

spotlight

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A PUBLICATION FOR VOTING MEMBERS OF MARYLAND FARM BUREAU

90th Annual AFBF Convention

Maryland Farm Bureau captures national honors



The Maryland Farm Bureau delegation gathered in San Antonio, Texas, for the 90th Annual American Farm Bureau Federation Convention and

Annual Meeting. Tours, workshops, socials and delegation sessions filled the agenda and many enjoyed the famous River Walk during their stay.



Why I support the Maryland Farm Bureau PAC

By Lee McDaniel

When asked to write my comments about Maryland Farm Bureau's Political Action Committee, I reflected on what I think the PAC does for me and my fellow farmers.

In Maryland, if all of our rural legislators support legislation that is endorsed by Farm Bureau, there are still not enough votes for that position to pass the legislature. Therefore, there is a real need for farmers and Farm Bureau to have a way to reach out to legislators who come from suburban and urban areas of the state.

The MFB PAC can reach out to those legislators through endorsements of candidates from those areas.

I recall after the first cycle of endorsements that the MFB PAC did many years ago, when I spoke to one urban legislator, the response was "Oh, you are from that farm group that endorsed me in the last election." What the PAC did was open the door to discuss our issues, and if you don't get your foot in the door you don't have a chance.

As the PAC continues to grow in financial and political strength, I and my fellow farmers will benefit by reaching more and more of our legislators.

Fifty-four Maryland Farm Bureau members made the trek to the 90th annual American Farm Bureau Federation Convention and Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, in January.

While small in size, Maryland stood large among many when recognized for its membership growth. Maryland Farm Bureau was honored for making its membership quota and also received the Navigator Award for "exceptional membership growth." Our membership percentage increase was 6.5 percent over last year, which was the fourth highest of all states.

The Free State also took the spotlight during the Awards of Excellence program, capturing gold in four of the five categories where state Farm Bureaus focus their energies. Honors were won for Leadership Development, Member Services, Policy Implementation and Public Relations and Information.

Maryland Young Farmer William Layton saw success in the national Discussion Meeting competition and made it to the Sweet 16 round.

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Maryland Farm Bureau

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Maryland Farm Bureau captures national honors

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Stallman: Farmers Ready to Work with New Administration

AFBF President Bob Stallman said that Farm Bureau members are eager to work with the new Congress and President Barack Obama's administration on the issues facing the United States. Stallman's comments opened the organization's annual meeting.

"President-elect Obama has told us he wants discussion and constructive debate," Stallman said. "He wants a healthy agricultural economy and he

Maryland Farm Bureau Young Farmer William Layton represented the Free State in the national Discussion Meet sponsored by the AFBF Young Farmers. His outstanding performance landed him in the "Sweet 16" of the competition.



likes decisions based on science. That is good news for Farm Bureau and agriculture."

Stallman issued a direct message to the new U.S. president: "We, the farmers and ranchers of Farm Bureau, are ready to roll up our sleeves and move forward. We feed the nation, and no matter which national priority—the economy, energy, immigration, trade, environment—that you choose to pursue, we are ready to hit the ground running."

Commenting on specific issues of interest to the Farm Bureau, Stallman focused on the need for a reliable supply of legal workers willing to work in agriculture.

"Too many of our current workers are unfortunately caught up in an immigration system that is broken," Stallman said. "And too often, farmers face the consequences. We urge Congress to enact

meaningful immigration reform for agriculture now."

Stallman also called for an overhaul on global trade negotiations. "Clearly, the Doha Round (of World Trade Organization) talks have stalled," he said. "Trade must be a tool for economic growth and not an excuse for erecting new barriers. We will work with any partner ready to find a new path forward to create real trade growth and development. Trade talks must focus on increasing trade, not preventing it."

The Environmental Protection Agency's new rule dealing with manure management on concentrated animal feeding operations brought this comment from Stallman: "We are challenging the rule in court based on our belief that EPA has exceeded its authority to regulate livestock farms under the Clean Water Act."

Members of Congress and the new administration are setting their sights on climate change, and Stallman said farmers and ranchers will be active in the debate.

"Where science indicates a real risk or harm, we will play our part in reducing or eliminating that risk," he said. "We also will caution lawmakers to make sure that science is not hijacked by those with a particular policy agenda."

Stallman renewed the call for a comprehensive energy plan that embraces all aspects of the nation's energy needs.

"I am proud to say that we successfully advocated for a strong energy title in the farm bill, part of which was to aid in the transition to cellulosic-based renewable energy," he said. "Ag-based energy such as biofuels, wind and electricity from waste digesters are capable of powering an important share of our nation's renewable energy future."

Bill Bradley: 'Can-Do' Spirit Will Sustain America

Americans' "can-do" spirit will sustain the nation through today's turbulent economic times, according to former U.S. Sen. Bill Bradley, who delivered the keynote address at the 90th annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Two simple things need to happen in order for the nation to move out of "can't do" mode, according to Bradley.

"We need to put country ahead of party and we need to tell people the truth," Bradley said. "As Americans, we share more than what divides us." He cited good jobs, access to health care, a secure pension at retirement and access to education as examples of common goals for all Americans.

Regarding the current state of the U.S. economy, "the core problem is that we don't save enough, both individually and as a nation," Bradley said. As a result of spending more than we have as a nation, we have to borrow from non-Americans at a rate of around \$4 billion per day, he noted.

Referring to the fiscal restraint that typifies America's farmers and ranchers, Bradley said they learned an important lesson in the 1980s – "don't borrow more than you can afford."

