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A CONVERSATION ABOUT OVERALL SUPPLY CHAINS AND THE ECONOMY: DR. ROGER CRYAN

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director



Says, Dr. Cryan, “Our current inflation is, without a doubt, the result of the Federal Reserve Bank creating more than \$6 trillion in new money in 2020 and 2021, a 40% increase in 20 months.”

Dr. Roger Cryan joined the American Farm Bureau Federation last fall as Chief Economist.

Before joining Farm Bureau, Dr. Cryan served as the Director of the Economics Division for the Dairy Program in USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), where he directed an award-winning team of market reporters, economists, and marketing specialists across the country, and contributed to dairy purchasing and policy across USDA.

He previously served as Vice President for Milk Marketing and Economics at the National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and as the Economist for the Federal Milk Market Administrator in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Cryan was raised in rural upstate New York and earned his bachelor’s degree in International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, and his master’s degree and Ph.D. in Food and Resource Eco-

nomics at the University of Florida.

For a 30,000-foot-view of what’s going on with overall supply chains and the economy, Dr. Cryan brings clarity and understanding. Hopefully, some of his insights help us prepare as we’re planning for the next farm and ranch business cycle.

Arizona Agriculture: What do you see as the major factors causing supply chain disruptions?

Cryan: Our supply chain problems have really been supply problems. COVID created a recession due to supply disruptions, and the Federal Reserve Bank and Congress both took steps – monetary expansion and spending – that are better suited to recessions caused by too little demand.

Stimulating economic demand overwhelmed the already strained supply of all sorts of things, including computer chips, freight capacity, and manufactured goods, including a lot of farm inputs.

Arizona Agriculture: Talk about the disruptions in the supply chain and what caused so many vessels to back up in the Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach?

Cryan: The government was sending out checks and pumping up the money supply to Americans who couldn’t spend it on restaurant meals or ballgames or concerts, so we started shopping online and clearing out the Home Depot, essentially buying lots of ‘stuff,’ much of which comes across the Pacific Ocean and lands in those ports.

The ports could only handle so much, and shortages of truck drivers and containers and trailers (to put the containers on) further clogged things up. It looks better at the ports now, but only because prices have risen and the ports are primarily receiving ships by reservation, and a lot of shipments are going to Gulf and Atlantic ports instead.

Arizona Agriculture: Talk about the freight rate increases and do they eventually level off.

Cryan: A lot of shipping rates are coming down from incredible highs but, for example, ocean shipping rates are still several times what they were before COVID. It will

take time and continued investment – in ships, in port expansions and efficiencies, and in containers – before those begin to look low again. Trucking is still challenged with a driver shortage, as part of a general labor shortage in the U.S. and because potential long-haul drivers worry that they will be replaced by computers in a few years or would rather drive delivery vans so they can sleep in their own bed every night, but rates are falling as demand drops off.

Arizona Agriculture: The cost of energy is along every link in the supply chain. Talk about this and what can be done to mitigate some of these higher prices.

Cryan: Fuel prices are down from their peaks, due partly to the President’s release of oil from the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserves; but we can only draw so much from those before we create other problems, so they are not a long-term solution. We are exporting petroleum at the highest rate in 75 years, responding to continued high global demand and trying to fill gaps caused by disruptions from the war in Ukraine.

Biofuel use is growing, particularly renewable diesel, which is a so-called ‘drop-in’ substitute for diesel fuel; and about 6% of U.S. petroleum use has been replaced with biofuels. This can help mitigate high petroleum prices, but in the long-term, the price of petroleum may be more of a climate policy result than a pure market outcome. This makes it hard to see a long-term outlook for energy prices.

Arizona Agriculture: Discuss the historic average for fertilizer costs and the market for corn prices and corresponding ag commodities.

Cryan: We’ve gotten used to stable and relatively low fertilizer prices over the last decade. Prices were already rising last fall because 2022 was expected to be a good year with strong demand. Then the Ukraine war made a mess of fertilizer markets. A lot of potash comes from Belarus. A lot of European nitrogen fertilizer plants closed because they couldn’t pencil out with the very high price of natural gas, a lot of which they (usually) get from Russia; instead, Europe bought fertilizer that other folks needed and squeezed the world market. As with fuel, it will take time and investment (plus lower natural gas prices) before fertilizer prices will begin to look anything like normal again.

