



**Wisconsin  
Farmers  
Union**

UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE



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farm women  
building  
networks

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Farmers  
Union  
members  
gather in  
San Diego

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# WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS

April 2017

Volume 74 | No. 3

## Budget burns rural America



**Darin Von Ruden**  
WFU President

**S**ince President Trump took office, many Americans have been waiting to see what the business mogul has in mind for the rural population that was largely to thank for his win.

So what does Trump's newly announced fiscal year 2018 federal

budget serve up for family farmers and ranchers?

Deep, wounding cuts to rural America.

Trump's budget blueprint, announced March 16, calls for a drastic reduction in spending on agriculture and rural related agencies and programs. The cuts coincide with the worst farm economy in well over a decade and an inadequate safety net that is hamstrung by \$23 billion in budget cuts.

In mid-March, National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson pointed out that the last thing farmers need right now is more cuts to agencies and programs that provide incredibly important work, especially in the midst of the current farm crisis. These cuts and the message they send

**See p.2 ▶ BUDGET**



*Above: The 2016-2017 National Farmers Union Beginning Farmer Institute wrapped up in San Diego in March.*

## 'An eye-opening experience' Six Wisconsin farmers graduate from BFI

**Josh Stolzenburg**  
Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union

**S**AN DIEGO — From Washington, D.C. to Salinas, California to San Diego, the three trips we took as part of the 2016-2017 National Farmers Union's Beginning Farmer Institute were an eye-opening experience. All 17 participants from across the country, including six from Wisconsin, seemed incredibly satisfied with the programming, venues and each other.

**See p.3 ▶ BFI**

## Think spring! WFU sets spring meetings around state

**W**isconsin Farmers Union is mid-way through Spring Meeting season, with two meetings coming up, one April 3 in Ashland and the other April 5 in Marshfield. Each meeting will offer time for networking, a complimentary meal and an update from Wisconsin Farmers Union staff on farm policy and the impact of the proposed state budget on rural Wisconsin.

- **ASHLAND:** Monday, April 3, Freehands Lakeside, 2521 W. Lakeshore Dr., Ashland (5pm Tour, 6pm Meal, 7pm Legislative Issues and Chapter Development)
- **MARSHFIELD:** Wednesday, April 5, Ag Research Station, 2611 Yellowstone Dr., Marshfield. (11am Budget Talk, 12pm Lunch, 1pm Tour of Dairy Facility at M605 Drake Ave., Stratford)

There is no cost to attend. Come learn more about WFU and the work the farm organization is doing on behalf of family farmers and rural communities.

"The Spring Meetings are a good chance to connect with other farmers and get an update on what's happening in farm policy before we head back into the fields," said Wisconsin Farmers Union President Darin Von Ruden. "With funding for rural initiatives in limbo, it's more important than ever that farmers stay well-informed and have a voice in the ring for them; Wisconsin Farmers Union can be that voice."

Pre-registration is appreciated for meal count, but not required. Please RSVP to Deb Jakubek at 715-590-2130 or djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com.

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## WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION NEWS

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Wisconsin Farmers Union  
117 W. Spring St.  
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ph: 715-723-5561 • 800-272-5531 • fx: 715-723-7011  
[www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com](http://www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com)

### WFU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<b>Darin Von Ruden</b> President District 5 608-634-4695	<b>Linda Ceylor</b> District 1 715-567-1010
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	<b>Mark Liebaert</b> At-Large 715-398-5234

### WFU STATE OFFICE STAFF

<b>Tom Quinn</b> Executive Director 715-723-5561 • <a href="mailto:tquinn@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">tquinn@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Diane Tirry</b> Administrative Assistant 715-723-5561 • <a href="mailto:dtirry@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">dtirry@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Cathy Statz</b> Education Director 715-723-5561 • <a href="mailto:cstatz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">cstatz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Amanda Kollwitz</b> Accounting/Member Services 715-723-5561 • <a href="mailto:akollwitz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">akollwitz@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Danielle Endvick</b> Communications Director 715-471-0398 • <a href="mailto:dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Tommy Enright</b> Communications Associate 715-513-0460 • <a href="mailto:tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Sarah Lloyd</b> Special Projects Coordinator 608-844-3758 • <a href="mailto:sllloyd@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">sllloyd@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Deb Jakubek</b> Regional Membership Coordinator 715-590-2130 • <a href="mailto:djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Kirsten Slaughter</b> Program & Membership Organizer 608-514-2031 • <a href="mailto:kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Kara O'Connor</b> Government Relations Director 608-514-4541 • <a href="mailto:koconnor@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">koconnor@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Nick Levendofsky</b> Government Relations Associate 608-234-3741 • <a href="mailto:nickl@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">nickl@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>
<b>Brad Henderson</b> Facilities Manager, WFU Kamp Kenwood 715-214-7244 • <a href="mailto:bhenderson@wisconsinfarmersunion.com">bhenderson@wisconsinfarmersunion.com</a>

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### From p.1 ▶ BUDGET

to rural America are deeply disappointing.

President Trump's budget calls for a \$4.7 billion cut to USDA, a 21 percent drop from the previous budget. This huge cut to discretionary spending will put rural development, food safety, conservation and research programs in jeopardy.

According to *The Progressive Farmer*, The White House has stated USDA's budget proposal protects the department's core function while "streamlining, reducing or eliminating duplicative, redundant or lower priority programs where the Federal role competes with the private sector or other levels of government."

The President's plan also provides for a \$2.6 billion cut to Environmental Protection Agency funding. This 31 percent drop guts the agency's ability to provide important environmental services and pesticide approval. It even limits the administration's ability to rewrite or remove the unnecessary regulations that the President promised to address.

The budget calls for cuts to USDA county offices, an effort that was attempted the past two presidents but has been frequently blocked by Congress. The 2014 farm bill actually requires USDA to specifically detail to Congress any proposed cuts to Farm Service Agency offices.

The proposal would also gouge deep into areas such as Rural Development, eliminating several loan and grant programs including water and wastewater loans and grants to communities, a \$498 million program. Another proposed elimination is the Rural Business-Cooperative Service, a \$95 million program offering grants and loans for small rural start-up businesses and communities.

The budget proposed by the Trump administration

does not call on any changes to crop insurance.

If Trump has his way, funding would limit the USDA's statistical capabilities at the National Agricultural Statistics Service, "while maintaining funding to complete the Census of Agriculture."

Meanwhile, the budget proposes a \$54 billion increase for Defense spending, as well as more for national security and law enforcement.

The proposal does not add to the \$488 billion deficit already forecast by the Congressional Budget Office but instead includes cuts to several departments to offset the president's increased Defense spending.

The cuts to the USDA come after the House Agriculture Committee wrote a letter to colleagues in the Budget Committee in March asking to leave the Ag department untouched due to cuts in the 2014 Farm Bill, a decline in spending for food aid and struggles in the farm economy. Twelve farm and commodity groups also wrote the House and Senate appropriation committees, calling for a spending boost for farm programs because of the poor farm economy.

This attack on rural America also comes at a time when the USDA is without an Agriculture secretary to advocate for the department. As of *Wisconsin Farmers Union News* press time, Sonny Perdue, the president's nominee for Agriculture secretary, was one of the few remaining Cabinet nominees waiting to be confirmed, with a March 23 hearing set.

To this point, the president has put the needs of rural America and agriculture on the backburner, and, in many cases, on the chopping block.

Farmers Union calls on Congress to reject these budget cuts and adopt funding levels that ensure the success and vibrancy of farming communities and rural America.

SAVE THE DATE

## Midwest CSA Conference

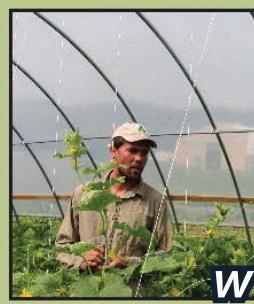
### December 7 & 8, 2017

Chula Vista Resort • Wisconsin Dells, WI



We invite you to join in two days of shared learning, practical workshops, and lively discussion, including keynote and general sessions to imagine together the future of the Community Supported Agriculture movement in our region.

