

# 2014: A YEAR *in* REVIEW

Your membership helped us get the job done at the statehouse, in Washington, D.C. and in local communities across Ohio.



## IMPACTING POLICY

This year, 95 percent of candidates who were named a "Friend of Agriculture" or "Friend of Farm Bureau" won their races in the November elections. Ohio Farm Bureau had success in the Statehouse on numerous environmental, business climate and natural resource issues. At the federal level, we advocated for an improved farm bill, immigration reform and workable regulations. Events such as farm tours, Ag Day at the Capital and the county presidents' trip to Washington, D.C. connected policymakers with Ohio farmers, and the AgriPOWER program continued to develop new advocates for agriculture and rural Ohio.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

Six Ohio county Farm Bureaus were honored for their programs through American Farm Bureau's County Activities of Excellence awards. An additional 18 counties submitted nominations. Through events such as the Ohio State Fair and the Ohio Farm and Food Leadership Forum, we helped build support for the state's top industry. The Young Agricultural Professional program continued to grow attendance at its outreach events. Through *Our Ohio* magazine, *Our Ohio* television, *Town Hall Ohio* and social media we connected hundreds of thousands of Ohioans to the issues affecting the food and farm community.



## ADDRESSING THE ISSUES

From water quality issues to addressing the public's expectations about food production, Ohio Farm Bureau offered a platform for members to share their stories. Farm Bureau committed \$1 million for a water quality action plan that will help improve Ohio's water resources. The organization also helped the media and the public understand farmers' commitment to finding solutions. Farm Bureau members made recommendations on policies and programs such as the future of Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Farm Bureau legal staff served as resources to help farmers make informed decisions on issues such as CAUV and oil and gas leasing.



## STATE ISSUE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### WATER QUALITY

Because of Farm Bureau support, the Ohio General Assembly passed legislation that will help farmers better target fertilizer application, save money and keep more phosphorus on their fields. Farm Bureau took the lead after the Toledo water usage ban by creating an action plan and setting aggressive goals for nutrient management training. The organization committed \$1 million for a water quality action plan that will help improve Ohio's water resources.

### NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY

Farm Bureau helped rural counties impacted by oil and natural gas drilling by securing an increase in the percent of revenue from the proposed severance tax change going to those counties. Farm Bureau continues to fight for an even larger increase for this impacted part of the state. Farm Bureau significantly improved renewable energy legislation in an attempt to increase investment and growth in that industry.

### EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Farm Bureau helped our next generation of farmers now in high school by successfully protecting a funding formula for Agricultural and Environmental Science programs. The organization created the Advancing Agriculture + Envisioning the Future Advisory Committee to help position OSU College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences as a leader in the university system. The organization also helped train hundreds of FFA students on how to advocate for agriculture.

### CAUV & TAXES

Farm Bureau is conducting a study of all Ohio taxes and their impact on farmers as well as thoroughly examining the details of the CAUV calculation to determine what can be done to provide solutions.

### AGRITOURISM

Farm Bureau helped introduce legislation encouraging agritourism opportunities by protecting farms from lawsuit liability and eliminating burdensome zoning barriers.

### INVASIVE SPECIES

Because of Farm Bureau support, legislation was passed that grants Ohio Department of Agriculture sole and exclusive authority to identify and regulate invasive plant species.



Hundreds of farmers turn out for nutrient management training sessions as Ohio Farm Bureau launched its water quality initiative.



Lawmakers helped celebrate agriculture by holding a hearing at Ohio Farm Bureau's Ohio State Fair exhibit.



Left: Farmer Andy Lynd testifies at the Statehouse. Right: Sen. Rob Portman is recognized for his support for farmers.



Farmer John Davis meets with Supreme Court Justice Judi French during her successful re-election campaign.

## FEDERAL ISSUE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### FARM BILL

Farm Bureau advocated for members as Congress passed a five-year farm bill with new programs for farmers that provide real risk management tools, improve crop insurance and help beginning farmers. The organization partnered with Ohio State University, Farm Credit and U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct five successful farmer education sessions around the state.

### FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY

Farm Bureau continues to provide input on the Food Safety Modernization Act rules. Farm Bureau consulted members statewide and then provided official comment on these rules. The organization was successful in requesting redrafted rules to further protect Ohio's produce farmers.



County Farm Bureau presidents engage on the issues during a trip to Washington, D.C.



Farmers have lunch with state lawmakers during Ag Day at the Capital.

### REDUCED REGULATORY BURDENS

Because of Farm Bureau pressure, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration issued a formal guideline that postharvest activities (including drying and storing grain) are exempt from OSHA regulations on farms with fewer than 10 employees. With bipartisan support, the U.S. House passed a bill to rein in U.S. EPA's power grab in trying to regulate Ohio's ditches and waterways.

### WATERWAY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Waterway legislation (WRRDA) was passed into law and with Farm Bureau encouragement, every member of Congress from Ohio voted for the bill. Having a modern lock and dam system is critical to Ohio agricultural trade as 51.8 million tons of grain is shipped using the Ohio River annually.

