



A CONVERSATION ABOUT GENERATIONAL FARMING: THE SOSSAMANS

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

The Arizona agriculture history of the Sossaman farm family in Queen Creek is amazing. Lifelong Arizona Farm Bureau members, we begin their history with Jasper and Nancy Sossaman, originally from Oklahoma, who came to Arizona looking for a better life in 1914 after their pig farm near Galveston, Texas, was wiped out in a hurricane. Shortly thereafter, another tragedy hit in 1918 when Jasper passed away, leaving Nancy and three sons to manage by themselves. Luckily, homesteads became available in Queen Creek, and the family obtained not one, but two! Gradually, they extended the farm to 1,000 acres and grew cotton, watermelon, potatoes, Durham wheat, castor beans, corn and sugar beets.

One of the three sons, also named Jasper, married Faith Mather and continued farming. Their only child, Jamie, inherited the farm in 1962. Today, their son, Stephen, and wife, Chris, now manage the farm including their innovative marketing of heritage grains and more.

Over the years the farm has always been an innovative family-centered business run by people who cared not just for the land, but also for the community.

And last year, Arizona Farm Bureau awarded the family the Century Farm recognition as they have been in continuous operation for more than 100 years.

Steve and Chris Sossamans business mantra is, "Say YES to opportunities." It's the best way to meet new people with new ideas. And in this conversation, we talk to Steve and his daughter, Caroline, to discover what it means to be part of a generational farm family.

Arizona Agriculture: Talk about all the crops the Sossaman family has grown over the generations?

Sossamans: We have grown almost everything over the years: Sugar beets, Cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, potatoes, cotton, corn, alfalfa, triticale, durum wheat, sesame, black-eyed peas, barley, and ancient/heritage grains (white Sonora, einkorn, farro, red fife, etc).

Arizona Agriculture: Caroline, what's your take on your



Daughter, Caroline (middle), has joined her dad in the business. Their business endeavors today, reflect an adaptation to changes in the market and keeping an eye on opportunities. Steve and his wife, Chris, might be considered serial entrepreneurs by most standards.

family heritage in farming?

Sossamans: I feel so lucky to be part of such rich Arizona history and to come from a long line of hardworking men and women. Growing up on the farm and seeing how important agriculture is in society has really shaped my life in so many positive ways. I feel proud to be part of such a great legacy of farming and finding my passion for everything grain related.

Arizona Agriculture: Last year the Arizona Farm Bureau recognized you as a Century Farm during our Annual Meeting. What do you think was/were the key element(s) for ensuring 100 years of continuous business?

Sossamans: Family continuity and a legacy of community service. Always being involved in

Agricultural organizations and community organizations (church, local and state politics, charitable groups). Also, a sense of what our forefathers endured to get where we are today through hard work and fiscal responsibility.

Arizona Agriculture: How'd you get into ancient grains?

Sossamans: I was approached by Jeff Zimmerman of Hayden Flour Mills to grow some ancient varieties of wheat. He tried working with other farmers for two years without success. I said yes just to see what would happen. We've grown alongside them over the last 10+ years; they now have a facility on our farm.

Arizona Agriculture: Why Arizona and ancient grains?

Sossamans: Arizona is the perfect environment for these grains since their history can be traced back to the fertile crescent in the middle east thousands of years ago.

Arizona Agriculture: Caroline, why'd you get inspired to be in this aspect of the business?

Sossamans: I spent around seven years helping Hayden Flour Mills become a national brand and learning every aspect of the flour industry. I've always had an interest in where the grain goes - beer, bread, whiskey, etc. - so coming on board with my dad seemed like the perfect next step!

Arizona Agriculture: Talk about all the diverse markets for

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FALL FESTIVALS



Despite the fact it may still be in the triple digits in the desert, fall 2021 is pretty much here – at least on the farm. Arizona Farm Bureau's Fill Your Plate hopes you plan socially distanced outdoor family outings with Arizona farms in mind. You may already notice Fill Your Plate's "Visit A Farm" section, but we also updated the information below so you can find the nearest farm fall festival.

Arizona farms you can visit vary, full of family-oriented fun and give you a chance to teach your children about agriculture in a hands-on, interactive way. Whether the farm is up north or down south, you will find a variety of activities for the family during one of our famous pumpkin festivals. Enjoy the fall fun and the cooler weather, at least when it gets here!