Program developed by  
CSA farmers for CSA farmers  
[www.midwestcsa.com](http://www.midwestcsa.com)



[www.midwestcsa.com](http://www.midwestcsa.com)

**From p.1 ▶ BFI**

From a hops entrepreneur to small acreage market and CSA producers to large-acreage grazers, grain and vegetable producers, we managed to form a tight knit band for the whole of three weekends over six months and have gained much perspective from one another.

Melissa Miller and Tom Driscoll from the National Farmers Union office put together a tight and comprehensive program. (It was 95% Melissa, Tom would have me mention here, and he'd be right.) Classroom topics had little to do with production practices, which was both novel and welcomed in a program like this, at least in my experience.

Washington, D.C. might not be a place you'd think you'd pick to learn about farming, but it is the place to learn all about the bureaucracies of government programming related to agriculture and who is making the decisions that affect us all. My BFI group had the chance to meet with higher-up folks in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and its subsidiary programs like the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Farm Service Agency. Accessing these programs can be difficult to people who are new to the game, and we gained an introduction that makes the processes much less intimidating. We also got to eat at Founding Farmers, a fantastic restaurant owned by multiple Farmers Union state organizations.

The second trip in my BFI experience was arguably the highlight because of all the farm tours around Salinas, CA. My wife, who was also in my BFI class, joined me on this little adventure, and she was pregnant through the whole process and probably a little skeptical about what we had gotten ourselves into. She works in the local food and farmer support business and was thoroughly impressed with this aspect of seeing all of the different farms. The magnitude of scale in California agriculture, especially in organic vegetable production with their 4' beds cultivated one bed at a time, was breathtaking

and caused us all to think about what it would take to manage these types of operations. The vertical integration of production and marketing was also truly impressive. Plus, we got to meet the guy that made kale a thing way back in the 80's. No small feat.

Combining the final weekend of BFI with both the National Farmers Union Women's Conference and the National Convention was a perfect exclamation point to the process. The women in the BFI course sat on a panel for the Women's Conference and spoke to the difficulties of being both women farmers and beginning farmers. On top of that, there were some wonderfully engaging presenters on the final weekend splitting their time between our class and the women's conference. Laura Lengnick looked beyond the seeming rural/urban divide to how we can begin to integrate our outlook on regional economy. Poppy Davis spoke some hard truth about the intersection of the law and the tax code and where we were all probably doing things incorrectly. Lisa Kivirist outlined some creative solutions for diversifying income streams and agri-tourism.

Farm transition was a big topic for a lot of us and this was a much-discussed subject over the last weekend as well. Brittany Bula, one of our own Wisconsin participants is one of the leaders on this locally and has already written a nice piece on the subject for the Beginning Farmer's Forum on Facebook that the NFU office administers.

The deadline for next year's BFI round has come and gone, but I'd highly encourage anyone considering the program to apply in the future. I know of a few folks in Wisconsin that have applied this year, all deserving, and I sincerely hope they all get in. The more people we can put through this program, the stronger that Farmers Union will be.

*Josh Stolzenburg owns The Sand Box, a permaculture farm in Amherst with his spouse, Layne Cozzolino. He is a co-owner of North Wind Renewable Energy.*

**Give a Stronger Voice to Rural America  
Join Wisconsin Farmers Union and  
help preserve the economic health and  
sustainability of our rural communities.**

**Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Children under 21: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Household Type:**

Farm     Rural     Small Town     Urban

**Type of Farm:** *Check all that apply.*

Dairy     Poultry     Vegetables or Fruit

Beef     Crops     Organic

Hogs     Horses     Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership:** *Fee includes family unless student or organization is checked.*

New Member     Renewing Member

1 Year (\$30)     2 Years (\$55)

4 Years (\$100)     Lifetime (\$2000)

Student (\$15)     Organization (\$50)

**Join us today!****Mail this card to:**

Wisconsin Farmers Union  
117 W. Spring St. • Chippewa Falls, WI • 54729

**Or sign up online:**

[www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com](http://www.wisconsinfarmersunion.com)

**For more information, call 800-272-5531**

# Wisconsin showed up

## *WFU women stand out at Women's Conference*

**Mary Jo Borchardt**  
Columbia County Farmers Union

It is 7:30 pm on Friday, March 3 in San Diego. The sun has set and the chilly evening is a compelling argument for checking the weather forecast before packing only sleeveless garments upon heading out of Wisconsin. Approximately 50 women are assembled in the torch-lit enclosure of the Moray Lounge at the Catamaran Resort and our mutual intent is to make introductions and get to know the faces that will comprise the next day and a half of the National Farmers Union Women's Conference: Shaping the Future. It is an overly large group for any kind of cohesive discussion, so we began introducing ourselves to those seated around us. We shuffle around a bit, confusing the heck out of the waitress who is trying to serve drinks to moving targets, and began our gathering with what is often argued as the most important tool of a female farmer's toolbox: networking with other women. Simple conversations begun from "Hi, I'm Mary Jo from Wisconsin!" turn into stories of shared experiences, of challenges and triumphs, and new adventures. Usually this is the case. This was what I had come to expect, having attended several potlucks and women-centered farming events. On this night, however, the moment I mentioned Wisconsin to the latest woman seated beside me, I was met with an almost-eye-roll from the decidedly-not-Wiscon-

sinite. "Are you ALL from Wisconsin?!" she asked in a mostly-joking-but-almost-exasperated way. "Yes, there are a lot of us here," was what my brain on 10pm Central Standard Time remembers mumbling back.

It was true. Of the 50-ish women seated in friendly discussion, nearly a quarter of them were from Wisconsin. Fellow WFU members - take a hearty sense of pride in this fact. Twenty-two percent of the participants of the Women's Convention hailed from Wisconsin. Of the 10 presenters in the jam-packed schedule, two were our very own Kriss Marion and Lisa Kivirist. Wisconsin also dominated the most recent and largest class to date of Beginning Farmers Institute (BFI) attendees, boasting six of the 17 participants. We were a force! We represented. And our diverse numbers speak to the state of farming progress in our beloved home state. This is less exciting if one attended hoping to meet women from lots and lots of places, but for us of the Wisconsin Farmers Union, this is a testament to our powerful position in shaping the future of the family farm. Because we all know the statistics: the average American farmer is a white male in his 60s. If we are to save the family farm from extinction, we must turn that paradigm on its head.

And so we are - one convention, one potluck, one Facebook group forum, one list-serve, one campaign for local, state, and national government at a time.



**Above:** Representing WFU at the National Farmers Union Women's Conference March 3-5 in San Diego were, from left, WFU Communications Director Danielle Endvick, Holcombe; WFU Membership Coordinator Deb Jakubek, Amherst; April Prusia, New Glarus; Alicia Razvi, Stevens Point; Lisa Kivirist, Browntown; Kriss Marion, Blanchardville; WFU Government Relations Director Kara O'Connor, Madison; Jeanne Lydon, Marshall; and Mary Jo Borchardt, Poynette.

Why is a female-centered conference like this necessary? Why not simply present the information to any aspiring farmers who seek it out, regardless of gender? It turns out that we do this as well. The BFI program, gathered concurrently in San Diego, shared most of the same presenters as the Women's Conference but in their separate group. The women of the BFI class joined our Women's Conference for lunch on Saturday for a panel discussion on their experiences as female farmers. Folks, the stories they told were heartbreaking. One woman told us unabashedly that she realized early on that surviving as a farmer meant hiring that Average Farmer type to do her bidding in the auction ring, that prior to doing so, she was consistently outbid on principle alone. Another told us of a neighbor calling to buy corn. The neighbor insisted on dealing with this female farmer's father, instead of her. "Sure. You'll still have



**Above:** Mary Jo meets the Pacific Ocean. They hit it off nicely.



**Above:** Beginning Farmer Institute panelists share their experiences as female farmers over lunch.

**From p.4 ▶ WOMEN**

to make the check out to me." More often than not, these stories are the rule and not the exception. For this reason, the value of a female-centered forum like the NFU Women's Conference is priceless.

