

## 2011 AFBF State Farm Bureau Awards Program

State Name: **Ohio**

Program Area: **Member Services**

### **10 points - Member Involvement:**

Member Services programs for Ohio Farm Bureau members can be divided into three categories. First, there are numerous insurance programs offered through Nationwide Insurance, which began business in 1926 as the Ohio Farm Bureau Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, and Medical Mutual of Ohio, one of the country's oldest and most trusted insurance companies offering quality health insurance products for more than 70 years. These insurance programs are offered for some products at discounted premium rates, and some products are offered exclusively to Ohio Farm Bureau members. The second category is affinity discount programs that are agreements between Ohio Farm Bureau and the member service providers. The third category includes special programs or resource materials developed for use by Ohio Farm Bureau members. The committee that is responsible for Ohio Farm Bureau member services programs is the organization committee that is composed of members of the Ohio Farm Bureau board of trustees. Administrative responsibilities for member services programs belong to the OFBF senior director of business development. The senior director provides training and promotional materials detailing member services to field staff for use in membership recruitment and retention activities. The Ohio Farm Bureau field staff (Organization Directors) provide training and promotion materials to the volunteers who are involved in the annual membership campaign. The annual volunteer membership campaign is a highly coordinated effort to increase member retention and new member recruitment involving county volunteers. Each volunteer received training about the Farm Bureau organization and member services programs available for Ohio Farm Bureau members to help them recruit members. During the 2011 campaign, a total of 1,490 different volunteers signed 4,941 members of which 1,472 were new members.

### **10 points - Communications:**

Member services information is provided to Ohio Farm Bureau members through two main publications. The *Our Ohio* magazine distribution five times per year provides useful information about member benefits, agriculture, travel, home and garden, healthy living, food and what the Ohio Farm Bureau has accomplished in working on their behalf. The *Buckeye Farm News* publication reaches farmer members 14 times per year with information more relevant to members involved in production agriculture. In addition to the feature publications, Ohio Farm Bureau provides current information on its Website, [www.ofbf.org](http://www.ofbf.org). An entire section of the Website is specifically dedicated to providing members with information to help them access member services programs. Many of the member services programs highlighted on the Website provide members with direct links to the outside vendors providing the savings opportunity. A Social Media component was further enhanced in 2011 expanding a presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The goal is to share the news and views of hard working members to the average consumer who may be generations removed from any direct ties to agriculture. Ohio Farm Bureau published an updated guide to social media to provide members with instruction for engaging through this platform. Facebook includes pages for Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, Our Ohio, and Town Hall Ohio. Twitter account holders can follow @OhioFarmBureau and @OurOhio to join in the conversation, receive the latest information and connect to the organization like never before. Ohio Farm Bureau also established two channels on YouTube, one for Ohio Farm Bureau and one for Our Ohio. Members can view an extensive archive of Ohio Farm Bureau and Our Ohio videos, share them via email and social networks, and create their own accounts to receive updates and provide feedback. We continue to experiment to find effective ways to promote services to members through these new resources.



Political and policy information is provided as a member service under a program called "Power Communications." The *POWER* in POWER Communications is an acronym: Policy Outreach With Effective Results. Five types of POWER Communication messages are e-mailed to Farm Bureau members and leaders,

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state board and staff: 1) Weekly Public Policy Update 2) Issue Briefing 3) Action Alert 4) Political Update and 5) Policy Development Discussion Sheet. Local, state, and national issues; and policy, political, and legal affairs information is shared through POWER Communication messages, and member involvement or assistance is requested when needed. All interested OFBF members are eligible to sign up for the weekly POWER Communication: Public Policy Update. The Public Policy Update provides a recap of what bills were introduced, committee hearings held and highlights of Farm Bureau members testifying, legal rulings, and legislative/regulatory action taken during the past week that is relevant to Farm Bureau policy. In addition, the weekly update lists upcoming events or issues that members should be aware of.

### **10 points - Planning:**

Ohio Farm Bureau Federation member services programs are directed by the organization committee of the OFBF board of trustees. The committee recommends approval of new programs to the OFBF board of trustees and evaluates current programs that are being offered to OFBF members. This committee must give consideration to how a program will fit the vision statement of Ohio Farm Bureau Federation: to create a partnership between farmers and consumers that meets consumer needs and ensures agricultural prosperity in a global marketplace. As a part of the vision, OFBF has developed "Indicators of Success," which describe how we will recognize success when we see it. A strong organization is one of these indicators, and we state that "we will continue to grow a strong membership representing member interests, increasing member involvement and expanding member services." There are four factors for member services quality assurance in Ohio: brand recognition, tangible value, perceived value and member utilization. Member service programs that meet the standards for benefit program quality assurance generally meet with high member acceptance and in turn support new member acquisition and membership retention efforts.