Below, the various Arizona farms you can visit this fall are broken out by the county they are located within. Fall Pumpkin and Corn Maze Festivals

Cochise County

Apple Annie's

Fall Pumpkin Celebration, family fun picking your own pumpkins, fall vegetables and apples. For more information, call 520-384-2084, or visit AppleAnnies.com

6405 West Williams Rd
Willcox, AZ 85643

September: 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
October: 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

PRESIDENT: Stefanie Smallhouse

ADMINISTRATOR: Philip Bashaw

EDITOR: Julie Murphree

MANAGING EDITOR: Joel Carr

LAYOUT & DESIGN: Melissa Hogben

Maricopa County

MacDonald Ranch

Annual Pumpkin Patch Family fun includes: A Petting Zoo; Run through the Hay Maze; Learn to pan for gold; Hayride and Train ride to the Pumpkin Patch; Play Western Games; "New" Pedal carts for kids!

26540 N Scottsdale Rd
Scottsdale, AZ 85255

Daily Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. daily, last ticket sold at 5:00 p.m. Oct 1st - Oct 30th Closed on Tuesdays & Halloween. For more information, visit macdonaldranch.com/pumpkin-patch, or call 480-585-0239.



Mother Nature's Farm

Come to the Pumpkin Patch. Enjoy a fall gourd show, U-pick pumpkins, squash, and much more.

1663 E Baseline Rd
Gilbert AZ 85233

Daily Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
September 24th - October 31st. For more information, visit mothernatures-farm.com, or call 480-892-5874.

Rocker 7 Farm Patch

Opening day 2022, enjoy a fun, family farm experience as you explore the pumpkin patch, corn maze, sunflower field and many farm-related activity areas for children.

19601 W Broadway Rd
Buckeye, AZ 85326

Friday Oct 8th 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and every weekend through October (Thursday-Sunday), Closed on Halloween. For more information, visit rocker7farm-patch.com, or call 623-208-8676.

Schnepf Farms

Pumpkin & Chili Party starts October 1st through November 1st every Thursday. Must buy tickets ahead of time online. For more information, visit schnepffarms.com, www.pumpkinandchiliparty.com or call 480-987-3100.

24610 S Rittenhouse Rd
Queen Creek, AZ 85142

Tolmachoff Farms

Pumpkin Days & Fall Maze. Visit one of the last family farms in the city!

5726 N 75th Ave
Glendale, AZ 85303

Fall Festival fun begin October 1, 2022. For more information, visit tolmachoff-farms.com, or call 602-999-3276.

Vertuccio Farms

5-acre Corn Maze; Giant tube roll; Giant Jump Pad; Extreme air pillow; Mini zip line; Hayrides and lots more.

4011 S. Power Rd.
Mesa, AZ 85212

Corn Maze & Fall Festival, September 30th - October 30th. Monday-Thursday 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. | Friday-Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. | Sunday 12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. For more information, visit vertucciofarms.com/fall-festival, or call 480-882-1482.

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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

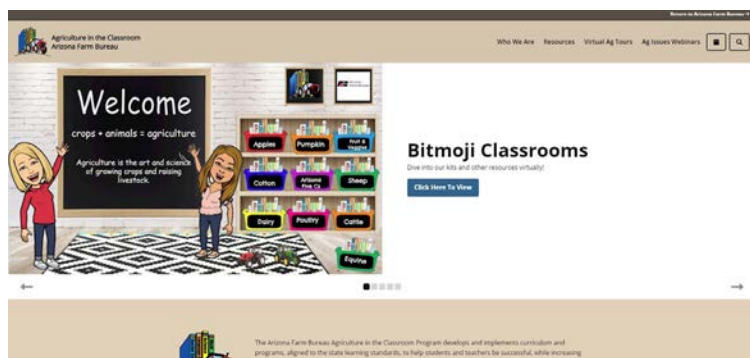
Periodicals postage paid in Higley, Arizona and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Arizona Agriculture, 325 S. Higley Rd., Suite 210, Gilbert, AZ 85296. Subscription amount is included in annual dues.

AG IN THE CLASSROOM HAS A NEW LOOK

By Katie Aikins, Arizona Farm Bureau Education Director

Although the program is the same, Ag in the Classroom (AITC) has a new look online. To market the quality programs and resources provided by AITC, a website has been created specifically for teachers and other educators to discover all that AITC has to offer.