This is why this year’s relatively high harvest time prices for grain aren’t looking so great, depending on when you booked your crop price and your fertilizer prices.

Arizona Agriculture: The money supply is tied into all of this and is impacting inflation. Please explain. And will this prolong inflation since we’ve added so much money to the supply chain?

Cryan: Our current inflation is, without a doubt, the result of the Federal Reserve Bank creating more than \$6 trillion in new money in 2020 and 2021, a 40% increase in 20 months. They did this by lowering short-term interest rates close to zero, which is not unusual, and by buying \$3 trillion worth of government bonds and other securities in just 3 months in 2020, which is like nothing that has ever happened before. Like anything else, if you make too much money, it becomes cheap; since we measure the price of everything else in dollars, a cheaper dollar means higher prices for everything else, and that means inflation.

And, yes, I think inflation will be prolonged because the Fed doesn’t seem to believe anymore that too much growth in the money supply causes inflation, which is something that everyone used to understand. Instead, the Fed is moving to stymie demand with higher interest rates, and they are moving very slowly to sell off those securities, which would absorb more of that extra money.

See **DR. ROGER CRYAN** Page 4

FARM BUREAU LEADERS FOUND IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

By Chelsea McGuire, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

In September, Arizona Farm Bureau sent a delegation of leaders to Washington, D.C. to discuss critical ag issues with federal elected officials. This was our first official fly-in since COVID shutdowns made such trips an impossibility, and it was a joy to be back on Capitol Hill with Arizona’s premier agricultural leaders!

We met with staff and elected officials from seven of Arizona’s nine Congressional offices. In those meetings, our leaders shared the top issues currently facing agriculture in Arizona. While sharing stories from their own farms, our leaders discussed western drought and the situation on the Colorado River, the 2023 Farm Bill, and the need for agricultural labor reform.

While in D.C., we presented four members of Arizona’s congressional delegation with the Friend of Farm Bureau award. This award is given to legislators whose voting record is consistent with Arizona and American Farm Bureau Priorities. Recipients must be nominated by Arizona Farm Bureau and approved by the American Farm Bureau Board of Directors. Congratulations to Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D), Senator Mark Kelly (D), Congresswoman Debbie Lesko (R, AZ-08), and Congressman Greg Stanton (D, AZ-09) for earning this exclusive recognition!

In addition to our visits with elected officials, we also had a chance to discuss Colorado River issues with the Bureau of Reclamation. While we left that meeting with more questions than answers, it was still a valuable opportunity to put stakeholders in front of an agency with an immense amount of power and influence over an impending water crisis. By telling our story to the Bureau, they have a better understanding of what’s at stake on the Colorado River and how to engage stakeholders on the river as they make crucial decisions about water.

Our visit has already sparked some tangible action from Congressional offices, and we look forward to continued follow-up that will have a positive impact on our members across the state. Your stories matter, and there is no more powerful lobbying tool than the true story of a farmer or rancher with a vested interest in a policy outcome.

A huge thank you to Stefanie Smallhouse (and her son, Johnny Smallhouse), Paul Brierley, Nancy Caywood (and her son, Travis Hartman), Nich Kenny (and his wife, Brook Kenny), and Kristen Nelson for taking the time away from their farms and businesses to tell the story of Arizona agriculture. 🚜



Surrounded by Arizona Farm Bureau’s leadership delegation, Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D) received the Friend of Farm Bureau Award, given to legislators whose voting record is consistent with Arizona and American Farm Bureau priorities.



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PERSISTENT DROUGHT IMPACTING ARIZONA FARMERS AND RANCHERS

By Joel Carr, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Manager - Membership Value



Arizona-specific drought conditions from American Farm Bureau's latest drought survey reveal a serious impact on farm and ranch production.

It's no secret that America's Western Region is facing harsh drought conditions. Unfortunately, this mega-drought isn't going anywhere anytime soon. In the meantime, for the past three years, American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) continues to track the drought through a multi-state survey.

Recently, AFBF released the findings from the third edition of the Assessing Western Drought Conditions survey. This survey depicts ground-level drought impacts. These include reducing yields, removing and sometimes destroying orchard trees or multi-year crops, and even selling a portion of their herds or flocks.