Here's another: 969,672.

According to the 2012 U.S. Ag Census, there are 969,672 female farmers in the United States. They control 7 percent of U.S. farmland and account for 3 percent of sales.

Take a moment to check in with your reaction to these numbers - are they higher or lower than your expectations? I'd reckon your answer has a lot to do with your farming peer group. Seen from the vantage point of my own — that group made up largely of "Soil Sisters" in the South Central part of the state — the numbers seem shockingly low. Yet given that the U.S. only started accounting for female farmers in 1978, it might be argued that our means of counting the women has not yet worked out the systemic kinks. Many women, as we know, farm with their spouses or partners. As the census currently recognizes only the

Principal Operator in a household, that designation most often falls to the man of the farm, leaving their female partners uncounted.

Women account for between 19 percent and 24.8 percent of elected officials in public office. While the sheer disproportionate representation of women in elected office might be discouraging, we learned that women win the races that they run for just as often as men. They're simply not running. Study after study shows that women tend to undervalue their professional skill. We learned that women most often need to be asked to run for office or for a board position. So ask them! We learned that when women simply show up, again and again, they become necessary cogs in the machine of democracy, and of cooperation. WFU women - join me in showing up!

Let us visualize together the three-legged stool that is the Farmers Union: Cooperation, Legislation, and Education. Our WFU board has demonstrated the Farmers Union commitment to these tenets with their offering of scholarships for women like me to

attend the Women's Conference. I was humbled and so grateful to be given this opportunity to represent our state in San Diego. I was thrilled to realize that we did so in such clearly disproportionate numbers. Our state membership total garnered only 4 voting spots at the convention, a pittance really when compared to other states' delegations, but there were 37 of us there showing up and representing in an unofficial capacity. Thirty-seven voices for Wisconsin - voices of women, men, seasoned farmers and new. Our diversity is one of our greatest assets. Let us continue to work together in this spirit of Cooperation to advocate for the family farm.



**Above:** Lisa Kivirist reads from her book *Soil Sisters*. **Left:** Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union President Alicia Razvi practices her stump speech in a group exercise on running for office.

## Volunteers sought for Kamp Kenwood clean-up day

**Brad Henderson**  
Facilities Manager

On Saturday, April 15, Wisconsin Farmers Union will host a volunteer appreciation and work day at WFU Kamp Kenwood. Friends and neighbors across Wisconsin are invited to come assist WFU as we prepare the camp for the 2017 season.

The day begins at 7am with coffee and pastry. After catching up with WFU friends and family (and meeting new ones) we'll start checking things off the list. Projects include painting benches and tables, moving furniture outdoors, washing windows and doors, spreading wood chips, gardening, and a wide range of projects designed to improve and beautify camp. Volunteers will also be encouraged to walk trails to sort woodland debris and cut back loose branches.

The event will be on, rain or shine. All you need to bring with you is a hat, a water bottle, sturdy shoes (no flip flops, please!) and your enthusiasm. Children are welcome, but are expected to work on the same project as their parents, and teens are organized into special teen groups. You are also encouraged to bring guests who have not been to Kamp Kenwood before. We provide the projects, the tools, and the direction.

Barbeque lunch will be served at 11:30am in the lodge. Projects will continue until everything is complete or 2pm (whichever comes first).

Those who have participated before have uniformly reported a deep satisfaction from putting in a wholesome day of work in support of WFU. And you can't beat the spirit and camaraderie!

Wisconsin  
Farmers Union  
**KAMP KENWOOD**

**SPRING  
FLING  
CLEAN-UP**

Saturday, April 15th  
7am-2pm  
19161 79th Ave.  
Chippewa Falls, WI

**Volunteers needed. Food served.  
RSVP to Brad - 715-214-7244**





**Left:** Representing Wisconsin Farmers Union at the National Farmers Union 115th Anniversary Convention this year in San Diego were: from left, (front row) Darin Von Ruden, Westby; Rick Adamski, Seymour; Maria Davis, Custer, holding Iris; Kara O'Connor, Madison; Lisa Kivirist, Brownstown; Cathy Statz, Chippewa Falls; April Prussia, New Glarus; Alicia Razvi, Stevens Point; Kriss Marion, Blanchardville; Miriam Valley, Sun Prairie; Josh Stolzenburg and Layne Cozzolino, both of Stevens Point; Nick Levendofsky, Madison; and Deb Jakubek, Amherst Junction; (back row) Chris Holman holding Eleanora, Custer; Dennis Rosen, Emerald; Lisa Severson, Eau Claire; Deb Rosen, Emerald; Kirsten Slaughter, Madison; Mary Jo Borchardt, Poynette; Andrew Cotter, Fitchburg; Killian Harnish, La Crosse; Jerry and Char Croes, Deer Park; Tom Quinn, Menomonie; Patty Edelburg, Scandinavia; Craig Myhre, Osseo; and Tommy Enright, Amherst. Not pictured: Danielle Endvick, Holcombe; Betty Anderson, Brodhead; Tenzin, Stacey and Iris Botsford, Athens; Ryan Stockwell, Medford; and Helen Quinn, Menomonie.

## FROM BARN TO BEACH: Thirty-seven WFU members head to San Diego for National Convention

**S**AN DIEGO – Thirty-seven Wisconsin Farmers Union members were among the nearly 500 farmers and ranchers who gathered in San Diego, California March 5-8 for the 115th National Farmers Union Anniversary Convention, where they joined in the important work of shaping NFU policy for the coming year.

“The National Convention is a place where members can voice their opinions and set the policy that NFU will work to have included in national policy in the next year,” said WFU President Darin Von Ruden. “Beyond that, it’s a gathering place that provides important interaction with fellow farmers from around the country.”

The convention brought together NFU members, experts and friends of agriculture for meetings, high-level panels, breakout sessions, award ceremonies and a local farms tour.

“It’s really invigorating to be a part of this democratic process where we can try to bring our common interests together,” said WFU board member and first-time national convention attendee Rick Adamski of Seymour. “Often we see a ‘divide and conquer strategy’ in our country, but if we can come together and work together to find that common ground, we can hammer out the details that will make a stronger future for Farmers Union and for family agriculture.”

“As a farmer-led organization, the state delegates are an important part of our truly grassroots process that takes place at convention,” said NFU President Roger Johnson. “This year’s deliberations are especially important, as family farmers and ranchers face a depressed farm economy, waves of consolidation, a new administration, and upcoming farm bill negotiation. Our members have worked hard to set positions that are representative of policy solutions that work for family agriculture and rural communities.”



**Left:** Serving as delegates for WFU in the policy process this year were, from left, Darin Von Ruden, Westby; Jerry Croes, Deer Park; Dennis Rosen, Emerald; and Rick Adamski, Seymour.



**Right:** Well-known Illinois Farmers Union member Larry Lieb “adopted” little Eleanora, daughter of WFU Board member Chris Holman and Maria Davis, as his honorary Farmers Union granddaughter at the convention.

## SAN DIEGO SCENES

### National Farmers Union Convention March 5-8, 2017

**Clockwise,  
from top right:**

National Farmers Union historian Tom Giessel shared his knowledge on Farmers Union history during two workshops; from left, WFU Membership Director Deb Jakubek, WFU Communications Director Danielle Endvick and Wood-Portage-Waupaca member Patty Edelburg posed for a photo outside the Catamaran Resort; WFU members were among a group pulled on stage for a luau dance-off; the Wood-Portage-Waupaca and South Central chapters were recognized for their membership efforts by National Farmers Union President Roger Johnson, far right; Kriss Marion of Blanchardville received the Silver Star Award for her work with the South Central chapter; National Youth Advisory Council members Miriam Valley, pictured, and Killian Harnish, addressed the convention; Char Croes, left, of Deer Park and Helen Quinn of Menomonie in a moment of laughter; and Stacey and Tenzin Botsford of Athens (pictured with daughter Iris) took part in the FUE Leadership Program in conjunction with convention.