Be sure to check out the new site at www.azfbaitc.org and see all the amazing resources that Arizona Farm Bureau's AITC has to offer your local school! 📚



NEW RESOURCES ON AZFB.ORG: DIRECT MARKET FARMING

Staff Reports



Arizona's farms and ranches come in all shapes and sizes including organic, conventional, biotech, animal agriculture, and more. And, we have our share of retail or "direct-market" farms, businesses that sell directly to you and me, the customer.

Often, these retail farms sell their products via internet-based sales, farmers' markets, farm stands and country stores. Many are small and feature organic produce. Our retail farmers happen to be one of our best connections between farmer/rancher and enthusiastic consumers of Arizona-grown produce and other agricultural products.

Additionally, these retail farms, like most businesses, need a variety of resources. So, Arizona Farm Bureau worked with several of our retail farmers to find out what resources they would want us to feature on azfb.org.

From there, we built a resource page specifically for our retail farmers. You can now go to azfb.org/News/Direct-Markets-Farming-Resources.

We will continue to add to this resource page as we come across other resources our retail farmers would find valuable. In the meantime, check it out. 📚

VANTAGE UAV MEMBER BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT

Staff Reports

Vantage UAV, a global drone service and solution company, is currently offering Arizona Farm Bureau Members a cashback discount on specific drone hardware and a discount for any drone as a service. The price of the hardware/service will determine the discount or cashback offer.



Drone technology offers many solutions for farmers and ranchers, like providing accuracy, assurance, and high-quality data. Drone technology ensures farmers and ranchers are well equipped and informed. Vantage UAV's drone technology services are field mapping, crop health assessment, treatment implementation/crop dusting, livestock management, surveillance/perimeter management, remote sensing equipment, multi-spectral measurement, thermal imaging, and weather damage assessment.

Hardware Sales

- \$1,000-\$5,000: \$100 Cash back
- \$5,001-\$10,000: \$250 Cash back
- \$10,000+: \$500 Cash back

Drone as a service

- \$5,000 5% Discount
- Over \$5,000: 10% Discount

Vantage UAV will also provide a free consultation (if needed) to determine which service or solution would be the best fit for your operation. Vantage UAV also offers additional training for anyone who requires it. Vantage also provides the opportunity to test new technology in a controlled environment. Vantage gives its clients the ongoing support they may need with technical experts to help integrate automated UAV services into your business.

Vantage UAV's mission is to reach new heights in asset management through revolutionary data collection methods that enable more intelligent decisions for a more sustainable future. Vantage UAV is a global drone service and solutions provider. Vantage UAV focuses on delivering viable, functional data to make better-informed decisions more safely and efficiently.

Contact Vantage UAV at 1-888-871-0780. View our wide array of statewide and local benefits at AZFB. The Member Benefits page is categorized by benefit type and lets you quickly see what's available. 📚

THE SOSSAMANS *Continued from Page 1*

Ancient Grains. Who all is using the Heritage Grains?

Sossamans: Markets include craft millers for bread flour, mixes, crackers and porridge. Craft brewers for beer. Distillers for whiskey.

Arizona Agriculture: Where do you see the market growing?

Sossamans: The market trend is to grow with our population of younger people that appreciate the flavor of ancient/heritage grains and craft/artisan products.

Arizona Agriculture: Where will Sossaman Farm be in another 100 years?

Sossamans: Sossaman Farms will probably just be a memory along with the other farms that once called Queen Creek home. We will have a heritage corner on the original homestead. Restaurants, shops, and educational opportunities will showcase agriculture and focus on grains. Think places for beer, pizza, tortillas, baked goods, etc.

Arizona Agriculture: You all have the entrepreneurial bent; Chris has her tea business. Talk about this.


Sossamans: Chris is very talented, and we have always been serial entrepreneurs. Together we have over 5 businesses. She has her Tea Royalty plus a commercial property enterprise. We farm, have Grain R&D, plus I do land development. We both get a little inspiration from our grandparents.

Arizona Agriculture: Where is Arizona agriculture in 100 years and what might be the major crops then?

Sossamans: My crystal ball broke a while ago. Farming will follow the water and probably be more intense and mechanized.

Arizona Agriculture: What do you love in general about

farming and ranching in Arizona?

Sossamans: The people that are part of agriculture are some of the finest we have met. All over our country and here in Arizona. Plus, farming in Arizona is year-round, not like other parts of the U.S.! 