The objectives of the member services programs in Ohio Farm Bureau are to provide members with resource information they need and opportunities for financial savings through special programs designed to meet member needs. Progress toward goals and objectives of the member services programs are monitored by the organization committee of the Ohio Farm Bureau board of trustees. During meetings of the committee, a periodic review of existing member services programs as well as consideration of any new programs proposed to be offered to Ohio Farm Bureau members are conducted. In reviewing the current programs, as much information as possible is provided to the committee to characterize the level of member participation and the value of savings members receive. This committee serves an important role in providing direction to the member services program to ensure that member needs are being addressed through savings and resource information programs.

The member services process for the Ohio Farm Bureau includes, but is not limited to the following steps: 1. Develop vendor/partner contact relationship. 2. Define the member service offering. 3. Reach an agreement in principle. 4. Management Cabinet review. 5. Legal review of agreement including AFBF approval for use of marks as appropriate. 6. Organization committee review and recommendation. 7. Marketplace background check. 8. Develop launch plan. 9. Develop marketing materials. 10. Execute launch on target date. 11. Staff, county office and volunteer training. 12. Evaluation.

**10 points - Improvement over previous year:** Our Business Development processes help to ensure that each year improvements are made. Business Development is to function as a Development Center for the purpose of proposing, evaluating, presenting and assisting with the implementation of innovations for Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. Business Development is to provide leadership to member services development and innovation. Business Development is to conduct research and development activities related to new processes and procedures designed to enhance administrative processes between Ohio Farm Bureau, County Farm Bureaus, Vendors (Partners) and Members.

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There were a number of new member services launched and enhancements made in this year. Sedgwick CompManagement provided expanded workers compensation insurance savings tiers for member employers. Great Wolf Lodge began offering members discounts on overnight stays and waterpark admissions. The Ohio Farm Bureau and the Longaberger Company have partnered to create a commemorative canning basket featuring the Farm Bureau's consumer brand "Our Ohio."



For a limited time, Bob Evans Restaurants launched a discount coupon program for dine-in and carry-out items. Bob Evans is an Ohio based company that shares many of Ohio Farm Bureau's values that will hopefully result in a successful, long term relationship. Ohio Farm Bureau also partnered with Bob Evans in the Ohio State Fair Sale of Champions.

### 60 points - Results:



Nationwide Insurance continues to be a core provider of many of our member services programs. Ohio Farm Bureau's sponsorship relationship with Nationwide began with the company founding in 1926. The products available for Ohio Farm Bureau members include standard auto, non-standard higher risk auto, boat, recreational vehicle, motorcycle, snowmobile, ATV, personal watercraft, home, tenant, condo, farm, travel accident, trip cancellation, Veterinary Pet Insurance, Nationwide Bank and specialty health products.

Our member health plans provider is Medical Mutual of Ohio offering a variety of individual health plan benefit designs. All give members access to the SuperMed Plus network, which is the largest network of doctors and hospitals in Ohio. Members can even choose a plan compatible with a tax-advantaged health savings account.



OFBF members who are employers have access to workers' compensation group rating programs administered by CompManagement, Inc., A Sedgwick CMS Company. A total of 2,565 agriculture industry employers are currently enrolled in the program. A total of 77.79 percent of all agricultural employers enrolled in group rating programs in Ohio choose to participate in the Ohio Farm Bureau program. There were 8,859 employers participating across all industries.



OFBF participates in some of American Farm Bureau's member service programs including the Dodge and Grainger programs. Since the Dodge program began in 1992, OFBF members have purchased 12,523 vehicles and received rebates totaling \$6,261,500.

OFBF members have used the Grainger program to purchase over \$1,090,000 worth of tools and industrial supplies since January 1, 2011 and are on pace to break \$1,750,000. This would be an all time high for Ohio.



Choice Hotels discount program has continued to grow in Ohio. Members were responsible for net booked revenue of \$340,459 since Jan 1 which is an increase of 37 percent.