While comments from the survey's participants remained anonymous, AFBF shared the comments with us. Comments like, "Commodity prices are elevated; reduced acres and increased inputs will reduce on-farm revenue by a minimum of 20% if input prices like fertilizer and fuel continue to increase" point to what our farmers and ranchers are dealing with in their operations.

Arizona participants' findings are a bit startling:

CROP FACTORS

- 61% of respondents from Arizona reported reductions in harvest yields as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 28% last year)

- 64% of respondents from Arizona reported intentions to switch planned crops for the growing season as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 28% last year)
- 41% of respondents from Arizona reported tilling under crop because of a lack of anticipated water deliveries as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 34% last year)
- 40% of respondents from Arizona reported removing/destroying orchard trees and other multi-year crops as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 33% last year)
- 41% of respondents from Arizona reported wildfires have contributed to crop losses and herd sell-offs in their area
- Participants reported the most impacted crops as alfalfa (35% of respondents), other forage (25%), and cotton (10%)

LIVESTOCK FACTORS

- 70% of respondents from Arizona reported selling off portions of the herd/flock as prevalent or higher in their area
- 73% of respondents from Arizona reported removing animals from rangeland due to insufficient forage as prevalent or higher in their area
- 91% of respondents from Arizona reported increases in local feed costs linked to drought as prevalent or higher in their area
- 65% of respondents from Arizona reported traveling long distances to acquire feed and forage as prevalent or higher in their area
- 69% of respondents from Arizona reported hauling water to livestock as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 64% last year)
- 63% of respondents from Arizona reported having diminished access to public grazing lands in their area
- Of the 35% of respondents from Arizona who liquidated some or all their cow/calf herd in 2021, 89% are fallowing rangeland, and 11% are leasing rangeland to another rancher
- Of the 83% of respondents from Arizona who reduced their livestock herd in 2021, nearly 50% (48%) are further reducing their herd size, 32% are maintaining the reduced size, and only 20% are building back or planning to build back their herd

GENERAL WATER FACTORS

- 65% of respondents from Arizona reported reduced surface water deliveries as prevalent or higher in their area
- 63% of respondents from Arizona reported increases in local restrictions on agricultural water use as prevalent or higher in their area (up from 60% last year)
- 79% of respondents from Arizona reported increased use of groundwater as prevalent or higher in their area
- 62% of respondents from Arizona reported new well drilling as prevalent or higher in their area
- 32% of respondents from Arizona reported state or federally listed endangered species had reduced water access in their area

These statistics confirm the importance of investing over a billion dollars in the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority for water augmentation, conservation, and rural water supply development, legislation that passed this summer during Arizona's most recent legislative session along non-partisan lines. 🚜

PFAS: WHAT IS IT AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE

By Ana Kennedy Otto, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Manager

Have you heard of PFAS or (polyfluoroalkyl substances)? it hasn't been in the news much here in Arizona, but other states are dealing with polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination in water and closer to home farmers in a couple of states have seen their operations crippled by the presence of PFAS on their farms.

What is PFAS? According to EPA, there are thousands of PFAS chemicals that are found in many different consumers, commercial and industrial products. The most common PFAS chemicals are PFOA (Perfluorooacetic acid) and PFOS (Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid), which have largely been phased out, but were the main component of firefighting foam and water, oil, and stain repellant products. Consequently, many everyday items such as clothing, cookware, and food packaging materials contained PFAS chemicals.

PFAS are long-lasting chemicals, often referred to as forever chemicals, because they either never break down or do so very slowly over time. As a result, these chemicals have been identified as a source of water contamination, and some health studies link exposure to PFAS chemicals with harmful health effects on both humans and animals. Federal and (some) state governments are now attempting to create regulatory regimes to limit human exposure.

Why should farmers and ranchers be concerned? The agricultural practices do not produce PFAS; however, these chemicals may be found in the water that producers provide to their crops and livestock. Another source of PFAS contamination that can occur on farms is through the application of soil amendments (e.g., biosolids). Unfortunately, a dairy in New Mexico and beef producers in Michigan are already dealing with the consequences of PFAS contamination in either their water source or the application of biosolids that have rendered their farms and farm animals unusable. Other farmers may be in the same situation unknowingly and passively receiving PFAS chemicals.