# Chapter Chatter Share it here!

Submit chatter to Danielle at 715-471-0398 or [dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com)



## Pondering profitability

**Above:** The Chippewa County and Eau Claire County Farmers Union chapters hosted a March 15 workshop focused on dairy profitability. The event was funded through a grant from the WFU Foundation. To learn how your chapter can take advantage of the Small Grants Program, check out page 9.

## WFU members named Local Heroes

Several South Central Farmers Union members were among those recently honored with Edible Madison Local Hero Awards, which recognize dedication to the local food system in southern Wisconsin.

Earning the top honor in the Farm/Farmer category were Kriss and Shannon Marion of Circle M Market Farm in Blanchardville. The Marions run a CSA and bed and breakfast and are committed to encouraging future farmers. They teach organic farming and home-steading workshops and offer farm stays, where guests can be immersed in the daily rhythms of the farm.

Topping the Food/Beverage Artisan category were South Central Farmers Union members Anna Landmark and Anna Thomas Bates of Landmark Creamery, which crafts small-batch, seasonal, award-winning cheeses from the milk of cows, sheep and water buffalo.

Also recognized were REAP Food Group (Nonprofit), Viroqua Food Co-op (Food Shop), and Jeff Gauger of Beans'n Cream Coffeehouse (Chef/Restaurant).

## Apply for Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin

Farmers and others in Wisconsin's food industry who want to grow their local markets are encouraged to apply for a Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant. Man-

aged by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), the grants can help farms and business more efficiently process, market and distribute food in local markets including stores, schools and institutions.

Proposals must be received at DATCP by 4pm April 14, 2017. Each proposal must include a cover page, a completed budget template and three-page project description. The necessary documents can be found online at <https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/BuyLocalBuyWisconsinGrants.aspx>.

## BFI class supports fellow farmer

The Beginning Farmers Institute (BFI) through the National Farmers Union is a year-long education program for beginning farmers which brings farmers from various regions of the U.S. with diverse backgrounds and farm management practices together to develop leadership and farm management skills. Each BFI class meets three times throughout the year.

One member of the 2016-2017 BFI class, Dan Wal-dvogle, recently lost his wife to cancer. His fellow BFI participants have rallied together to support Dan in this time of grief and to ensure that their shared dream for Dan to run a cattle operation and butcher shop can be realized. Consider supporting the campaign at <https://www.gofundme.com/we-stand-with-dan>.

## FARMERS UNION HAPPENINGS

- **Chaseburg Local Farmers Union Meeting**, March 28, 8pm, The Hide-a-Way, 107 W Mill St, Chaseburg. Agenda: Report on F.U. Convention, spring planning and pizza.

- **National Farmers Union Beginning Farmers Institute Application Deadline**, March 30, details at [www.nfu.org](http://www.nfu.org).

- **WFU Spring Meeting**, April 3, Freehands Lakeside, 2521 W. Lakeshore Dr., Ashland. 5pm tour, 6pm meal, 7pm Legislative Issues and Chapter Development. RSVP to Deb at 715-590-2130 or [djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com).

- **WFU Spring Meeting**, April 5, Ag Research Station, 2611 Yellowstone Dr., Marshfield. 11am Budget talk, 12pm lunch, 1pm tour of dairy facility at M605 Drake Ave., Stratford. RSVP to Deb at 715-590-2130 or [djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:djakubek@wisconsinfarmersunion.com).

- **Soil Sisters: How Women Transform our Food System**, April 6, 6pm, Middleton Public Library Archer Room. Registration: [midlibrary.org/events](http://midlibrary.org/events)

- **FSMA Produce Safety Rule Info Session**, April 7, 10am to 1pm, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, 2740 W. Mason St., Green Bay, WI 54307.

- **Women, Food and Ag Network Plate to Politics**, April 8, 9am to 2:30pm, Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, W2493 Cty Rd ES, East Troy. Info: [www.wfan.org/east-troy-wisconsin-plate-to-politics/](http://www.wfan.org/east-troy-wisconsin-plate-to-politics/)

- **Wolf Summit II**, April 8, 9am to 2:30pm, Sugar Camp Town Hall, Sugar Camp. Registration is \$15; tickets available at [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

- **WFU Kamp Kenwood Clean-Up**, April 15, 7am to 2pm, 19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls. RSVP to Brad, 715-244-7244.

- **Tour de Kolacky bicycle ride with Taylor-Price County Farmers Union**, June 17, 9am, Phillips High School, 900 Flambeau Ave., Phillips, <http://www.thecrazyloon.com/tour-de-kolacky/>

- **Soil Sisters: A Celebration of Wisconsin Farms & Rural Life**, Aug. 4-6, Brodhead area, <http://soilsisters.wixsite.com/soilsisters>

- **Summer Conference and County Presidents Meeting**, August 17, WFU Kamp Kenwood, 19161 79th Ave., Chippewa Falls

- **National Farmers Union Fall Fly-In**, Sept. 10-13, [www.nfu.org](http://www.nfu.org)

- **Midwest CSA Conference**, Dec. 7-8, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells, [midwestesa.com](http://midwestesa.com)

- **87th annual Wisconsin Farmers Union State Convention**, Feb. 2-4, 2018, Chula Vista Resort, Wisconsin Dells

*Submit events to Danielle Endvick at [dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:dendvick@wisconsinfarmersunion.com).*

# Funding available through WFU Foundation grants

The Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation maintains a modest Small Grant Program to provide support to a variety of farm and rural organizations and projects. Grant amounts are generally \$50 to \$1,000, and occasionally larger.

These grants are intended to support programs that:

- Foster family farming
- Enhance the quality of rural life
- Provide opportunities for public education and dialogue on key issues
- Encourage cooperative economic development

Grant requests must meet the WFU Foundation's mission: *The Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation supports projects and programs for all ages that foster family farming, rural life and public education on the important role of cooperatives and agriculture in society.*

Any Wisconsin nonprofit organization or individual with proposals meeting WFU's mission are eligible for consideration. Preference is given to organizations or individuals that demonstrate ability to raise matching funds (cash or in-kind).

The Foundation Grant Committee meets quarterly to consider applications. Quarterly deadlines are **March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31**. Applicants will be notified by the 15th day of the month after the deadline under which the application was made.

Successful applicants must, within a year of the grant's acceptance, submit a report demonstrating how the funding was used. Small Grant funds are made available from the donations of WFU members and partnering cooperative businesses.

## Grants awarded in the first quarter of 2017 include:

- Wisconsin FFA Foundation State Convention
- Wisconsin 4-H Foundation Green Clover Donation
- Friends of St. Joseph Hospital Family Family Event
- Minnesota Cooperative Education Foundation William Nelson scholarship
- Cornucopia Institute Sponsorship
- WI Dairy & Beef Well-Being Conference Sponsorship
- Pecatonica Pride Producer-Led Watershed Project Field Days Sponsorship
- Food Sovereign Summit John Kinsman Prize Sponsorship
- Manitowoc County UW Extension Forage Council



- Chippewa & Eau Claire County Farmers Unions Dairy Workshop
- Taylor County Land Conservation Department Grazing Education
- Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association conference sponsorship
- Southwest Badger RC&D Grass-fed Livestock Apprenticeship Stakeholder Meeting

## Funding for WFU Chapter Special Projects

Grants are available to WFU chapters that have an idea for a special project or activity in their community. This request should be for something that is extra from what you normally do with your own funds, and which will provide publicity or educational activities for WFU.

Each application must also include a written narrative describing the grants purpose and use along with the organization's background and history.

Requests also should include a budget demonstrating how the funding will be used.

Some examples of ideas would be hosting a workshop on farm transitions, renewable energy or other topic of interest; planning and sponsoring a speaker and meal; organizing an on-farm field day or meeting to educate about important policy issues or farming practices, etc.

Contact the WFU State Office at 715-723-5561 for more information on the WFU counties grant application process. Requests may be made via email or mail to the WFU State office at info@wisconsinfarmersunion.com or 117 W. Spring St., W. Spring St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729.

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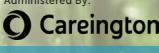
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## Thank you Associate Members!

Does your organization share the values of Wisconsin Farmers Union?