The Buying Local Directory at OurOhio.org provides consumers the information they need to buy locally produced agricultural products. The service features an online interactive map enabling consumers to search for local agricultural businesses and events by county. To qualify for the Buying Local Directory, businesses must be OFBF members and fall into one of these related categories: roadside stands or markets, farm markets, farmers' markets, wineries, Christmas tree farms, pick-your-own or U-pick, garden centers/greenhouses, agritourism, produce auctions or community supported agriculture. The business may also provide agriculture-related entertainment programming such as hayrides or a corn maze.

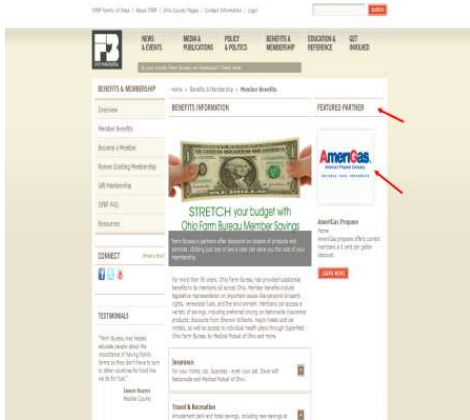
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## The President’s Award

The Ohio Farm Bureau leadership has dedicated considerable time to “rationalize programs and services” as one of the 5 radical changes for associations identified in the management book *Race for Relevance* by Harrison Coerver and Mary Byers. According to the authors, the typical trade association tries to do too much. They attempt to provide a complete menu of programs, services, products, etc. Associations continue to add to their offerings and rarely discontinue any. The result of these practices is an every expanding array of the average associations benefits and fee-for-service programs. They identify the “Pareto Principle” holds true for associations as 80% or more of the value members receive are derived from 20% of the programs and services.

This program year we worked to better focus our communications related to our member services through a “Featured Member Service of the Month” initiative. The objective was to have a timely and relevant message about member services while removing some of the “clutter” that comes with presenting all of the services all of the time. We chose to focus on three areas each month; one member service, one Nationwide product and one Medical Mutual of Ohio product each month. The featured services were identified and provided to the Ohio Farm Bureau departments and field staff so that they could focus on these specific topics in state publications, website positioning and county newsletters. As a

Ohio Farm Bureau Featured Member Service of the Month Initiative			
Month:	Member Service:	Nationwide:	Medical Mutual of Ohio
November 2010	Bob Evans	AgriChoice	Healthcare Re-forum
December 2010	Reward Program	Tenant/Condo	Standard 80/90 Plans
January 2011	Jackson Hewitt	Recreational Vehicle	Value Plans
February 2011	Grainger Industrial Supply	Motorcycle/Snow/ATV	Health Savings Account
March 2011	Sherwin Williams	Accidental Death Policy	Dental
April 2011	Choice Hotels	Boat	Vision
May 2011	Amusement Parks	Nationwide Bank	Wellness Features
June 2011	Car Rental	Travel Medical Coverage	EyeMed
July 2011	Ohio State Park Resorts	Auto	Health Risk Assessment
August 2011	STAPLESlink Program	CountryChoice	High Deductible Plan
September 2011	AmeriGas	Homeowners	MMO Network
October 2011	GM Rebate Program	Pet Insurance	Paperless EOB



result of this initiative, we were able to provide members with a greater depth of understanding of the member services which had significant participation and value proposition for them. Within the Member Services section of the Ohio Farm Bureau’s [ofbf.org](http://ofbf.org) website (left image), we identified the providers as the “Featured Partner” prominently displaying their logo, program description and link to their website. This initiative provided the publications staff with direction for planning feature stories and advertising placement.

We will expand on the effort to rationalize programs and services utilizing the parameters suggested by the authors; Does it relate to the mission? Life cycle position? Percent member utilization? Financial performance? Effective use of human capital? Available elsewhere? Would we start this program again today?

One of our key resources in communicating the relevance of the organization to many of our members is our Nationwide Insurance agents and staff. During our most recent Agent Visitation Week, a week designated for Ohio Farm Bureau staff to visit all 471 Nationwide insurance agencies in Ohio, we developed a membership sales kit to help the agent to explain the new member benefits, activities and experiences. The kit included Velvet ice cream coupons, Longaberger basket offer, Buying local directory/coupons, member benefit fliers, and the sample *OurOhio* magazine. The kit also included descriptions of projects that the agent could engage with their county Farm Bureau resulting in membership and insurance policy sales. This project was also presented at the AFBF Member Services conference in August where several states expressed interest in developing kits for agency visitations in their respective states.