See PFAS Page 6

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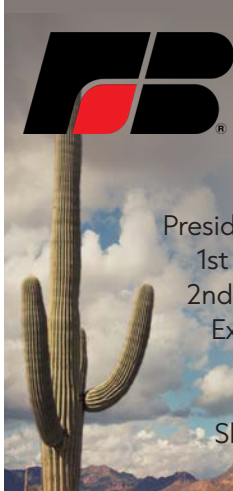
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DR. ROGER CRYAN *continued from Page 1*

So, I think we'll see year-over-year inflation in the Consumer Price Index – which inflation was 8.3% in August, by the way – continue in the 5% to 9% range through the end of 2023, just to work out the massive money supply increase.

Arizona Agriculture: Some say the ag supply chain should be smoothing out now. What are you seeing and if forecasting, what does 2023 look like?

Cryan: I used to rely on market analysis to project what the next year might look like, but that assumes a certain amount of normalcy. Since 2020, we haven't really seen normal. What 2023 will look like depends on war and disease and whatever other dumpster fire is waiting over the horizon.

But if markets were in charge, I'd say input prices will come down some and most agricultural commodity prices will be high. There has been a lot of reduction in livestock inventories, so supplies will be down, and those prices could allow for a decent margin. And crop inventories have been depleted, so that the current prices may be sustainable for another year. But I don't count on normal anymore.

Arizona Agriculture: How can farmers and ranchers mitigate their costs in these unusual times?

Cryan: This has been a very uneven year, with perfect weather in one place, flooding somewhere else, and drought in too much of the country. The crazy price swings and the extreme weather means it is very hard to say whether this has been a good year or a bad year for farmers generally; and it has demonstrated how critical good risk management tools are. This may not cut your costs, but if you can't get through this year, cutting costs won't mean much next year.

Arizona Agriculture: What have I not asked you that is important to share with our Arizona farmers and ranchers?

Cryan: I'd like to share my appreciation with them. I'm blessed to work with 50 state Farm Bureaus plus Puerto Rico. Farmers have made feeding the world look easy for the last 40 years, and a lot of folks take their food supply for granted. Farming is pretty darn hard work, especially with all the demands the world keeps putting on farmers. I'm proud to work for them at AFBF and do what I can to help.

Editor's Note: Join us in November at Arizona Farm Bureau's Annual Meeting on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th to learn more from Dr. Cryan and how to prepare for future economic challenges.