Contact WFU Membership Coordinator Deb Jakubek at 715-590-2130 to learn how being an Associate Member can benefit you and further our efforts in protecting family farms and rural communities.

Barron Mutual Insurance Company  
Cooperative Network  
County of Marathon  
Crawford Stewardship Project  
Dallman Insurance Agency  
Douglas County Land & Water Conservation Dept.  
Falls Silo Repair  
Greenville Co-op  
Hay River Pumpkin Seed Oil  
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute  
Midwest Renewable Energy Association  
Natural Heritage Land Trust  
North Wind Renewable Energy  
Osseo Plastics & Supply  
People's Food Co-op  
Premier Co-op  
Ruby Coffee Roasters  
Vernon Telephone Co-op  
Viroqua Food Cooperative

# Stand up, speak up

## Farmers Union hosts Farm & Rural Lobby Day



**Above:** Over 100 Wisconsin Farmers Union members from across the state took part in Farm & Rural Lobby Day Feb. 28 in Madison.

**MADISON** – On Feb. 28, over 100 farmers and rural residents from across the state traveled to Madison to share their views with their Senators and Representatives during Wisconsin Farmers Union's Farm and Rural Lobby Day.

"Lobby Day is a chance for our members to share their story with their representatives and put a face behind the name," said WFU President Darin Von Ruden. "The interactions were particularly important this year as policymakers are at work on a budget that can greatly influence members' farms and rural communities."

Lobby Day participants encouraged lawmakers to support funding for several priorities in the Governor's state budget proposal: rural schools, roads, expansion of high-speed internet, and the

Farm to School program. They also urged legislative support for nonpartisan redistricting, sound conservation policies, and loan forgiveness for beginning farmers.

WFU is a grassroots organization. The positions members presented during the Farm and Rural Lobby Day were adopted by farmers from throughout the state during the 86th annual WFU State Convention in January in Wisconsin Dells.

Roughly half of the attendees were participating in their first WFU Farm and Rural Lobby Day, including Alicia Razvi, president of the Wood-Portage-Waupaca Farmers Union, who says the experience left her feeling energized and hopeful.

"Inside two hours, my local group of Farmers Union members met with four politicians. Some were Democrat, some were Republican," she said.

"But it didn't matter much in those moments. We were present, and we were from the same community, and we all wanted the best for that place and for our farms."

"Having a group of farmers, all with different types of farming practices, different backgrounds and different types of farms, all sitting in the same legislator's office fighting for the same cause was quite powerful and energetic," added Amherst dairy farmer Patty Edelburg. "That's the backbone of our democracy."

"With the many issues facing our farms and small towns, it's very important for people to be engaged and take part in things like the Lobby Day," said WFU Vice President and Oseos farmer Craig Myhre. "We had a very good crowd with lots of energy and many new faces, which is good to see."

## Dunnum vies for Alice in Dairyland

Westby Local Farmers Union member Alexis Dunnum is among the top six candidates for the agricultural ambassador role of the 70th Alice in Dairyland.



Dunnum, the daughter of Craig and Vickie Dunnum of Westby, was raised on her family's fourth generation organic beef and crops farm. This past summer she completed an internship with National Farmers Union in Washington, D.C. Growing up, she was an active member of the Nerison 4-H Club and the Westby FFA. Dunnum showed beef steers, swine, and poultry each year at her county fair and served as the 2014 Vernon County Fairest of the Fair. She is a senior at UW-Madison, double-majoring in life science communications and Scandinavian studies and will receive a certificate in environmental studies. Last year, Dunnum studied at the University of Southeast Norway and traveled the country independently to interview farmers about sustainable agriculture. Dunnum spends her time as a member of Collegiate FFA, the Association of Women in Agriculture, and playing trumpet in the UW Marching Band.

The next Alice in Dairyland will be selected May 11-13 in Brown County. Although only one candidate ultimately will be selected as the next Alice in Dairyland, the personal growth experienced by all of the candidates as result of the process will carry into their future careers.

Other candidates include Abrielle Backhaus, Kewaskum; Jenna Crayton, Oak Creek; Crystal Siemers-Peterman, Cleveland; Kaitlyn Riley, Gays Mills; and Kelly Wilfert, Two Rivers.

Alice in Dairyland is a one-year, full-time public relations position with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP). For more information and ticket sales, visit [aliceindairyland.com](http://aliceindairyland.com).

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# Understanding the Food Modernization Safety Act

Kristen Slaughter

Membership & Programs Organizer

The Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) came out of the FDA in September of 2014 and like all new government regulations will take some time for us all to figure out. FSMA was put in place to improve overall food safety. Thought this article focuses on produce, keep in mind that is only one part of the regulation. The FSMA Produce Safety rule was created to protect consumers and give farmers a set of standards across the board for safe growing, harvesting, packing and holding practices. Regardless of whether or not you feel an added food safety regulation is needed, FSMA is now the law and we want to make sure that you have the resources and answers you need.

Wisconsin Farmers Union has received a grant from National Farmers Union and the Local Food Safety Collaborative to put together workshops around the state and a field day for peer-to-peer learning. The dates and times are still to be determined so be on the lookout for them in the coming months. The workshops will include information about the FSMA Produce Safety rule and what you can do to prepare for it.

In order to fully understand what the Produce Safety rule is saying and how it will impact your farm, some important definitions have been included.

- Produce** is defined as “any fruit or vegetable and includes mushrooms, sprouts, peanuts, tree nuts, and herbs.”

- Covered Produce** refers to the harvestable or harvested part of produce that is subject to the Produce Safety rule. This does not include produce that is for personal consumption, produce that is considered rarely consumed raw under the Produce Safety

Business Size	Compliance Dates for Sprouts	Compliance Dates for all other Covered Produce	Water Related Compliance Dates	Compliance date for Qualified Exemption Labeling Requirement	Compliance date for retention of records supporting a qualified exemption
All other businesses (greater than \$500K)	1/26/17	1/26/18	1/27/20	1/1/20	1/26/16
Small Businesses (between \$250K-500K)	1/26/18	1/28/19	1/26/21		
Very Small Businesses (between \$25K-250K)	1/28/19	1/27/20	1/26/22		

<https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/food-safety-modernization-act/produce-safety-rule-compliance-dates-timeline>

rule, and produce that is processed to adequately reduce the presence of microorganisms of public health significance. This is a term that is used frequently throughout the regulation as well as this article.

- Qualified End users** are defined as a consumer or restaurant or retail food establishment located “in the same state or the same Indian reservation as the farm OR not more than 275 miles from such farm.”

There are exemptions or partial exemptions for some operations under FSMA, but the most important thing to remember when looking at the rule is that, regardless of what FSMA considers an exemption, if your buyer or consumers requires you to comply with the Produce Safety rule then you will need to. The table below is designed to help you understand how your operation will interact and be covered under the regulation.

The next step for the FDA and for the states will be to set guidelines and procedures for the inspections that are expected to accompany the Produce Safety rule. At this time there is nothing in place that states what the inspections will consist of and how often they will happen. This is up to the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture and Consumer Protection. There are several compliance dates that have been set for

different components of the regulations and based on income.

At least one supervisor or responsible party from your farm must successfully complete a food safety training approved by the FDA to receive the required Produce Safety rule training certification.

WFU will keep our members informed on these trainings. Please note we will be hosting shorter information sessions that will also include help developing a food safety Standard Operating Procedure. These will not include a certificate but will provide helpful information to your operation.

The first WFU-hosted training will be a Produce Safety Rule Information Session from 10am to 1pm April 7 at the Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, 2740 W. Mason St., Green Bay. The cost is \$15 for WFU members or \$30 for nonmembers. Lunch is included.

If and how an operation will be covered under the Produce Safety rule can vary greatly. Be sure to attend one of the WFU information sessions to learn more. If you have questions contact me, Kirsten Slaughter, at [kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:kslaughter@wisconsinfarmersunion.com) or 608-514-2031 with any questions.

