

DATA CENTERS, WATER, AND ARIZONA AGRICULTURE: WHY EVERY DROP COUNTS FOR ALL OF US

By Julie Murphree, Arizona Farm Bureau Director of Strategic Communications

In Arizona's desert landscape, water is our most precious resource, and the growing conversation around data centers and their water use has captured plenty of attention. As our state welcomes new technology infrastructure to drive economic growth and create jobs, it's important to keep the full picture in mind: Arizona agriculture remains the bedrock of our food supply, our local economies, and the water systems that support every family, business, and community across the state.

When we discuss agricultural water use, we're really talking about water that sustains all of us—the food on our tables, the jobs in our communities, and the strong foundation that makes modern Arizona possible. Arizona agriculture delivers high-volume but high-impact water use that ensures national food security, especially with our irreplaceable winter vegetable production, while supporting local economic stability and the infrastructure that powers our entire economy.

In a water-scarce state, this isn't a zero-sum game. Smart policies that promote efficiency, water trading, and targeted incentives—such as agricultural innovation or conservation projects supported by growing industries like tech—can help sustain agriculture's vital role while allowing room for data centers, housing, and other economic development.

As experts often point out, every nation requires a certain level of high-volume, high-impact water use to feed its population and maintain food security. Without a strong agricultural sector, food security risks rise for everyone.

A research student recently reached out seeking a clearer understanding of data centers' water use and its potential effects on Arizona's broader economy and communities. We dug into the topic to help provide balanced context, and we're sharing some of those insights here.



This modern water system on a Pinal County dairy is used for growing feed crops for the dairy cows. Agriculture's water efficiency continues to improve year after year.

ARIZONA AGRICULTURE: AMERICA'S WINTER FOOD BASKET AND A PILLAR OF FOOD SECURITY

Few states play a more critical role in national food security than Arizona. Our mild winters and fertile soils — especially in Yuma County, the "Winter Lettuce Capital of the World" — make us the nation's go-to source for fresh produce when much of the country is covered in snow.

- From November to April, Arizona supplies 90 to 100% of the nation's leafy greens (lettuce, spinach, and more) and a massive share of winter vegetables.

- The state produces about 25% of all U.S. lettuce annually.
- In peak season, Yuma ships enough produce to fill 1,200 to 1,500 refrigerated semi-trucks daily, enough iceberg lettuce for every person in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico to have a head, with millions left over.

This isn't just volume; it's reliability and safety. Arizona's strict food-safety standards help keep grocery shelves stocked with fresh vegetables nationwide during the coldest months. Without our farms, winter fresh produce prices would skyrocket and supply chains would face major disruptions.

Locally, the benefits are just as real. According to the University of Arizona, Arizona agriculture and agribusiness contribute nearly \$31 billion to the economy each year and support over 126,000 jobs. From dairy and beef that reach Phoenix stores to melons and greens that keep families fed with short, fresh supply chains, our farms strengthen food resilience right here at home. They also preserve open space, rural communities, and a diversified economy that goes far beyond tech and urban growth.

Arizona Farm Bureau President John Boelts, a Yuma-based

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8 REASONS TO ATTEND THIS YEAR'S SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By Staff Reports

The Summer Leadership Conference is around the corner and will be held once again in Flagstaff! Sponsored by Arizona Farm Bureau's Women's Leadership Committee, this year's leadership conference will be held at Little America, July 16 and 17. This year's theme Seeding, Feeding and Leading, sets the stage for a full schedule.

Why should you attend the conference this year? We've got 8 reasons for you to join us.

1. Location, location & ...discount:

Little America in Flagstaff, Arizona, is situated on 500 acres of Ponderosa pine forest just off Interstate 40, at an elevation of approximately 7,000 feet in the Coconino National Forest. You'll be cool in the middle of the summer!

2. Activities for everyone in the Family:

A dedicated playground with traditional equipment for younger kids, plus cornhole, ladder ball, horseshoes, and sand volleyball for family fun, with complimentary equipment available at the front desk. Plus, you'll find Onsite Trails and Disc Golf: Miles of scenic trails for hiking amidst wildflowers and beautiful pines, plus a disc golf course for friendly family competitions.

3. Free from Event Conflicts:

The July dates for this conference don't conflict with FFA or any other agriculture organizations' conference dates.

