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KENTUCKY FARM BUREAU NEWS
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Cover photo by: Tim Thornberry
Boone County Elite Equestrian Drill Team
member Elise Curtis with a team horse named
Tiger Lily.

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President's COLUMN



Kentucky farm families are some of the most productive in the world and the world has benefitted greatly from our agricultural endeavors thanks to the trade channels that exist in this country.

To say we truly live in a global economy is somewhat of an understatement these days as the ability to deliver our products to every continent on the planet has become much easier over the last few decades and the need for what we produce has grown exponentially.

By some estimates, more than a third of Kentucky's agricultural production is exported and worth more than \$2 billion. Nationally, over 20 cents out of every dollar of farm income comes from exports and trade. Losing any part of that business would have a very negative affect on our farm families.

With that said, we are still enjoying some very lucrative agricultural trade arrangements, but we need those to remain in force and we need to create new agreements in order to maintain our farming industry.

The recent news of possible tariffs being levied on many of our agricultural products is concerning and somewhat unnerving. Agriculture exports are critical to growing ag-related and rural economies in this state and across the country.

Each farm in Kentucky, no matter what size, has a role to play in providing these goods that are in demand around the world and Kentucky Farm Bureau has been very vocal in its support of maintaining and expanding these export markets. In addition, we also have many other agriculture organizations and champions, at both the state and federal levels working diligently to see that our export markets remain viable and our ability to serve those markets remains intact.

The American agriculture industry is fortunate to have a strong advocate in USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue when it comes to keeping our trade avenues open. During his recent visit to Kentucky, the Secretary noted how valuable the trade dollar is to farmers and is working to help producers deal with any uncertainty they are facing or will face when it comes to trade issues.

More importantly is the fact that the word of coming tariffs at this point is just that, words. These matters are still being negotiated and in doing so, we are hoping for the best possible outcome. But while we wait, we need to remain vigilant in our advocacy efforts.

Never be reluctant to be loud and proud about our industry and what we need to remain solvent in the agri-business world. In doing so, we must do our homework; know the facts and the factors that are creating any situations that come down the road when it comes to trade or any other ag-related matter.

As our national leaders move forward on these trade issues, we should continue to let our voices be heard. We must help those in decision making positions understand the importance of our agriculture industry, not only for the welfare of our citizens but for those people in other countries who depend on our farmers remaining the most productive in the world.

Mark Haney
President
Kentucky Farm Bureau

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Kentucky Farm Bureau is a voluntary organization of farm families and their allies dedicated to serving as the voice of agriculture by identifying problems, developing solutions and taking actions which will improve net farm income, achieve better economic opportunities and enhance the quality of life for all.

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Comment

COLUMN



THIS IS A DANGEROUS GAME WE ARE PLAYING, WITH U.S. AGRICULTURE AT RISK OF BEING THE LOSER.

Tourists from all over the world are visiting our nation's capital to see a symbol of international friendship and cooperation. The cherry blossom trees, a gift from Japan to the United States in 1912, are in bloom. While visiting Washington, D.C., some of those tourists might also make their way to the National Zoo, home of two giant pandas currently on loan from the China Wildlife Conservation Association. The panda exhibit began back in 1972 when the Chinese government gave two pandas to the U.S. following President Nixon's visit to China.

Against this backdrop of good international relations, however, a conflict is escalating between the U.S. and China. China has engaged in unfair trade practices for years, and now the U.S. is reacting with tariffs intended to bring China to the negotiating table. Instead of negotiating to stop the tariffs and agree to fairer trade terms, China has responded by escalating the situation with higher tariffs on U.S. goods, with agricultural products in the crosshairs.

No matter who started it, it's time to stop it. U.S. – China trade is too important, to both countries, to let this fight continue and escalate further.

As important as our \$21 billion in agricultural exports to China are to farmers' and ranchers' livelihoods, the broader U.S. market for everything from clothing and computers to televisions and toys is much more important to China. China's exports to the U.S. exceeded \$500 billion in 2017. China has a lot to lose in this battle. That's why just this week Chinese President Xi Jinping said in a speech that China would work to widen market access. That promise is a step in the right direction. It means there is hope we can avoid additional tariffs on our ag exports.