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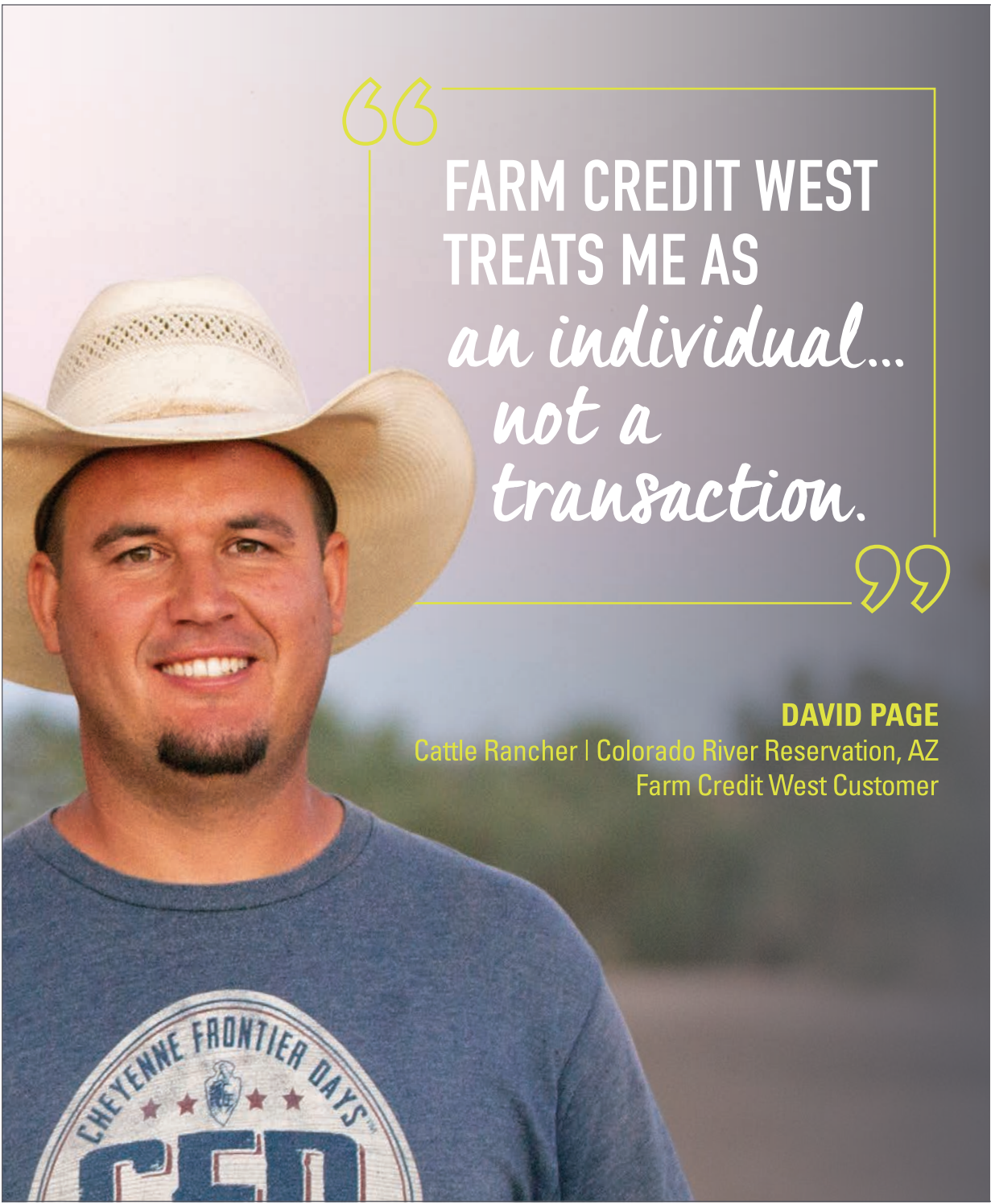




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PRESIDENT SMALLHOUSE TELLS CONGRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC LANDS RANCHING



Arizona Farm Bureau President Stefanie Smallhouse testified last month before the House Natural Resources National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands subcommittee regarding the challenges that federal land management and restriction pose to public lands ranchers.

“Livestock grazing is critical for managing and preventing invasive plant species, decreasing hazardous fuel loads to prevent wildfires, supporting wildlife habitats, and cultivating viable rural economies,” said Smallhouse. “The restrictions [posed by federal land management] severely limit the effectiveness of grazing as a critical land management tool, setting a dangerous precedent for future land use restrictions

and threatening a critical aspect of our nation’s food supply.”

Smallhouse’s testimony was in response to the proposed H.R. 8719, which would expand wilderness areas and create a new conservation area known as the Great Bend of the Gila. The bill’s restrictions would threaten the ability to continue economic activity in that area, including ranching. “I have serious concerns about the impact this bill would have on livestock grazing,” Smallhouse explained. “Public lands grazing is integral to ranches in Arizona and across the West. H.R. 8719 would restrict grazing within the conservation and wilderness areas to its current footprint, leaving no room for expanding that footprint in ways consistent with environmental and ecological conditions.”

“Public lands are critical to the success of agriculture, and agricultural managers are likewise critical partners for the preservation of public lands,” concluded Smallhouse. “[W]e remain committed to working alongside federal land management agencies for the benefit of all whose livelihood depends on our nation’s natural resources.”

USDA-ARMS WILL BE REACHING OUT TO PRODUCERS ABOUT PRODUCTION PRACTICES

Please respond to U.S. Department of Agriculture interviewers who may call to help you complete the Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS), asking about production practices and costs and returns data from wheat producers. As responses help ensure you are represented, this portion of the survey asks questions about fertilizer, pesticides, cropping practice, and technology management.

Collecting your data by phone is the best way for USDA to get the information we need to make sure your operation is counted. Over 3,700 wheat producers will be contacted to participate in the survey. For more information about this survey, visit <https://nass.usda.gov/go/arms> or contact Jim.Barrett@usda.gov.