4. Networking:

There is plenty of time to relax and network with your fellow Aggies. Plus, you can make new friends.

5. Meet the Influencer: Keynote - Sierra Jepsen Anthony:

is a meat scientist, lead butcher, and founder of Butcher Solutions LLC—a traveling butcher school that's injecting fresh energy and skills into America's struggling butchery and meat processing sector. From her base in Three Forks, Montana (with family ties to Dusty Rose Farm in Ohio), she packs up her knives and hits the road to deliver in-house training at meat lockers, shops, and ranches across states like Montana, Wyoming, Texas, and beyond. Her focus: hands-on butchery techniques, meat science educa-



tion, and bridging the gap between producers and consumers—while addressing a real labor and knowledge shortage in the industry. A University of Idaho grad with a master's in meat science; Sierra launched Butcher Solutions in late 2022 after spotting the need for better-trained workers. In just a couple of years, she's trained dozens of butchers on-site (saving shops travel time), run cutting demos for community groups, consulted for industry players, and even competed in events like the Young Butcher challenge. Her tagline? "Building better butchers."

6. Tailgate Conversations.

Join us at the tailgate for a friendly conversation and learn from a diverse panel on difficult topics. Panelists share their insights, experiences, challenges, and successes on topics that always seem to hit home.

7. Anyone's Welcome.

The educational conference encourages young and old, male and female and all segments of agriculture.

8. It's Inspirational and Encouraging:

One past conference attendee said, "This meeting is a breath of fresh air to my busy schedule. Rubbing shoulders with amazing leaders, listening and learning from amazing speakers and relaxing help motivate and inspire me in the best ways. This conference helps me be the agriculture leader this world needs!"

To register for the conference, go to www.azfb.org, then click on the events section. If you register by May 20, you'll receive an early bird discount. If you need more information, contact Hannah DalMolin at hannahdalmolin@azfb.org. Reserve your hotel At Little America in Flagstaff by June 17 to receive the special group rate. 🍷

Special Note: Enjoy a Pre-conference event at the famous Bearizona.



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And "Fill Your Plate"



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ARIZONA FARM BUREAU AND BOOT BARN: A PERFECT FIT FOR MEMBERS

By Staff Reports

When it comes to blending hard work, heritage, and a good pair of boots, few partnerships feel as natural as the one between Arizona Farm Bureau and Boot Barn. That's why we're excited to share that Boot Barn is back as a member benefit provider, bringing even more value to your Farm Bureau membership.

Whether you're out in the field before sunrise, heading into town, or gearing up for a weekend rodeo, Boot Barn has long been a go-to destination for quality western wear and durable work gear. And now, as a Farm Bureau member, you can enjoy exclusive savings when you shop in-store.

A PARTNERSHIP ROOTED IN SHARED VALUES

Let's be honest, Farm Bureau members know the importance of quality, durability, and authenticity. It's not just about looking at the part; it's about gear that works as hard as you do. That's where Boot Barn comes in.

Boot Barn has built its reputation on offering dependable products that withstand real-life demands. From rugged boots to reliable denim and everyday essentials, their selection speaks directly to the agricultural community, rural lifestyle, and the cowboy culture in all of us.

So, bringing Boot Barn back into the Arizona Farm Bureau member benefits lineup? It just makes sense.

HOW THE BENEFIT WORKS

Taking advantage of this member perk is about as simple as it gets. When you visit a Boot Barn store, just show your Arizona Farm Bureau membership card at checkout. That's it, you'll unlock special savings on a regularly priced item.

A few things to keep in mind while you shop:

- This offer is valid for **in-store purchases only**
- Some brands and items are excluded from the offer
- Gift cards are not eligible for the discount
- Be sure to have your membership card ready at checkout

It's a straightforward way to stretch your dollar a little further while investing in gear you already trust.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR MEMBERS

Membership with Arizona Farm Bureau isn't just about advocacy for real, tangible value you can use in your everyday life. Benefits like this one are designed with you in mind, helping you save on the products you need and use most.

And let's face it those savings can add up over time. Whether you're replacing worn-out boots,

BOOT BARN[®]

America's Largest Western & Work Store

picking up a new jacket, or just browsing for something comfortable and practical, having access to exclusive deals makes a difference.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP

If you haven't taken advantage of your Arizona Farm Bureau member benefits lately, now's a great time to start. The Boot Barn offer is just one of many perks available, and it's a reminder that your membership goes beyond the usual.