*This article is meant to give basic information and help to farmers and should not be considered legal advice or count as a Grower Training Certification.*

## Food Safety Modernization Act Exemptions

Does your farm on average (in the previous three years) have \$25K or less in annual produce sales?	Is your produce for your personal /on farm consumption only?	Is your produce a commodity the FDA has identified as rarely consumed raw? Full list found at <a href="https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/">https://producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu/</a>	Does your farm on average (in previous 3 years) have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less than \$500,000 annual food sales AND               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than half of food sold directly to “qualified end-users”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>Section 112.4(a)</i>	<i>Section 112.2(a)(2)</i>	<i>Section 112.2(a)(2)</i>	<i>Section 112.5 and 112.6</i>

<b>Your farm is NOT covered by this rule</b>	<b>Your produce is NOT covered by this rule</b>	<b>Your produce is NOT covered by this rule</b>	<b>Your farm is eligible for an exemption but must still comply with labeling of produce and record keeping)</b>
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Table outlines possible exemptions under the FSMA Produce Safety rule. Remember even if your farm is eligible for a qualified exemption you will still need to comply if your buyer requires it. When reading the rule, note the differences in produce, covered produce, and food sales. Food refers to all food that is sold on your operation as defined by the FDA and includes commodity grain and corn.

*Source: Standards for Produce Safety: Coverage and Exemptions/Exclusions for 21 PART 112, Grower Training, Produce Safety Alliance, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, December 21, 2015.*

# Collegiates talk co-ops at NFU-hosted event



**Above:** National Farmers Union hosted 100 students in Minneapolis in mid-February for the annual College Conference on Cooperatives.

**M**INNEAPOLIS – Drawing on nearly 115 years of leadership in cooperative education, National Farmers Union hosted 100 students from 20 colleges and universities in Minneapolis Feb. 16-18 for its annual College Conference on Cooperatives (CCOC).

The three-day conference provides an interactive learning experience for American agriculture's next generation on the importance, structure and operations of various types of cooperative groups.

"Cooperatives play an important role in strengthening rural and urban economies and communities across the country," said NFU President Roger Johnson. "NFU's CCOC engages tomorrow's agricultural leaders in applying cooperative business principles and learning about opportunities available to them through the cooperative model."

Representatives and farmers from traditional and value-added agricultural cooperatives, housing and worker-owned co-ops, and consumer cooperatives offered their insight on cooperative development. Students also heard from William Nelson,

former president of CHS Foundation, and Doug O'Brien, executive vice president of programs at the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International.

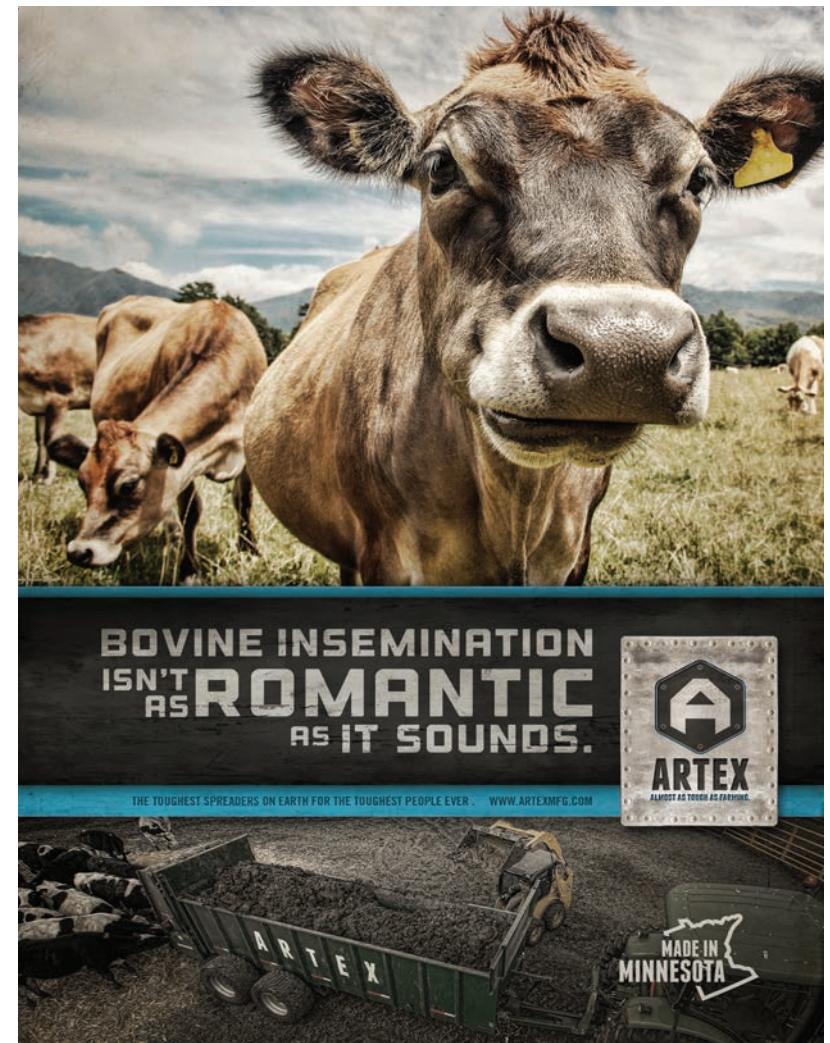
In addition, participants visited several area cooperatives, including Thrivent Financial, Riverton Housing Co-op and REI, and the Mill City Museum, a river-front museum built into the ruins of what was once the world's largest flour mill.

Johnson explained, "NFU was founded on the core principles of education and cooperation, and we proudly continue that emphasis today with hands-on learning experiences like CCOC."

"Thanks to the support of our sponsors, NFU is able to provide cooperative education beyond the farm and ranch gate to young leaders from college campuses across the United States," Johnson concluded.

This year's conference was made possible by the generous support of the CHS Foundation, CHS Inc., CoBank, Farmers Union Industries Foundation, and NFU Foundation.

To learn more, visit [www.nfu.org/education/ccoc/](http://www.nfu.org/education/ccoc/).





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# Act now to save Farm to School program



**Nick Levendofsky**  
Government Relations Associate

**W**isconsin Farm to School is a program run through the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) that connects

Wisconsin schools and institutions with Wisconsin-produced foods. Farm to school programming helps children develop healthy eating habits through nutrition and agricultural education. Further, farm to school improves farmers' incomes and creates steady institutional market opportunities for Wisconsin producers.

The 2017-2019 state budget proposes to eliminate the Wisconsin Farm to School Program, including the Program Director position, "to reflect budget efficiency measures." However, cutting the program (\$66,400 and 1.0 FTE) from DATCP's budget translates to a savings of 0.1 percent for the agency, while the program itself helps schools to purchase over \$9 million annually in Wisconsin-produced foods. A dedicated Farm to School Program Director at DATCP is vital to the continued growth of this important program.

Our lawmakers need to hear that constituents value Wisconsin Farm to School and that it has a positive impact on our lives and livelihood. Please help us spread the word about the Wisconsin Farm to School Program and the good work it does. Please urge your lawmakers to put Farm to School back into the state budget.

What can you do to help?

When legislators start getting even a handful of calls and communications about an issue, they take notice and will communicate this concern to the Joint Finance Committee - the Senators and Representatives who are responsible for reviewing the state budget and making any changes.

1. Call your state senator and representatives. The most effective action is to pick up the phone and let your legislator know you oppose the cut and want to see the position and funding restored in the budget. The important time window for calls on this issue is between now and Friday, April 21.

To find your legislator, visit <https://legis.wisconsin.gov> and type in your address under "Find My Legislator."

2. Email. If calling is not possible, email your senator and representative (note: calls carry the most weight and only cost you a moment). You can find your legislator's email address at the link above.

3. Attend budget listening sessions around Wisconsin and share your story about why Farm to School has been valuable to you and your community. Joint Finance Committee members and staff are there to hear from the public. These sessions start at 8 a.m., and you should arrive early to get a chance to speak.

Budget listening session dates are at 8 a.m. for the following dates and locations:

- **Mon., April 3 – UW-Platteville**
- **Wed., April 5 – State Fair Park, Milwaukee**
- **Fri., April 7 – Berlin High School**
- **Tues., April 18 – Spooner High School**
- **Wed., April 19 – Ellsworth High School**
- **Fri., April 21 – Marinette High School**

What should you say?