FAQ’S ON THE SURVEY

What is the survey about? The Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is a survey from USDA with questions about nutrient and fertilizer use, as well as your production, tillage, and pest management practices for wheat acreage.

How many wheat producers in the US are receiving the survey? Over 3,700 wheat producers in 22 states will receive this survey.

How is this survey being conducted? A sample survey questionnaire labeled “Informational Purposes Only” and a respondent booklet have been mailed to wheat produc-

ers selected for the survey. An interviewer will call and set up an interview to assist in the completion of your questionnaire.

- Please do not complete and return the paper questionnaire. Instead, use it to help gather the information needed for your interview.
- Please have your spray records available. If you used a commercial chemical company, please make sure those records are accessible.

What are the dates for this survey? The survey will be mailed to producers on September 21. Enumerators will be collecting information by phone from October 1, 2022 – December 7, 2022.

How will the survey results be used? Responses will help ensure that accurate use rates of necessary crop protection products will be widely available for the wheat industry. These data are frequently used in re-registration and other decisions affecting the use of these crop protection products. The information gathered by the survey will be used for statistical purposes only. In accordance with federal law, and responses will be kept confidential and will not be published in identifiable form.

For more information on this survey, visit nass.usda.gov/go/arms. For analysis of ARMS data, visit: ers.usda.gov/arms.

PFAS continued from Page 2

To date, we know of no such concerns in Arizona, but farmers and ranchers should be aware of PFAS and its implications.

The current regulatory proposal you should know about. The EPA has introduced a rulemaking to designate PFOA and PFOS as hazardous materials under CERCLA and this could impact agricultural producers. CERCLA is the federal statute that provides a Federal “Superfund” to clean up uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous-waste sites as well as accidents, spills, and other emergency releases of pollutants and contaminants into the environment. Through CERCLA, EPA was given the power to seek out those parties responsible for any release and assure their cooperation in the cleanup. CERCLA imposes

liability on parties responsible for, in whole or in part, the presence of hazardous substances at a site.

American Farm Bureau is reviewing the proposed rulemaking and will submit comments to express the position that farmers and ranchers who have passively received PFAS chemicals should not be held liable or lose their property value due to PFAS contamination.

For more information about what Arizona is doing about PFA visit the ADEQ link azdeq.gov/pfas-resources or the AZDHS website azdhs.gov and search for PFAS.

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ELECTION 2022: CHECK OUT AGPAC ENDORSEMENTS

By Chelsea McGuire, Arizona Farm Bureau Government Relations Director

With the midterm election only weeks away, AgPAC of the Arizona Farm Bureau is proud to announce our endorsed candidates for the 2022 election. Each year, AgPAC supports candidates who are dedicated to the future of Arizona’s agricultural industry. Our endorsements are reserved for individuals with a proven track record of support for agriculture’s priorities – regardless of location or party affiliation.



In races for the Arizona Legislature, AgPAC has endorsed the following candidates:

- Representative David Cook, LD07
- Senator TJ Shope, LD16
- Representative Gail Griffin, LD19
- Representative Lupe Diaz, LD19
- Senator David Gowan, LD19
- Senator Sine Kerr, LD25
- Representative Tim Dunn, LD25

AgPAC’s endorsements for Congressional candidates include:

- Representative David Schweikert, CD1
- Representative Tom O’Halloran, CD2
- Juan Ciscomani, CD6

Our statements about each candidate, as well as other key information about the 2022 election, can be found at www.azfb.org/vote. Additionally, we’ll list what propositions Arizona Farm Bureau took a position on.

Want to help AgPAC support candidates who will fight for the policies of the Arizona Farm Bureau? Go to www.azfb.org/AgPAC to learn how.

MEET ARIZONA AG'S ANGLE-LARSON FAMILY

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

While we were searching high and low for another Farm Bureau family that would apply for the Century Farm and Ranch recognition, another member, Lucia Konrath from Graham County, alerted us to another fellow Graham County farm family that had hit the 100-year mark, Angle Orchard. Thanks to our network, we’re keeping up with all our farm and ranch stories.



This story has special meaning for the farm and ranch families in Graham County as Larson’s farm family story begins in the shadow of Mount Graham.