Here are a few quick tips to maximize this benefit:

- Keep your membership card handy, snap a photo of it for easy access
- Plan your shopping trips around what you need most
- Ask store associates if you're unsure about eligible items
- Check in regularly for updates on new or return benefits

A little planning can go a long way in helping you get the most out of your membership.

A WARM WELCOME BACK

At the end of the

see **Boot Barn: A Perfect Fit** page 4

It's Simple. It's Easy. It's FREE!

Exclusive Farm Bureau Member Offer

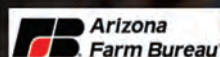
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BOOT BARN: A PERFECT FIT continued from Page 3

day, this renewed partnership is all about serving you, our members. We're always looking for ways to bring added value and meaningful benefits that fit your lifestyle.

FAQS

DO I NEED TO SIGN UP SEPARATELY FOR THE BOOT BARN BENEFIT?

Nope! If you're an active Arizona Farm Bureau member, you're already eligible.

CAN I USE THE OFFER ONLINE?

This particular benefit is available for in-store purchases only.

ARE ALL ITEMS INCLUDED?

Some exclusions apply, including select brands and

gift cards. Check with store staff if you're unsure.

WHAT DO I NEED AT CHECKOUT?

Just show your Arizona Farm Bureau membership card to receive the savings.

WRAPPING IT UP

The return of Boot Barn as a benefit provider is more than just a perk; it's a reflection of what Arizona Farm Bureau stands for: supporting members with practical, everyday value. With trusted gear, a familiar shopping experience, and exclusive savings, this partnership is one worth stepping into.

So go ahead, pull on those boots, head to your nearest Boot Barn, and make the most of your membership.

BUILT FOR THE WORKDAY: HOW ARIZONA FARM BUREAU MEMBERS SAVE WITH GRAINGER

By Staff Reports

If you spend your days managing a shop, maintaining equipment, or keeping an operation running, you already know this: the little things aren't little. A worn belt. A missing fitting. A filter you meant to replace last week. That's the difference between staying on schedule and losing half a day. That's where the Arizona Farm Bureau Grainger member benefit comes in. This isn't a flashy perk. It's a practical one. The kind that quietly saves you time, money, and frustration when the job needs to get done right.

WHAT THE GRAINGER BENEFIT OFFERS

Arizona Farm Bureau associate members get access to Exclusive member pricing on a wide range of essential products. Free shipping to keep your operation moving without added costs, and we're not talking about a handful of items.

THIS BENEFIT COVERS THESE CATEGORIES:

- Adhesives, sealants, and tape
- Cleaning sup- see **Built for the Workday** page 6

ENTERTAINMENT	ENTERTAINMENT	PERSONAL/BUSINESS	PERSONAL/BUSINESS

SPRING INTO SAVINGS WITH TICKETSATWORK: YOUR ARIZONA FARM BUREAU MEMBER ADVANTAGE

By Staff Reports

As Arizona's days grow longer and the desert bursts into bloom, there's a renewed sense of energy in the air, perfect for getting out, exploring, and making memories with family and friends. Spring and summer aren't just seasons; they're invitations to travel, relax, and reconnect. Whether you're mapping out a weekend getaway, planning a staycation, or simply looking for ways to make your budget stretch further, Arizona Farm Bureau Federation members have a powerful advantage at their fingertips.

Through its partnership with TicketsatWork, Arizona Farm Bureau offers members exclusive access to one of the nation's most comprehensive perks and discount platforms. And honestly, it's a game-changer. This program connects you to thousands of deals across travel, entertainment, dining, and everyday purchases, helping

you enjoy more while spending less.

Think about it: instead of paying full price for your next adventure, you could unlock savings on experiences you were already planning. From bucket-list destinations to hidden gems right in your backyard, TicketsatWork makes it easier to say "yes" to fun without second-guessing the cost.

HERE'S JUST A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE:

- Theme parks and attractions – Perfect for family outings, school breaks, or just a fun day in the sun
- Hotels and vacation packages – Whether it's a quick road trip or a longer escape, you'll find deals that make travel more affordable
- Local entertainment and events – Concerts, shows, and seasonal happenings across Arizona
- Dining, shopping, and everyday savings – Because who doesn't love a good deal on things you already buy?

