



Farm Bureau -- a grassroots organization for 75 years

By CHARLENE RUZICKA
FB Secretary

Farm Bureau was launched in 1933 by farmers and ranchers determined to develop resources that would stand the test of time and develop local leaders from the grassroots up.

"Those county Farm Bureau leaders are in touch with what is happening in the country to farmers and ranchers," said Hope Huffman, TFB state director from 1994-2000. "They're the first to know when an issue may arise, and that gives the state organization the opportunity to become educated and develop a plan to address that issue with credibility."

To say Texas Farm Bureau has grown through the years would be an understatement. In 1941, membership totaled 15,630; in 1949, it climbed to 40,696; in 1954, membership was 55,670; in 1958, it grew to 76,032; and by December 2008, membership increased to 422,159 families.

Some notable accomplishments for 2007-08 include the "Voice of Agriculture" (the mission of TFB) with special media coverage in all TFB media on Hurricane Ike, Texas drought, biofuels and the renewable fuel standard, Trans Texas Corridor and Interstate 69, South Texas fever ticks and the agricultural boom in West Texas.

Regulatory accomplishments include lobbying Texas Parks & Wildlife Department commissioners for changes to spring turkey hunting as proposed by the TFB Wildlife Advisory Committee; supporting the continuation of the Prescribed Burn Board, which is under Sunset Review; providing leadership in the fight against fever ticks in Texas; and helping to write the Career and Technical Education standards for Energy & Natural Resources for public schools curriculum standards.

Ag in the Classroom activities include conducting the 14th Summer Agricultural Institute at Tarleton State University and conducting teacher workshops. In addition, 26 county Farm Bureaus ordered 35,500 TFB book covers to be used in schools in their counties.

Mobile Learning Barn Trailers were exhibited to 71,510 children

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The vision of Texas Farm Bureau is to benefit all Texans through promotion of a prosperous agriculture for a viable, long-term domestic source of food, fuel and fiber.

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-- Charlene Ruzicka
Lampasas County Farm Bureau secretary

and were viewed by more than 68,000 mixed-age groups. They were shown for 352 days.

Planet Agriculture activities included attending eight fairs and stock shows across the state that attracted more than 4 million people for 89 days, and continuing to build support from various commodity organizations and other corporate sponsorships.

Special projects included:

- eminent domain survey coordinated by FB leaders with county and city officials across the state to determine support for adequate compensation for the taking of private property. This represented one of the largest grassroots efforts with more than 160 counties participating.

- trade mission trips to Cuba and Mexico to promote Texas agricultural exports.

Political-action efforts centered around the Texas Transportation Commission's efforts to construct the I-69 portion of the Trans Texas Corridor along existing right of way. A citizens' advisory committee

report closely aligned with TFB policy on the TTC.

And Congress enacted the 2008 Farm Bill, which required an override of the president's veto twice after three years of effort from the TFB Farm Bill Advisory Committee.

Leadership training and development encompassed several areas:

- completed second year of AgLead VIII program and kicked off AgLead IX and also FARMLEAD Program.

- marketing education included county and regional marketing meetings for livestock producers.
- The Young Farmer and Rancher Committee conducted a Young Farmer and Rancher contest, Excellence in Agriculture contest and a Discussion Meet contest. They also award scholarships for high school seniors and students enrolled in college.

- sponsored the 45th annual Youth Leadership Conference at Angelo State University with 280 students from 121 counties.
- held Talent Find Contest and Miss Farm Bureau with 13 state contestants awarded \$14,500 in scholarships in each contest.

Grassroots activities include the National Affairs Award Trip to Washington, D.C., where 161 Farm Bureau leaders from 53 counties attended, and policy development with resolutions that originate at the county level and then are passed on to district, state and national levels.

As Farm Bureau has grown, so have the benefits and services available for its members. The list includes Dodge Rebate program, Case IH Discount program, Agristar Satellite-based high-speed Internet service, defensive driving courses, T-Mobile discount program on products and services, amusement park discounts and Farm Bureau Insurance services.

The vision of Texas Farm Bureau is to benefit all Texans through promotion of a prosperous agriculture industry for a viable, long-term domestic source of food, fuel and fiber.

Agriculture remains as important in this country and across the world as it was 75 years ago, though not as many are directly involved with the production of food, fuel and fiber. The need is even greater, however.



Farm Bureau board

Members of the Board of Directors of the Lampasas County Farm Bureau for 2009 include, front row from left, John Davis; Walter Ruzicka; Charlene Ruzicka, secretary; Barney Groves, vice president; and Alex Wittenburg; back row from left, Henry Stoneham; Bufard Carlile; Jim Spivey; Bob Poe; Mickey Edwards, president; and Allen Craft. Not pictured: Asa Langford.

Financial services offered

Farm Bureau Bank began in July 1999, and bank services are headquartered in San Antonio. All deposit accounts are FDIC insured.

Farm Bureau banking patrons are not just regular customers, because it is not an ordinary bank.

Products and services have been designed especially for Farm Bureau members, with valuable benefits not offered anywhere else.

At Farm Bureau Bank, patrons will receive:

- credit card services.
- deposit services: money market savings, certificates of deposit and performance checking.
- home mortgages and services.
- vehicle loans.

Make inquiries or receive information by phoning (800) 492-3276, or by visiting www.farmbureaubank.com. Members also may contact the Lampasas County Farm Bureau at 556-6271.

We proudly support the Lampasas County Farm Bureau

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Membership drive to begin

The Lampasas County Farm Bureau will conduct its annual membership drive from May 18-19. During that period, special efforts will be made by the local organization to enroll new members.

Lampasas County Farm Bureau ended 2008 with 1,452 farm families. Membership in the local organization automatically makes one a member of Texas Farm Bureau and the American Farm Bureau.

The state organization is influential in both state and national affairs on behalf of agriculture, said Barney Groves, Lampasas County FB vice president.

Its purpose is to analyze the problems of farm and ranch families,

and to formulate action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity and social advancement, thereby promoting the national welfare.

"One does not need to own a farm or ranch to be a Farm Bureau member, but many participate because they want to help agriculture and take advantage of the services offered by the organization," said Groves.

To become a member or for more information, phone the local office at 556-6271 or call Christine Groves, membership chairman, at 556-5511.

Thank you Lampasas County Farm Bureau for supporting the agricultural needs of the community.

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CONSERVATION DOLLARS

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Farm Bureau members in this farm community are especially aware of the importance of preserving the land. Our members have always been leaders in making our county, state and nation a better place to live with sound conservation programs.

•LET'S WORK HARDER TO MAKE IT EVEN BETTER•

Hill Country Soil & Water Conservation District

Web site gives updated information

Texas Farm Bureau has a Web site to keep people abreast of proposed legislative action and to serve as a means of communication with federal and state legislators.

A visit to www.txfb.org will show what is offered in the way of news about Washington, D.C. and Austin. Simply click on the "Legislative Action Center" button and follow the prompts.

The Web site is an easy and effective communication tool to help one become a more informed citizen.

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