This is a dangerous game we are playing, with U.S. agriculture at risk of being the loser. At risk is \$12 billion a year in soybean exports, half a billion dollars a year in pork and cotton exports, millions in fruit and nut exports, and more. All of this comes at a time when farm income is at a 16-year low. Farmers are patriotic, but they cannot hold on for long without their markets.

Let's hope and pray that international goodwill is as alive today as it was when the first pandas arrived and the first cherry blossom trees were planted. It's time to negotiate and stop this tariffs race.

Zippy Duvall
President

American Farm Bureau Federation



USDA Secretary Sonny Perdue and his wife Mary joined members of the Hinton family along with Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles and KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck during his most recent RV Tour.

BACK TO OUR ROOTS

USDA Secretary's RV Tour Comes to Kentucky

MAYS LICK- When U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue's RV rolled into the Hinton Mills' Mays Lick location, a large, enthusiastic crowd had gathered to hear from the nation's top agriculture advocate.

Perdue's third "Back to Our Roots RV Tour" included two days and several stops in Kentucky to hear from and speak to farmers, agriculture officials, agri-business owners, and students. He also paid a visit to Keeneland Race Track to see some of the state's best thoroughbreds on opening day of the Spring Meet.

Perdue has made these tours part of his mission to get out to his "customers" and hear firsthand their concerns about issues each are facing on the farm and in their rural communities.

Hinton Mills, a family owned farm and feed supply business with five locations in three counties, provided a perfect backdrop for the dozens of Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) members and other ag officials who came to hear what Perdue had to say on a number

of topics, and to ask him questions related to Kentucky's agriculture sector. He was joined in the discussion by KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck and Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles.

"It was quite an honor to have our agriculture secretary visit and get an up-close look at our ag industry and hear directly from our producers," said Beck. "I believe having this opportunity really helps our farm families know they have a true advocate in Sonny Perdue at a time when our industry really needs that support at the federal level."

Perdue said he really liked to get out of Washington to visit with farmers where they live and work.

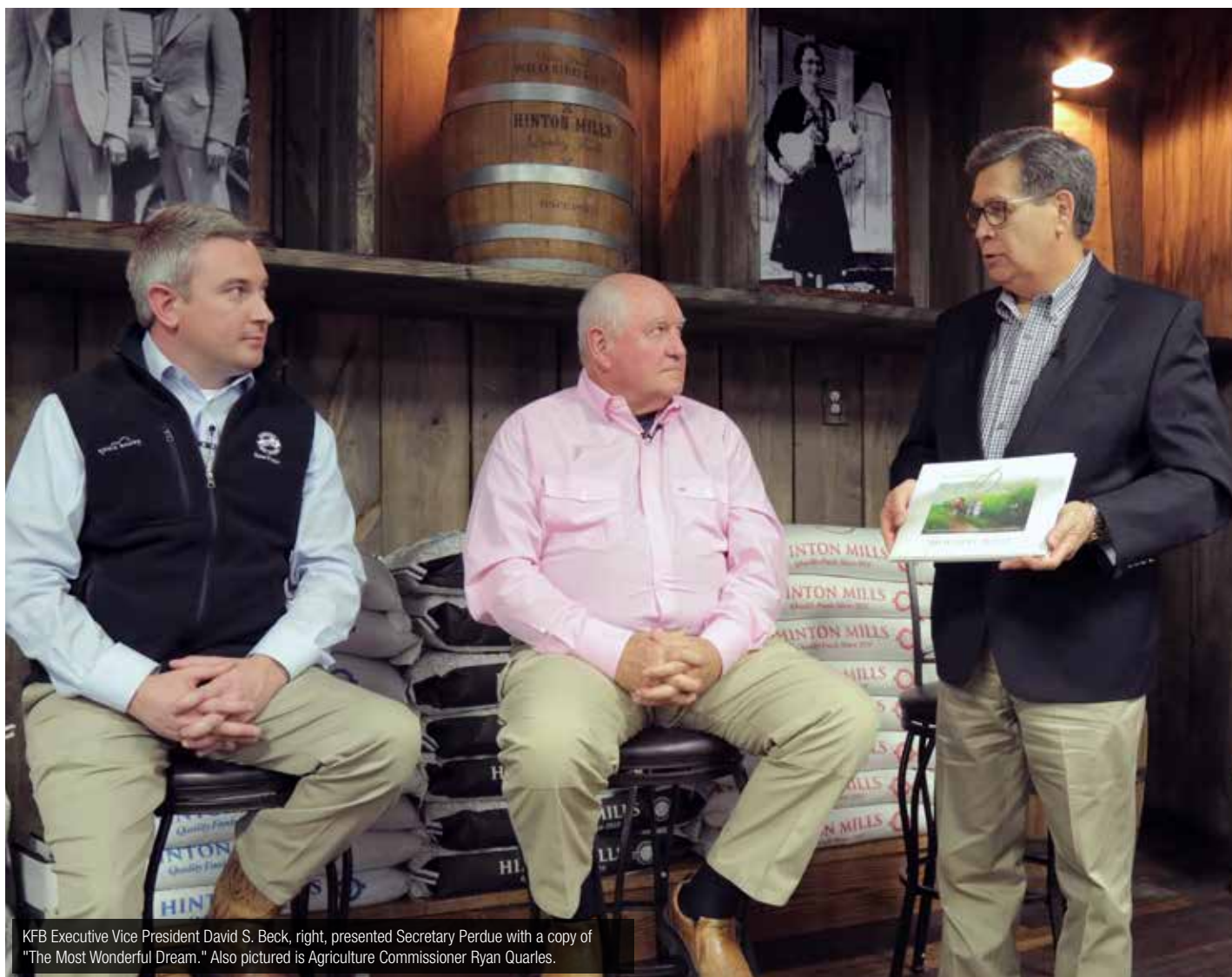
"Our folks are out here in the farmland and fields all across America, and we love to get out and talk to them," he said. "I would rather hear from them directly and the good thing about farmers is, they'll tell you what's on their minds."