And it doesn't stop there. For members who are always on the go, the newly launched TicketsatWork mobile app takes convenience to a whole new level. Designed with a focus on local deals, the app helps you discover nearby experiences in real time. Maybe you're already out and about and wondering what to do next—just pull up the app and browse options near you. From last-minute plans to exclusive seasonal promotions, it's like having a savings guide see [Spring into Savings](#) page 6

HEALTH CARE	VEHICLE	INSURANCE/FINANCE	TRAVEL
	PETS	CLOTHING	
FREE PRESCRIPTION ASSISTANCE	National Benefit Builders, Inc.	WORKBOOTS.COM	
	USAPetMeds		
SAVE UP TO 80% ON PRESCRIPTIONS!	MISC.	15% DISCOUNT EXQUISITESWIMWEAR.COM	

BUILT FOR THE WORKDAY *continued from Page 5*

plies and consumables

- Electrical and lighting
- Fleet and vehicle maintenance
- Hand tools and power tools
- HVAC filters and equipment
- Hydraulics and pneumatics
- Fasteners and motors
- Paint and finishing supplies
- Plumbing parts, valves, and fittings
- Power transmission and pumps
- Material handling equipment
- Manufacturing essentials like abrasives and lubrication
- Safety equipment, including footwear, facility safety, and personal protection

WHY IT MATTERS

Every operation depends on reliability. When equipment goes down or supplies run out, you don't just lose time. You lose momentum. And in this line of work, momentum matters. Having access to discounted pricing on the items you use most helps protect your bottom line. Free shipping removes another barrier, especially when you need something quickly and don't have time to shop around. It's about simplifying the process so you can focus on what matters.

BUILT FOR REAL WORK

Grainger is known for carrying products that don't just look good on paper; they hold up in the field, in the shop, and on the job site. From replacing worn parts to

upgrading tools or restocking safety gear, this benefit supports the daily demands of agriculture, operations, and small business management. It's not about buying more. It's about buying smarter.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Accessing the benefit is simple. First, create a Grainger account. Then, use the Arizona Farm Bureau account number when setting up your profile to unlock member pricing and free shipping. Once you're in, you'll have access to the full range of products and savings tied to your membership. If you don't have the account number, reach out to Arizona Farm Bureau Member Benefits for assistance.

A BENEFIT THAT WORKS AS HARD AS YOU DO

Some benefits sound good on paper but don't show up when you need them. This one does. It's there when you're replacing a part before sunrise. It's there when you're restocking supplies before a busy week. It's there when you're trying to stay efficient without overspending. It's simple. It's practical. And it's built for the way you work. Because at the end of the day, the right tools and supplies don't just make the job easier. They help you keep moving forward. 📦

SPRING INTO SAVINGS *continued from Page 5*

right in your pocket.

Getting started couldn't be easier, and the best part? It's completely free for Arizona Farm Bureau members. No hoops to jump through, no complicated steps. Just follow these simple instructions:

1. Visit www.TicketsatWork.com
2. Enter company code: **KBFAFBF**
3. Create your account and start browsing instantly

As a little extra incentive, all new users receive a welcome gift upon registration. It's a small but thoughtful way to say thank you, and a nice bonus as you begin exploring everything the platform has to offer.

What really makes TicketsatWork stand out, though, is how often it evolves. New deals are added regularly, so there's always something fresh to discover. Whether you're planning or making plans on the spot, it pays to check back often. You never know when the perfect deal will pop up.

So, as you step into the warmer months, take full advantage of this exclusive benefit. 📦



Life insurance is cheaper than you think.

WHY WAIT?

For less than \$1 a day, you can make sure your family will have money to pay for things like a mortgage, tuition and everyday expenses. Don't wait until it's too late.

Contact your Farm Bureau agent today.

 **FARM BUREAU
FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Individual eligibility for all product promotions is subject to underwriting review and approval. Estimated premium payment is for 20-year Income Guard Term Life Plan; Standard; 30-year-old male or female; non-smoker. Amount is for demonstrative purposes only. Contact your agent for a quote on your actual monthly premium payment. Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company*/West Des Moines, IA. *Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services. LI205-ML(6-25)

DATA CENTERS, WATER, AND ARIZONA AG continued from Page 1

farmer who grows vegetables, melons, cotton, and forage crops gives a boot-on-the-ground perspective on this. "We need water to stay in the hands of agriculture so that we can keep food abundant and affordable. We think water resources should remain in the communities where they were developed. We're simply not going to grow crops without water, and we can do some tremendous agricultural production, tremendous growing of crops here in Arizona if we have the water resources to do it."

