

Growing through Farm Bureau

By Julie Roop
MFB Summer Intern

As a young child I remember going to Ag Week at the Mall. My parents were Young Farmers and they would help to build an enormous pyramid of ice cream to give to the public as part of June is Dairy Month. I also remember attending the county Farm Bureau picnic every year, where I enjoyed going down the large slide at the Rocky Ridge Park for the first time with Farm Bureau member Bobby Black. One of my most recent memories is of teaching students at a local elementary school about agriculture as the Frederick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Ambassador.

My name is Julie Roop and I am excited to be interning with Maryland Farm Bureau this summer. It is amazing to think that my experience with Farm Bureau at such a young age led to my profound involvement in my county Farm Bureau followed by the opportunity to work with Maryland Farm Bureau this summer.

My involvement in Farm Bureau began when I was named the Frederick County Farm Bureau Agricultural Ambassador. One of my responsibilities was to attend the Board of Directors meetings in our county. I was fascinated with the dedication and involvement that the members of our board had with the agriculture community. I quickly became aware, after attending statewide events, that the same passion for agriculture that I saw in Frederick County was evident throughout the state. It was this experience that opened my eyes to Farm Bureau and inspired me to become more active.

As a young person involved in agriculture, I find one of the most rewarding groups in Farm Bureau to be the Young Farmers Program. This group has linked me with individuals in my county that are as passionate for agriculture as I am. I have been able to broaden my horizons of the agriculture industry by attending agricultural tours through my county young farmers and by attending the state young farmers retreat. Young Farmers is also a place where I have been able to share my ideas on agriculture and hear ideas from others by participating in the discussion meet.

The Maryland Young Farmers group is an extremely important organization for agriculturists between the ages of 18 and 35. I encourage partic-

ipation in this organization. The young people involved in this organization are the future of agriculture in Maryland!

The greatest thing that our organization does for its members is having the dedication "to promote and protect Maryland agriculture and rural life" as stated in the mission statement. This is why I am proud to hold a card in my wallet that says Farm Bureau Member. In order to live out this mission statement, Maryland Farm Bureau members work together to accomplish and achieve goals that provide for a bright future in the industry that is nearest to all of our hearts, Agriculture!

Forty-four year Farm Bureau member Joe Free taught me that Farm Bureau is about "accomplishing things together, Farm Bureau can not be a one man show." It is because of working together that our organization has been so successful in being the leading voice for Maryland Agriculture since before the 1920s. One of these reasons is because of the legislative voice that Maryland Farm Bureau has. It is the role of each of us to advocate our beliefs and take advantage of this voice to ensure a bright future for Maryland Agriculture.

Interning with Maryland Farm Bureau this summer has allowed me to explore even more opportunities that are available through the organization. I am currently working on displays that will be exhibited at local county fairs throughout the state. Be sure to check them out this summer! I have enjoyed and am looking forward to more traveling across the state with our outstanding field service representatives and governmental relations directors. It is a truly a privilege to work with such a welcoming staff at Maryland Farm Bureau.

When I am not in Randallstown, I reside on my family farm in Thurmont, Maryland. I am the sixth generation on our 200-acre dairy heifer replacement and crop farm where I have lived for 20 years. During my 10 years as a 4-H member, I showed swine, participated in fashion revue and was very active in public speaking. In high school I was an active member of the FFA. I am very proud to have received my American FFA Degree this past October based on my achievements in my chrysanthemum, swine and agricultural placement supervised agricultural experience programs. It was a privilege of mine to have served the Maryland FFA Association as the 2004-2005 State Secretary.

I am currently a junior at West Virginia University where I am pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture with a major in Agricultural and Environmental Education. My goal is to teach high school agriculture and advise an FFA chapter in Maryland.

My memories and experiences of Farm Bureau over the last 20 years have helped me to find my passion and advocate my beliefs for agriculture. I am truly grateful to Maryland Farm Bureau for the intern opportunity they have provided me with this summer!



Become Active in Farm Bureau's Policy Development Process

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pected challenges to our community. Some bills will be down right offensive to our members. More than 2,000 bills are introduced each session. We evaluate each of these bills and decide whether or not to take action based on the policies set out in the Maryland Farm Bureau policy book.

We also use the policy book when we participate in meetings organized by the many state agencies that regulate our industry. From the Agricultural Stewardship Commission to Wildlife Management, Tributary Strategies, Migratory Labor and Nutrient Management, there is a state advisory group that meets regularly to recommend change. Our staff participates in all of these meetings and relies on your input through this important policy development season to guide them in your defense.

The Issues of Concern that follow were identified by staff throughout the year as areas where our policy is not clear. I urge you to take some time to review this material and formulate a policy position that serves your individual farm operation and the farming industry in the state and across the nation. If you have questions about an issue, whether it is listed or not, please call me at the office at (800) 248-9012. I will be happy to research existing policy or issues that you would like to see added in the future.



Get ready for banana, bubble gum and cotton candy CHEESE

University of Wisconsin researchers have developed kid-friendly flavors of string cheese, including banana, bubble gum, cotton candy, green apple and watermelon. Dairy Management Inc., funded the project, which also included changing the color of cheeses to match the far-out flavors. An initial attempt at making a strawberry variety failed because the pH range of string cheese did not allow the flavor to come through.

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ISSUES OF
CONCERN**