CHECK OUT ARIZONA FARM BUREAU SPEAKERS' BUREAU: FENCE LINE

Staff Reports

Have you talked to a farmer today? Here's your chance! Arizona Farm Bureau's Fence Line speakers' bureau is made up of farmers and ranchers who are happy to tell you about what they do on their farm or ranch every day, share a few stories and their passion for agriculture. Fence Line offers face-to-face presentations and the opportunity to talk directly with an Arizona farmer or rancher about how your food is grown.



Fence Line speaker topics include:

- Food Safety Today = Best practices
- Genetics

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- Understanding the Farm Bill
- Leadership: How to Pass the Baton
- Biotechnology
- The High Cost of Farm Equipment
- What it Cost to Farm
- What Makes Arizona Agriculture Unique
- Buying Local
- Learn about Arizona Agriculture
- Agritourism
- Animal Welfare
- Arizona's 5 C's... citrus, cattle, cotton, climate & copper
- Protecting your Agriculture
- How I grow/produce: Beef, Dairy, Grain, Hogs, Nursery plants, wine and more
- Agriculture Issues
- Yuma, "The Winter Salad Bowl" of the Nation

Here are a few comments about our speakers:

I just wanted to thank you for putting me in contact with John Boelts. It was a wonderful day of learning, and he went out of his way with my students. We were all very impressed. My students and I were astounded by his depth of knowledge and his ability to convey it. All of us felt privileged to have had the opportunity to learn so much. He is passionate about his crops and cares that he is helping to feed the people of the United States a quality food product. -- Brophy College Preparatory

I just want to thank you for arranging for Sonia Gasho so speak to our Nature Club tonight. She was a wonderful speaker and I think there were more questions than we have had for any other speaker. After the meeting a few of us enjoyed her company at dinner.

Thanks again for arranging such an interesting and informative speaker. -- SaddleBrooke Nature Club

We contacted you for a speaker for our staff training. You contacted Wes Kerr who gave us training on his family's dairy farm. His presentation was ranked extremely high by our staff due to his knowledge of the farm, science, etc. and staff thought he was one of the most relatable and dynamic speakers that we have had in a long time. -- Maricopa County Environmental Services Department

For more information about Fence Line, call 480-635-3609 or email joelcarr@azfb.org. We can handle any topic you're interested in as it relates to Arizona agriculture! 🌾



Take Fill Your Plate with You on the Road!

The mobile friendly
fillyourplate.org helps you search for...

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- Farm Products
- Farmers Markets
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TRAVEL



5TH ANNUAL RACIN' FOR THE BACON DERBY DINNER: OCT. 8TH!

By **Katie Aikins**, Arizona Farm Bureau Education Director

Be sure to join us for the 5th Annual Racin' for the Bacon Derby Dinner. The event will be held Saturday, October 8th from 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. on the South Lawn of the Arizona Farm Bureau building in Gilbert. Join us for the infamous pig races, delicious Arizona Farm Bureau Grill Dinner, live and silent auctions, and be sure to participate in our Derby Hat competition by wearing your fanciest hat. This event serves as the only fundraiser for the Arizona Farm Bureau Educational Farming Company and all proceeds help bring agriculture into the classroom.

This year's event will not only raise funds to continue agriculture education efforts in Arizona, but attendees will experience many Arizona Grown products. Both Live and Silent Auctions, appetizers, dinner, and dessert feature some of the fabulous products coming from Arizona farms and ranches. Purchase your ticket today to attend this night to remember and support ag education in Arizona. Tickets are \$50 and can be purchased online at azfb.org or by calling Katie Booth at 480-635-3605. 🍌



October 8th
Tickets are \$50
Tickets on sale through October 5th

Racin' for the Bacon
Presented by:  **Arizona Pork Council**


4:00pm-8:00pm
Arizona Farm Bureau
South Lawn
325 S Higley Rd,
Gilbert, AZ 85296





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OF ARIZONA FARM
BUREAU" AND "FILL YOUR
PLATE".**

S'MORES BARS

Staff Reports

Are you looking for a delicious treat to make with your family this Fall?

Look no further! Try baking these ooey-gooey s'mores bars by Six Sister's Stuff; you won't regret it!