1. First and foremost, let lawmakers know why it is important to you, your family, or your livelihood that the Farm to School program continue.

2. Fully fund Wisconsin Farm to School in the 2017-2019 budget. At less than 0.1 percent of the budget (\$87K in a \$90M budget), it is a small investment in a program that pays back so much to farmers, schools, and the state's economy.

3. The Farm to School Program Director secured more than \$200,000 of federal grant funding to increase institutional purchases of Wisconsin-produced food and directly helped schools shift their purchasing practices from national to local sources.

4. Wisconsin schools purchase over \$9 million of Wisconsin-produced foods each year thanks to Farm to School programming. Another 60 percent of surveyed school districts plan to begin or increase purchases of Wisconsin-produced foods. There is a lot of interest in this program and need for the expertise and help offered.

5. Farm to School improves farmers' incomes and direct access to steady institutional markets. It also links the well-being of our urban and rural communities.

6. Farm to School helps children develop healthy eating habits through nutrition and agricultural education.

For additional information visit the Save Wisconsin Farm to School Facebook page and use #SaveWIF2S when talking about this issue on social media.



Source credit: National Farm to School Program

# The Big Share a BIG success!

## Generous donors more than double WFU Foundation goal for camp bunks

**Danielle Endvick**  
Communications Director

There's something a little bit terrifying about hosting an online day of giving. You spread the word, cross your fingers and as you log online that day, you hope for the best.

The Big Share, an online giving event that the Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation participated in on March 7, proved that sometimes we need to step back and trust that good people are out there listening. In a tremendous show of support for Kamp Kenwood, Wisconsin Farmers Union's historic youth camp near Chippewa Falls, donors not only met our hopes for the fundraiser, they smashed our goal and doubled it! The WFU Foundation received more than \$10,000 during The Big Share, which aimed to raise funds for replacement of 100 bunk mattresses at the youth camp.

Combined with the generous giving at this year's 'A Night in the Pines' WFU Foundation Fundraiser during our state convention in January, we've surpassed our \$18,500 overall project goal and are only about \$3,000 away from also covering the welding costs to bring the bunks up to code for the new mattress width.

Altogether, 2,797 donors raised \$321,828 for 66 nonprofits during The Big Share. If you

were among those who gave, thank you! If you missed it, it's not too late to take part. Donations payable to the WFU Foundation can be sent to Wisconsin Farmers Union, 117 W. Spring St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. You can use the form below to donate.

### Donor acknowledgments

This was the third time the WFU Foundation participated in The Big Share. Donors helped fund a new cooler for the camp in 2015 and last year money was raised for kayaks and watercraft gear.

The WFU staff and board would especially like to thank two donors who provided matching grants for The Big Share — an anonymous donor gave \$2,000 in matching funds and Pierce County Farmers Union-member Bill Schroeder matched \$2,500.

Thanks to the following WFU chapters for donating to the mattress cause: Barron County Farmers Union, Chippewa County Farmers Union and St. Croix County Farmers Union.

To all donors, we'd like to extend a big thank you. More than 60 donors poured their love and opened their wallets for the camp that we love.

We'd like to acknowledge the following donation dedications from The Big Share.

• Steven Sorenson - I am proud to honor my father Larry Soren-

son who was Executive Director of Farmers Union and also my brother Paul and sister Sue who along with me attended and serviced on the Kamp Kenwood staff.

• Maxwell Burke-Scoll - Kamp is for the counselors!

• Amy Czerniak - I'm happy to donate to the Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation because Kamp Kenwood played such an important role in my life growing up. Some of my favorite memories were made through Farmers Union, and I want others to have the same opportunity!

• Jeanene Holton - Happy to be a part of this program for kids. Very important part of their lives.

• Christine Peterson - As a former counselor, I slept on those mattresses and I'm happy to help next summer's campers and counselors get a better night's sleep!

• Stephen Ruswick - I'm proud to give to WFU because they help develop and sustain meaningful change and societal empowerment.

• Alicia Leinberger - Everyone who cares about rural WI should be part of the Farmers Union! This organization holds the values that creates vibrant rural economies and healthy food for all of us.

• Michelle Miller - Rest easy!

• Forest Jahnke - So proud of the work y'all do for all of us in rural areas!

• Steve Statz - For my sister Cathy Statz and all she has done and given Wisconsin Farmers Union for the past 25+ years. To my parents, Tony and Claire

Statz for the cooperative education we had at home and for all their service to the many co-ops they've belonged to.

• Sarah Statz - I want to give to Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation because I want to give back to the amazing place that gave so much to me.

• Cathy Statz - On behalf of Tony & Claire Statz and all the hard-working Summer Staff over the years with whom I've been honored to work...YOU make the camp experience so special for the kids! Go Co-op!

• Marcy Cox - My kids and I love Kamp Kenwood!

• Madeline Gehrig - This is for the generations of kampers, who set aside their co-op store profits in hopes of a better nights sleep at kamp!

• Andrew Gehrke - I'm going to miss those mattresses....

• Aaron Kalmon - In honor of Grendl.

• Kyle Tomesh - Enjoy a good nights rest on us.

• Kathleen Roberg - I'm proud to give to Wisconsin Farmer's Union - as a farmer's daughter, camper, counselor, parent of camper, and returning as a part-time RN - it is a place to grow and enjoy.

• Alyssa Joachim - This is for all of the future campers and the memories that they will make - you deserve the best Kamp experience possible!

• Christine Hamele - She says she's in the union and she's in to stay!

• Denise Mushitz - I'm proud to give to Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundation for the

amazing young people who are influenced by this program. Lives are changed and hearts are opened with the guidance of the camp staff and director. I love my Farmers Union family!

• Patti Pattison - I'm happy to give to Wisconsin Farmers Union because it is a great organization that really believes in investing in the education of youths and adults.

• Patti Pattison - In Memory of MaryAnn Kinney Pattison who got so many of us involved with WFU because she believed in their mission of building communities by investing time, energy and commitment into making it happen.

• Brad Henderson - For Abby H.... and her guitar

• Jessi Peterson - I'm proud to support Kamp Kenwood. I work with kids in our community in need and I know the great work they do for families. Camp is something every kid should get a chance to attend and KK levels the playing field for rural and small town families.

• Hans and Katie Breitenmoser family - This donation is actually coming from three junior campers (with a steady calf-feeding income) who are definitely looking forward to a bit more padding in between their sleeping bags and the beds!!

• Theresa Pries - LOVE Kamp Kenwood! Long live co-ops!

• Cynthia Green - Kamp Kenwood gives great fun and learning experiences.

• Jesse and Danielle Endvick - For Logan and Blakeroo.



It's not too late to support WFU Kamp Kenwood! Consider donating today!

We'd like to help support the **co-op camp program** through a contribution to the WFU Foundation. Enclosed please find: \$\_\_\_\_\_

We'd like to help support the **WFU camp facility** through a contribution to the WFU Foundation Kamp Kenwood Fund. Enclosed please find: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**Contributions to the WFU Foundation for the camp program / WFU Kamp Kenwood Facility Fund are tax-deductible.**

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# What's on Your Table?

## with Diane Tirry

### Spring Salad Delights

**S**pring is coming, at least in our hearts and minds, maybe not in the actual temperature, but as soon as the warm temperatures arrive, so too will grilling, picnicking and the desire to try some new recipes. I received a suggestion to find some salad recipes that would be an addition to your spring menus.

The places I look to find new salad recipes include checking out older church or organization cookbooks, going onto Facebook or checking my inbox for Taste of Home emails with new and fresh ideas. Pinterest also has recipes that others share.

I like to look back into history to find salads that are time-honored and tasty. In fact, I found some mimeographed recipes from the Sheboygan County Fair created by the Sheboygan County Homemakers, now called Home and Community Education Associations, that I would like to share with you. Some of the pictures from this document are old school, but cool.