This story has special meaning for the farm and ranch families in Graham County as this family’s story begins in the shadow of Mount Graham. The mountain reaches 10,724 feet (3,269 m) in height and is the highest elevation in Graham County. Of worthy note, the mountain is also the southernmost peak and land area in the continental United States above 10,000 feet. As the name “Mount Graham” is often used by locals to refer to the entire mountain range, the peak itself is

frequently referred to as “High Peak.”

A farm profile of Paul Larson and Family, owner of Angle Orchard in Graham County. An ongoing series of our farm and ranch families.

Tell Us About Your Century Orchard: Angle Orchard was founded by Andrew Preston Angle and Viola Cooper Angle in 1922. It all started with a discarded peach pit.

The story goes, that between 1910 and 1920, some unknown person left a peach pit on the ground after enjoying the fruit.

The seedling peach tree that grew would bear fruit year after year, even when the fruit in the Gila Valley would freeze. This fact came to the attention of Andrew Preston Angle, who lived at the base of the mountain. Andrew surmised that the area must have ideal thermals for preventing frost and growing superior fruit.

Just as the trees started to bear fruit, Andrew Preston Angle died from an appendicitis attack in 1928. His two sons, Rome and Andrew, took over the orchard with Rome owning the orchard until 1962.

In 1962, Andrew and Zereta Farnsworth Angle became owners of the orchard and over the next 18 years improving the health and quality of the trees.

In 1980, Eldon Angle, son of Andrew and Zereta, purchased the orchard. Eldon did an amazing job planting, grafting and keeping the orchard in tip-top shape for the next

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25 years.

On July 1, 2005, Betty Ann Larson, Eldon’s sister, purchased the orchard and managed it for several years with the help of her three adopted sons and eight children. In 2017, Betty was diagnosed with dementia and had to turn the running of the orchard over to her children.

In 2018, her son, Paul Larson, took ownership of the orchard and with the assistance of his siblings and cousins, is keeping Angle Orchard alive and well now going on 100 years.

What do you love the most about the agriculture industry in general? The ability to produce something tangible and the satisfaction you get from producing something that supports life. Also, I get enjoyment from the people I meet and serve.

What is one fact or achievement that few people know about you? (Something about yourself we can’t find on Google or Facebook.) I am a 4th generation apple farmer.

In your opinion, how will the next generation of agriculturalists need to operate to be successful? For smaller operators like me, I think having a diversification of income is the ticket to success.

What is the best life advice that you have received and/or can give? Teach your children the value of hard work at a young age and never give up on your goals and dreams.

What Fruit You’ll Find at the Angle Orchard

For our orchard, the peach season starts around July 4th with the Saturn peaches and ends the first of September with O’Henry peaches. Angle Orchard has 15 varieties available.

The apple season kicks off in Mid-August with Gala apples and ends in late October with Fuji. The Orchard currently has 11 different varieties: Red Delicious, Golden Delicious, Blushing Golden, Winesap, Fuji, Elstar, Gala, Granny Smith, Arkansas Black, Empire and Jonathans.

Editor’s Note: Angle Orchard will be receiving statewide recognition from Arizona Farm Bureau for their Century Farm status in November. For hours of operation, look for them on Facebook at @angleorchard

NRCS CAMP CLASS ONE GRADUATES

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

How time flies. In partnership with NRCS, Arizona Farm Bureau will be celebrating Class One graduates from the Conservation Agricultural Mentoring Program (CAMP).

Arizona Farm Bureau and The National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) began a partnership in 2021 to engage in an exciting program that aids NRCS employees in understanding Arizona agriculture at the ground level. CAMP provides a mentoring structure between farmers and ranchers and the NRCS employees. While several other states have the CAMP program, Arizona is unique in its partnership effort with Arizona Farm Bureau.

Arizona Farm Bureau and NRCS will continue to shine a bright light on this exciting program and the experiences our mentors and protégé are going through.

NRCS’s Arizona producer-employee mentoring effort will allow an organic partnership approach between the agricultural community and NRCS. This effort will assist with the completion of the national NRCS’ goal of implementing a statewide new NRCS employees and local producers exchange of regionalized knowledge of production agricul-

ture and local natural resources in Arizona.

The core goals for this partnership effort are that participating NRCS employees (Proteges) advance their professional expertise related to:

1. Production agriculture in their local areas
2. Local resource concerns
3. How NRCS and producers address local resource concerns.