AGRICULTURE BUILT THE WATER INFRASTRUCTURE WE ALL DEPEND ON

Here's something often overlooked: Arizona agriculture didn't just use water, it built the systems that deliver it today.

- Early 20th-century farmers and ranchers formed the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association and pledged their own land to finance Roosevelt Dam (completed in 1911). That project created the Salt River Project (SRP), which still supplies reliable water and power to the entire Phoenix metro area.
- Decades later, agricultural leaders were key advocates for the Central Arizona Project (CAP), the 336-mile canal that brings Colorado River water to central Arizona, initially to help farms, but now serving millions of urban residents and businesses.

These landmark projects were funded and maintained through agricultural efforts. The infrastructure we all rely on for homes, businesses, data centers, and future growth exists because farmers had the vision and took the financial risk. That legacy gives agriculture a strong voice in water policy discussions—and a proven track record of stewardship. As a result, we're committed to being engaged and transparent about our water use.

DATA CENTERS AND WATER: CONTEXT MATTERS

Recent coverage from The Arizona Republic provides numbers on current data centers' water footprint, while these numbers are expected to grow. Using air-quality and power records, reporters identified at least 71 data center campuses in Maricopa County with 2.3 gigawatts of capacity, enough to power 300,000 to 500,000 homes.

- Statewide direct cooling water use in 2025 was estimated at roughly 905 million gallons (about 2,777 acre-feet).
- Even including indirect water for electricity generation, the current total remains a tiny fraction, well under 1%, of Arizona's overall water portfolio.
- Projections for full-build-out show growth, (still around 70 to 74% statewide and around 35% in the Phoenix metro).
- Most concern centers around managed growth and Arizona's continuing drought.

Many new data centers are adopting dry cooling, reclaimed wastewater, or zero-water technologies, show-

ing the industry is innovating too.

The Republic rightly notes community concerns and the need for transparency, but the reporting consistently shows data centers are not the primary driver of water stress. Drought, Colorado River shortages, and long-term population growth remain the bigger challenges.

Arizona Farm Bureau's official positions on water as outlined in our policy documents advocate for statewide planning with local control, recognizing that agriculture has already dramatically improved efficiency, producing more with less water than we did decades ago, while delivering massive economic and food security value. We support transparency and conservation across all users but highlight that ag water ultimately serves everyone through the local and national food supply and the infrastructure agriculture helped build.

AGRICULTURAL WATER USE IS WATER USE FOR ALL OF US

When Arizona farmers apply water to grow crops, that water produces food that feeds families across the country and supports our state's economy. It maintains the canals, dams, and delivery systems that now serve cities, industries, and tech. Every efficient acre of alfalfa, lettuce, or cotton helps stretch our finite supplies while delivering high-value nutrition and economic returns.

Arizona agriculture has a strong conservation story: We use the same amount of water today as we did in 1957, yet we produce far more thanks to drip irrigation, precision farming, overall technology advances in irrigation management and on-farm investments. We've cut per-acre water use dramatically while boosting yields, proving we can do more with less.

In water-scarce times, the conversation shouldn't be about pitting sectors against each other. It should be about smart, balanced policies that recognize agriculture's irreplaceable contributions: national food security, local resilience, economic stability, and the infrastructure legacy that benefits every Arizonan.

LOOKING FORWARD TOGETHER

As data centers expand, the agriculture community supports continued innovation, transparency, and collaboration across all water users. We've long advocated for groundwater management policy that protects historic agricultural rights and invests in conservation and efficiencies that benefit all sectors.

Agriculture isn't just another water user; it's the sector that literally grew the systems we all share and puts food on tables locally and nationwide. By keeping Arizona farms strong, we keep our food supply secure, our rural communities vibrant, and our shared water resources working for everyone.

Farmers are proud to be part of Arizona's future. Let's make sure policy decisions reflect the full value of agriculture—not just the gallons, but the food, jobs, infrastructure, and security it delivers for all of us.

"Water is key; we're not going to make or grow anything in this country, especially not going to grow anything in agriculture without it," said Boelts in a statement to The Arizona Capitol Times. 🍷



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Membership Benefits

www.AZFB.org
480-635-3609

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