### LABOR AND IMMIGRATION

Ohio Farm Bureau members were given a private meeting with Speaker John Boehner to explain why reform is needed for their individual farms. Farm Bureau members also flew to Washington, D.C. and met with nearly every Ohio congressman to deliver the message that Ohio farmers use migrant labor and must have reform. Farm Bureau members were provided information and attended many town hall meetings around the state to advocate for reform.



Ohio Farm Bureau's Young Agricultural Professionals and the AgriPOWER class developed advocacy skills during a joint trip to Washington, D.C.



State lawmakers meet with future leaders in the Capitol Challenge program, which invites young people to get involved in issues facing their communities.

## LOCAL PROGRAMS

This year, six Ohio county Farm Bureaus were recognized through American Farm Bureau's County Activities of Excellence awards for their local programs. Here's a look at the winners:



### Franklin County Farm Bureau | *Breakfast on the Farm*

Breakfast on the Farm, conducted in partnership with Madison County Farm Bureau, invited the local urban/suburban community to enjoy breakfast and experience agriculture. It was a collaborative group of farmers, Farm Bureau members and agricultural related partners providing a hands-on opportunity for the community to experience.



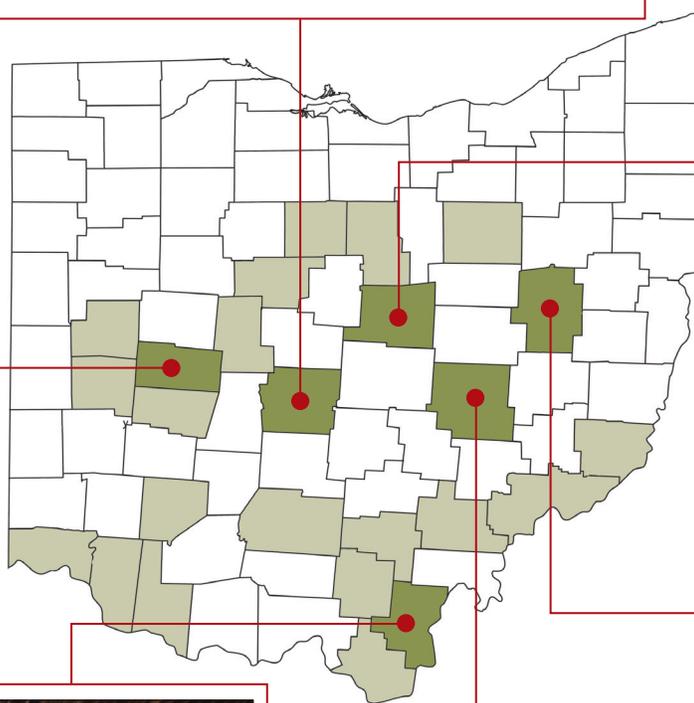
### Knox County Farm Bureau | *Taste of Summer*

The county Farm Bureau hosted a "friend-raising" event at Ke-Car Farms, a beef cattle farm in Danville. The farm welcomed 120 guests with a local wine and craft beer tasting and hors d'oeuvres accompanied by a tour of the farm. Following the cocktail hour, guests were seated under a tent and enjoyed a four-course dinner prepared by a local chef.



### Champaign County Farm Bureau | *Farm Watch*

Farm Watch is a joint rural crime watch program between the local sheriff department and the county Farm Bureau. In order to inform as many rural residents as possible when a crime has been committed, the sheriff's department notifies the county Farm Bureau of the crime, location and any other important details. The Farm Bureau then sends out an email blast to all members to inform them of the crime. Members also get free Farm Watch signs to post on their barns and outbuildings.



### Gallia County Farm Bureau | *Agriculture Awareness Day*

This event provided an educational, free field trip for all 4th graders in the county and city schools. Local members and producers provided a 10-minute, hands-on educational presentation about agriculture. A "Design Your T-shirt Contest" was held for all kids attending prior to the event, drawing a picture of "what agriculture means to them".



### Muskingum County Farm Bureau | *ATV Conservation & Farm Tour*

This event connected community members with farmers. 310 people on 135 ATVs traveled more than 40 miles through eight unique agriculture operations. Visitors were able to see first-hand how these farms operated and had 30 minutes at each stop to listen to the owners and ask questions.



### Tuscarawas County Farm Bureau | *Farmtastic Google Agventures*

Teaming with four other counties (Carroll, Cuyahoga, Harrison and Jefferson), this collaboration developed science and reading curriculum focusing on agricultural topics for use with 4th and 5th graders. An "Agventure" consists of students receiving an Ag Mag that provides background on a topic followed by an interactive 45-minute session using Google Hangouts. This provides an audio/video link between multiple classrooms and agricultural experts.

Additional county Farm Bureaus whose programs were considered for the award include:

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|----------|----------------|
| Hamilton | Jackson/Vinton |
| Clinton  | Washington     |
| Clermont | Union          |
| Crawford | Shelby         |
| Marion   | Miami          |
| Richland | Clark          |
| Wayne    | Monroe         |
| Ross     | Brown          |
| Lawrence | Athens         |