The outcome will be a deeper **awareness of the types of challenges and decisions our farmers and rancher face each day** and enhance their local community relationships and capacity to provide excellent customer service.

Says Class One NRCS graduate Brett Myers, “My mentor, Sonia Gasho, has taken the time to explain production agriculture, natural resources in her area, and the hurdles they face. Furthermore, expressing the fact that the best technical solution is not always the best for the producer, partnered conservation plans should address that.”

The graduation gathering will occur on October 20th. Additionally, we’ll kick off Class Two during the event.

7 SIMPLE STEPS TO TELLING YOUR FARM AND RANCH STORY

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Outreach Director

It happened again this past year: “We need to communicate better with the public about what we do,” said a Farm Bureau County leader during a board meeting. A variety of voices tell the broader farm and ranch community we are not doing enough to help the public understand Arizona agriculture. This concern continues to repeat itself when Arizona Farm Bureau staff is out in the counties.



Pinal County Farmer and Farm Bureau leader Nancy Caywood regularly gives tours of Caywood Farms right from the back of a John Deere tractor. When you put yourself “out front” talking about your farm and ranch business, it resounds with the public.

Someone somewhere will keep saying it until that someone personally steps up and joins those that are already telling the farm and ranch story. We must do it together, the old “strength in numbers” maxim.

Your “ag life” story told by you will always resonate with the public more than any one of the Arizona Farm Bureau staff telling your story for you. At Arizona Farm Bureau, the Advocacy, Outreach and Ag Education teams celebrate elevating the Arizona agriculture story to our various audiences and

we get better and better at it each year. But when we use strategies that put you “out front” talking about your farm and ranch business, it resounds more with the public.

Social media regularly proves when Rancher John or Jane speaks, it’s so much richer with strong originality and contextuality. Content counts (it’s also King) and from the source, it matters the most. Farmer/rancher personalities that have committed to the “social conversation” garner thousands, even millions, of followers, just ask @TheFarmerJon.

Farmer Jonathan Dinsmore, on Instagram for example, is more popular than anything Arizona Farm Bureau could put out. He’s the farmer! Are you willing to get out front with the public like this Yuma County farmer?

STEPS TO GETTING TO THE “DO”

Our family farmed up until 2005. I get how hard it is to even conceive of launching a social media channel (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and more) with everything else on your plate including running a business, raising a family, and then becoming a volunteer leader. It’s tough dealing with a time-consuming media query. Or, pausing long enough to go into your child’s classroom to read an ag-accurate book (even virtually today).

There is hope and for even the busiest of us, it can be done. I share seven tips to help you become part of Arizona agriculture’s information and engagement solution.

1. **Be original, be you.** Your best focus for the context of telling farming and ranching is your story, farm and ranch facts and statistics can come later in the conversation. 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. Dulled by the daily tasks of farming? Even starting an irrigation pipe seems fun to watch for the city kid (especially on Tok-Tok or Instagram’s Reels).
2. **Pick just one channel in social media:** Have you decided if you are more comfortable using Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook? Arizona Farm Bureau is on every channel imaginable. 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 while having my coffee 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 my commodity farmers 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 tomatoes. But, if you grew them, place the sign with your company logo by your wonderfully grown tomatoes so viewers know for sure they are yours. Marketers will tell you, it’s all about branding.

5. **Engage.** So, I can’t convince you to open 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. **Make what you celebrate in your business the key to sharing about the business.** New achievements or improvements 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.
7. **Document with photos.** If you have a smartphone, you have a way to take pictures. Agriculture is visual. Exploit this fact. Then, send it to us and with your permission, we’ll post it on our channels telling your story.

Just can’t tolerate the idea of engaging with the public. Arizona Farm Bureau and your commodity-specific associations will still be here for you to 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 something is there, just like falling in love. 🍷

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



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Coverage When It Matters Most



We can help protect your grazing or haying acres against a lack of rainfall with **Pasture, Rangeland and Forage (PRF) coverage**, and protect your livestock herd from the risk of declining markets with **Livestock Risk Protection (LRP)**.

Contact your Farm Bureau agent to learn more about these programs and to discuss options before the December 1 PRF sign-up deadline.



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