Ingredients

- ½ cup butter softened to room temperature
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 ½ cups flour
- ¾ cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 3 King Size Hershey Milk Chocolate Bars 3 (2.6ounce) bars
- 7 ounces marshmallow creme 1 container

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan.
2. In a large bowl, cream together butter, brown sugar, and sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Beat in egg and vanilla.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, graham cracker crumbs, baking powder and salt.
5. Add to butter mixture and mix at a low speed until combined.
6. Divide dough in half and press half of dough into an even layer on the bottom of the prepared pan. We found it works best to use our fingers.
7. Place chocolate bars over dough (3 king-sized Hershey bars should fit perfectly side by side, but break the chocolate if necessary to get it to fit in a single layer no more than 1/4 inch thick).
8. Spread marshmallow creme over chocolate layer.
9. Place remaining dough in a single layer on top of the marshmallow (most easily achieved by flattening the dough into small, flat shingles and laying them together).
10. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes, until a light golden brown.
11. Cool completely before cutting into bars. 🍌

THERE IS AN APP FOR THAT

Staff Reports

Arizona's farmers and ranchers overcome complex daily challenges while working tirelessly to produce a safe and abundant food supply. The Arizona Farm Bureau empowers its members through grassroots advocacy, communication, and education. Arizona Farm Bureau Members can receive their unique member benefits at their fingertips. Access discounts and special offers for entertainment, travel, food, and more on your smartphone.

Use your Member Benefits App anytime, day or night. Get the most out of your Farm Bureau Membership. You can even use the Member Benefits App to find nearby and local benefits. There are over 200 state and local member benefits. The Benefits App also contains an electronic copy of your membership card, making it easy to show proof of membership. The Benefits app is available on both Apple and Android smart devices.

[FB Benefits on the App Store](#) | [FB Benefits Android Apps on Google Play](#)

When you become a part of the Arizona Farm Bureau, you become a part of a community with agriculture's best interests in mind. Farm Bureau is the voice of agricultural producers at all levels. Farm Bureau will diligently work to unite divergent commodity interests. There is strength in numbers.

View our wide array of statewide and local benefits at azfb.org. The Member Benefits page is categorized by benefit type and lets you quickly see what's available. 🍌



Member Benefits on the Go!

Get easy access to special benefits for Farm Bureau members - download the Farm Bureau Member Benefit App!

 **Arizona
Farm Bureau**



FALL FESTIVALS

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Navajo County

Willis Farm

Come enjoy a pumpkin patch, Agrifact Maze, Big Cornmaze, Laser Tag and more. *Please check the weather before coming

Kid Haunt Oct 21st

*Limited supply of tickets available

*6-10 people group

381 S. 1st E. Street
Snowflake, AZ

Begins September 24th, closed on Sundays.

Pima County

Marana Pumpkin Patch

Visit their 50-acre pumpkin patch with tons of surprises in store! Wagon ride to the pumpkin patch; free access to corn mazes; and much more!

14901 N Wentz Road,
Marana, AZ

Begins October 1st-October 30th

Monday – Wednesday: Closed

Thursday – Friday 3:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Saturday – Sunday 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

For more information visit maranapumpkin-patch.com or call 520-305-5481.



Pinal County

Rooster Cogburn Ostrich Ranch

Family owned and operated. Stop by and feed the ostrich, deer, miniature donkeys, goats, ducks, and Rainbow Lorikeets. For more information, call 520.466.3658 or visit roostercogburn.com

17599 E Peak Ln,
Picacho, AZ 85141

Yavapai County

Mortimer Family Farms

Pumpkin Festival and Corn Maze begins
September 26th – October 31st

12907 E State Route 169
Dewey, AZ 86327

For more information, visit mortimerfarmsaz.com, or call 928-830-1116.

Remember go to fillyourplate.org for a complete direct-market list of farmers and ranchers. Also, check out Fill Your Plate's directory called "Visit a Farm."



Please join us during
November 2 - 4, 2022
for our 101st
Annual Convention.
The conference will be
held in person at the
El Conquistador Resort
in Tuscon, AZ.



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WHY WAIT?

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Arizona Farm Bureau
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Arizona Agriculture's

CHOICES



Son-in-law, Travis Tolmachoff (left) and Steve Sossaman (right) check out a tote of White Sonora wheat right after it was harvested from the field. Arizona is known for its ancient grains and its Desert Durum®.

Photo courtesy of Caroline Sossaman.