their classroom instruction. As part of the Pork in the Classroom Grant, teachers will also be teaching a minimum of one pork lesson that was developed by an Arizona teacher. We look forward to seeing all the great pork education!

 <b>Pork in the Classroom</b> 	
2021 Grant Recipients	
Basha High School	Megan Hartfield
Chandler High School	Kari Williams
Chandler High School	AJ Argueta
Canyon View High School	Kerilyn Brothers
Casa Grande High School	Kevin Curtis
Desert Ridge High School	Joyce Gifford
Desert Ridge High School	Cheri Compton
Douglas High School	Brita Kimble
Mesa Community College	Dennis Bushong
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St David High School	Dustin Hancock
Tanque Verde High School	Kimberly King
Westwood High School	Jimmy Wojcik
Yuma High School	Jaclyn Brown

him daily on Instagram talk about Arizona farming and his family owned and operated business, Bales Hay Sales.

Mark your calendar for every Friday morning between 10:00 and 11:00. We've already visited with more than 100 Arizona farmers and ranchers. During the 20 to 25-minute live sessions with our farmers or ranchers, you'll have a chance to pose a question if you follow Arizona Farm Bureau on Instagram: @AZfarmbureau.

One of our more recent "Talk to a Farmer" sessions was with Ashlee Mortimer of Mortimer Farms in Dewey-Humbolt, Arizona. Join us and stay connected to your Arizona farmers and ranchers that love to share their stories about farming and ranching in this vast and diverse agriculture state!



## Planning on Buying a New Vehicle this Year?



Photo: New Ford vehicle

Don't Forget the Farm Bureau/Ford Bonus Cash Rebate Program

Eligible Arizona Farm Bureau members can get a \$500 rebate toward the purchase of eligible Ford vehicles

- You must be a member of the Arizona Farm Bureau for at least 30 days prior to the date of delivery to be eligible for this rebate.

- To obtain your certificate and verify membership go to <http://www.fordspecialoffer.com/farmbureau/az>. The Farm Bureau member must present the certificate and membership card to the dealer at the time of purchase

- To redeem, take your certificate to your Ford dealer. The \$500 rebate will be applied to the deal at the time of purchase.

For more information, call Joel Carr at 480.635.3609 or email [joelcarr@azfb.org](mailto:joelcarr@azfb.org)

## USA Pet Meds

Anyone who knows me knows just how much I love my dog, Perry. While he is young and healthy, he still needs preventative medication from time to time Thankfully, I now save on pet prescriptions with USA Pet Meds.

Whether you need medication for your livestock or family pets, Arizona Farm Bureau members receive a 15% discount on brand name and 55% on generic pet and livestock medications, supplements and all pet and livestock care products.

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## Easiest Instant Pot Meatballs Recipe

By Sarah Hunt, Arizona Farm Bureau Communications Intern

Are you looking for an easy recipe to make for dinner tonight? Then this is the blog for you! This is one of my favorite instant pot recipes; it's super easy, delicious, and takes about 20 minutes to prep and cook. You can put these on pasta, rice, or sub sandwich bread with provolone cheese.

**Easiest Instant Pot Meatballs**  
By Erika Walker

**Equipment**

6-Quart Instant Pot Pressure Cooker

**Ingredients**

- 1 1/2 lbs ground beef lean (or ground turkey. We use 1 lb)
- 1/2 cup onion grated (optional)
- 1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese grated
- 2 eggs (we use 1)
- 2 cloves garlic crushed (or 1 tsp of garlic powder)
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt or to taste

- 1/2 teaspoon oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 4 cup spaghetti sauce (see notes above)

**Instructions**

Combine all ingredients (except spaghetti sauce) until well mixed. Mixing together with your hands works great.

Form into balls using hands or small ice cream scoop. You want them to be slightly smaller than a golf ball.

Spray bottom of Instant Pot with cooking spray and add spaghetti sauce.

Place meatballs over the sauce, layering them if necessary. It's OK if they touch, just don't squish them too much.

Place lid on Instant Pot and switch valve to "sealing". Press "Manual" and set to high pressure for 7 minutes.

After you hear the timer go off, allow to slow release for another 5 minutes and then do the quick release (you do this by carefully switching the tab to "venting").

Remove lid from Instant Pot, stir, and serve over cooked pasta noodles.

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