County Farm Bureau Final Membership Honor Roll

(As of January 23, 2009)

County Farm Bureau Membership Goals are based upon Regular Members, represented in the first two columns. The last column reports the total members paid, including both regular and associates.

County	YTD Regular Members Paid	Needed for goal	YTD All Members Paid
Allegany	70	60	91
Anne Arundel	551	388	2000
Baltimore	333	193	2638
Calvert	183	97	530
Caroline	274	108	568
Carroll	544	385	1026
Cecil	174	125	468
Charles	145	99	629
Dorchester	162	68	446
Frederick	542	359	1334
Garrett	92	91	118
Harford	298	159	1174
Howard	127	74	685
Kent	145	114	221
Montgomery	191	127	2255
Prince George's	113	114	1311
Queen Anne's	204	119	403
St. Mary's	211	134	496
Somerset	137	99	284
Talbot	180	101	427
Washington	174	104	515
Wicomico	213	128	497
Worcester	183	85	411
Maryland Totals	5,246	3,332	18,527

Changing Ag Markets Series Presents

**“Processing for Profits:
Moving from Concept to Consumers”**

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

9:00 AM to 3:30 PM

Friendly Farm Restaurant, Upperco, MD

This seminar will provide educational and networking opportunities for a wide range of farmers, food entrepreneurs, and potential on-farm processors. Program topics include: an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of on-farm processing, special presentations addressing untangling the regulatory maze, presentations by successful on-farm Maryland producers, and resources for production, processing, and marketing specialty food products.

I have included an attachment which contains a brochure to register.

Registration Deadline: Monday, March 2, 2009

For more information you can go to <http://www.agmarketing.umd.edu/Events.html> or contact Ginger S. Myers at (301) 432-2767 x338 gsmyers@umd.edu, Susan Barnes (301) 432-2767 x301 sbarnes6@umd.edu



Get your winter citrus savings

Are you interested in citrus savings? The Maryland Farm Bureau Citrus program is offering great prices on fruit, juice and nuts. **Contact your local Farm Bureau** for information on the February citrus sales. Orders are due to the state office by February 26, 2009.

New Congress includes farmers and ranchers

A recently published report titled *Membership of the 111th Congress: A Profile*, states there are three organic farmers, three ranchers, two vintners and a fruit orchard worker serving in the new Congress.

The average age of members of both houses at the convening of the 111th Congress is 58.2 years; of members of the House, 57.0 years; and of senators, 63.1 years. A record number of 95 women serve in the 111th Congress: 78 in the House and 17 in the Senate.

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

February

- 3 Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis
- 5 Maryland Agriculture Dinner, Michael's Eighth Avenue
- 7-9 AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Conference, Sacramento, CA
- 10 MFB Board of Directors Meeting
- 17 Food Check-Out Day and Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Committee Meeting, Ronald McDonald House, Baltimore
- 27 Caroline County Farm Bureau Banquet, Crowder Center, Denton
- 27-March 1 Maryland Young Farmers Retreat, Wisp Resort

March

- 6 Dorchester County Farm Bureau Banquet, Suicide Bridge Restaurant
- 7 Kent County Farm Bureau Banquet
- 12 Queen Anne's County Farm Bureau Banquet
- 13 Charles County Farm Bureau Banquet, Isaac Walton League
- 14 St. Mary's County Farm Bureau Banquet and Miss Contest, Leonardtown Fire Hall Social Hall, 6 p.m.
- 18 Washington Drive-In
- 19 Worcester County Farm Bureau Banquet, Nassawango Country Club
- 20 Talbot County Farm Bureau Banquet, Easton High School
- 21 Wicomico County Farm Bureau Banquet, Sharptown Fire Hall
- 28 Prince George's County Farm Bureau Banquet, Baden Vol. Fire Department

(To get your county's activities listed on the calendar, please send the date, event, place and time to Susan Summers at ssummers@comcast.net.)

Maryland Congressman tapped for Ag Committee

Maryland's freshman Congressman Frank Kratovil Jr. was recently selected to serve on the House Agriculture Committee for the 111th Congress. Collin C. Peterson of Minnesota will chair the committee.

The House Democratic Steering Committee nominated 28 Democrats, including 11 freshmen members and 17 returning members, to serve. The House Republican Conference has named 17 Republicans to serve on the committee and has left one seat vacant.

"The Agriculture Committee is responsible for issues as varied as farm programs, commodity markets, nutrition, conservation, renewable energy, and rural development, so the diverse experiences of these members will bring new ideas and energy to our work on these important issues," Chair Peterson said.

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MFB celebrated its 80th year as a sponsor of Nationwide in 2008. The organizations work together to provide member benefits, many of which come with special rates for MBF members. Nationwide and its family of companies are America's leading insurer of farms and farm cooperatives.

MFB members may receive a 10 percent farm rate discount from Nationwide Agribusiness on its AgriChoice farm insurance policy. Another exclusive MFB member benefit is the "additional coverages" endorsement built into the AgriChoice policy. Only MFB members insured with an AgriChoice policy may receive the additional coverages at no additional cost, such as:

- Identity theft protection up to \$15,000
- Business property
- Personal property at a dwelling other than the insured's
- Money, gold, etc.
- Landlord's furnishings
- Refrigerated products
- Removal of fallen trees and debris
- Theft of firearms, silverware, precious stones
- Credit card fraud, forgery and counterfeit currency

You may also qualify for up to a 7 percent discount on Nationwide insurance for your cars, and for savings on other coverages.

Contact a Nationwide agent for more details on all the insurance benefits and discounts available to MFB members.