When looking at the definition of salad, one can find such a large variation: a.) a cold dish of various mixtures of raw or cooked vegetables, usually seasoned with oil, vinegar, or other dressing and sometimes accompanied by cooked chopped or cubed meat, fish, or other ingredients; b.) a mixture containing a specified ingredient served with a dressing, such as a red pepper filled with tuna salad; c.) a vegetable suitable for eating raw; or d.) a mixture of fruits with or without a sweet dressing.

This first recipe made me think of how much my grandchild would love to find all the letters of his name and then eating in delight.

### ABC Noodle Salad

Source: Dorothy Weber, Sheboygan Co. Homemakers 1981

"This makes a generous size dish."

#### INGREDIENTS:

- ½ package ABC noodles
- ½ bag Miniature Marshmallow
- 3 oranges, peeled and cut in small pieces
- 2 small or 1 large can Crushed Pineapple
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 egg yolks
- ½ pint Heavy Cream, whipped

#### DIRECTIONS:

Drain the crushed pineapple, reserving the juice in a 2 cup measuring glass. Add enough water to measure 1 cup.

Heat the juice and add the sugar, cornstarch and egg yolks. When thickened, cool.

Beat the cream until thick and keep in refrigerator. When the thickened juice has cooled, fold in the whipped cream.

Cook the ABC noodles in 2 cups salt water according to package instructions. Don't overcook them. Drain and cool slightly.

Mix the fruit and marshmallows in with the noodles and add the juice mixture. Chill.

NOTE: For variety, substitute drained fruit cocktail or fresh fruit that is in season.

### GARDEN PASTA SALAD

Source: Barb Hesselink, Sheboygan County Home and Community Education 2003



This salad uses partially cooked broccoli and cauliflower as well as crab meat to make a colorful and healthy salad.

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups Tri-Colored Corkscrew noodles, cooked and drained
- 1 cup broccoli flowerets, partially cooked
- 1 cup cauliflower flowerets, partially cooked
- ½ cup chopped green pepper
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 8 ounces chopped crab meat
- 1 cup cubed sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 tomatoes, cut into wedges or use cherry tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 8 ounces Zesty Italian dressing

#### DIRECTIONS:

Combine all ingredients.

Add dressing and chill several hours.

Stir.

Before serving you may want to add more dressing.

For those favorite salads that require mayonnaise, have you ever given thought to making the mayonnaise from scratch? I have done this several times over the years, however my current schedule doesn't always lend itself to making this from scratch, but it does work and tastes fantastic.

Here is one I found online that can use up your whole egg rather than just the egg yolk. There are others using just the yolk and you can experiment which one tastes better or keeps better than the other.

tom of the bowl, turn the food processor on then begin to add the oil in tiny drops until about 1/4 of the oil has been added. It's at this point that you should notice the mixture is beginning to thicken and emulsify. Once this happens, you can be a little less strict with how slowly the oil is added. Continue to add the remaining oil in a very thin stream.

Once all of the oil has been added, scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl and process for an extra 10 seconds. Taste mayonnaise for seasoning then add salt, lemon juice or extra vinegar to taste. Try adding hot sauce for a bit of a kick! Add sugar, if you prefer something more sweet.



#### ADAM AND JOANNE'S TIPS

##### Storing Homemade Mayonnaise:

Store covered in the refrigerator as long as the expiration date of your eggs allow or for approximately 14 days.

**Raw eggs:** When choosing eggs for homemade mayonnaise, go for fresh, properly refrigerated, clean grade A or AA eggs with intact shells.

**Olive oil:** Olive oil can be a little overpowering so use one that's light and fruity and consider only replacing half of the oil called for in the recipe with olive oil and use something more neutral for the rest.

**Fixing Broken Mayonnaise:** While we have never had this recipe for mayonnaise break on us, if it happens to you don't fret! You really should be able to fix it. Add about 1 teaspoon of mustard to a bowl then slowly beat the broken mayonnaise into the mustard until it becomes emulsified and creamy again (a tip from Julia Child). Another trick is to repeat the same process, but replace the teaspoon of mustard with an egg yolk.

**NOTE:** A blender or electric mixer can be used instead of a food processor. The time may take a bit longer.

Enjoy a new salad recipe and share it on the Wisconsin Farmers Union blog by contacting Tommy Enright at [tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com](mailto:tenright@wisconsinfarmersunion.com).

*Happy and Healthy eating to all!*

Diane Tirry

#### DIRECTIONS:

Add egg, mustard, vinegar, and salt to the bowl of a food processor and process for 20 seconds. Scrape the sides and bot-

# As ag swoons, farm credit booms



Alan Guebert

**O**n Feb. 28, the agriculture subcommittee of the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee held a “Farm Credit Administration [FCA] Oversight Hearing.”

Remarkably, it was the first public questioning of FCA leaders—and how they regulate the nation’s biggest agricultural lender, the \$240-billion Farm Credit System (FCS)—by the subcommittee in 19 years.

In the intervening, unchecked decades, System banks more than doubled their lending (from \$106 billion in 2005 to \$236 billion in 2015), increased their share of U.S. ag debt by half (from 23.3 percent in 2000 to 40.4 percent in early 2016), and rose to dominate ag lending: 16 of today’s top 20 American ag lenders are System members.

Another FCS lender is about to join that club.

Beginning last summer, three System associations—AgStar Financial, the huge lender in Minnesota and western Wisconsin; Badgerland Financial, the FCS lender in Wisconsin’s southern half; and 1st Farm Credit, the lender in western and northern Illinois—have worked to create a single association that would stretch from east of St. Louis to north of St. Paul.

If the not-yet-public plan is approved by association borrowers-owners in a very quick, hoped-for April vote, the resulting \$18-billion lender would be named Compeer Financial.

It would also be largely unnecessary, says Bert Ely, a banking consultant that writes “Farm Credit Watch,” a fact-filled, monthly analysis of the FCS for the American Banking Association.

“Part of all these merger deals seems to be one-upmanship among System bankers,” explains Ely in a March 1 telephone interview. “Another part is that these mergers enable CEOs to pay themselves much bigger salaries.”

Millions in the case of the proposed, three-way upper Midwest deal.

“I’m very skeptical, however, that any system merger leads to greater lender profits or better lender service.”

Ely would know; he’s been analyzing and writing about the Farm Credit System since before its mid-1980s crack-up and subsequent government bailout. Recently he’s seen System banks balloon into something bigger and

richer than Congress ever envisioned.

“The System’s credit line has increased and increased to now where one member can borrow up to \$1.5 billion,” he relates. “What farmer do you know borrows \$1 billion? Clearly, it isn’t meant for farmers or ranchers.”

Recent System lending proves Ely correct. In the last decade, several FCS banks loaned money to various non-farm businesses and corporations—including Verizon, the Cracker Barrel restaurant chain, and a carwash, according to an April 2016 Washington Post story—whose tenuous ties to agriculture seem to be the forgotten uncle of great grandma’s adopted half-sister.

All this rule-stretching, claims Ed Elfmann, the vice president of Congressional relations for the American Bankers Association (ABA), violates the System’s taxpayer-supported mission and allows System lenders to unfairly compete against commercial banks in local, regional and national ag lending markets.

“Even worse, I think,” offers Elfmann, “Farm Credit has doubled its lending in the last 10 years with virtually no oversight and no controls. How will it hold up if the farm economy continues to flag?”

System bankers quickly note that their balance sheets are solid, at least for now.

What they don’t talk about, however, is how their special status as a Congressionally-chartered lender—and what Elfmann and Ely both say is lax oversight by both the Farm Credit Administration and Congress—allows System banks to pick big winners in Big Ag and Big Agbiz.

“Given the size of most of today’s System loans,” opines ABA’s Elfmann, “can taxpayer-subsidized financing be justified for any of these massive borrowers?”

That’s a good question for the tight-fisted, Trump-bowing Congress to address in 2018 Farm Bill hearings.

Before then, however, the borrower-owners of the not-yet-merged Compeer Financial should ask their hired hands at AgStar, Badgerland and 1st Farm Credit just how much the new bosses will be paid and how little the new deal delivers to them and their rural communities.

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