A number of topics were discussed during the meeting, many of which are the same for farmers all across the



country. Perdue said there are three overwhelming issues primarily for farmers he is hearing wherever he goes.

"There is a lot of anxiety about some of the trade disputes that are going on; also, we need a reliable farm labor workforce; a legal workforce that farmers can depend on; and thirdly are



KFB Executive Vice President David S. Beck, right, presented Secretary Perdue with a copy of "The Most Wonderful Dream." Also pictured is Agriculture Commissioner Ryan Quarles.

regulations," he said. "Agriculture has been oppressed for years with over burdensome regulations and President Trump is determined to peel those layers back and unleash the productivity and creativity of the innovative nature of American producers."

When speaking about the Farm Bill, Perdue said he is hopeful to get that legislation passed this year rather than extending the present bill.

"Extensions are very difficult to administer, difficult on our Farm Service Agency offices and difficult on our farmers not knowing how to plan for the next year," he said.

Perdue also noted that a good safety net through crop insurance, and PLC and ARC payments is wanted and will assist when weather situations or disasters occur to make sure people don't evaporate all their equity and can continue to farm the next year.

"But I don't know a farmer alive that wouldn't rather have a good crop at a fair price than a government check," he said.

While the discussions involved many issues of concern, Perdue pointed out some positive moves being made to help farm families including a new dairy margin protection program and continued efforts to explore new markets around the world.

"Farmers are some of the most resilient, optimistic people I've ever known. It takes a lot of faith and hope to put that seed in the ground every year and we are going to hope and have faith with them that things are going to be better," he said.



Secretary Perdue arriving at Hinton Mills, Mays Lick location.



INDUSTRIAL HEMP: A NEW OLD CROP

Recently introduced federal legislation would pave the way for new production of a historic crop

If the year were 1775 or even 1941, the idea of hemp being grown in Kentucky would be a very natural one. At one time, the state led the country in hemp production.

But with the plant's inclusion on the Controlled Substance list by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration,

growing the plant commercially or as a production crop has not been allowed since the end of World War II in the Commonwealth except under research provisions set forth by the 2014 Farm Bill.

The discussion of producing industrial hemp has turned into a lengthy one in Kentucky since 2013

when state legislation passed setting up an administrative framework that would oversee hemp production, should the ban be lifted. Congressman James Comer, who served as the state agriculture commissioner at that time, helped to push that bill through the General Assembly.



Central Kentucky Burley Tobacco Crop

The 2014 Farm Bill helped move the initiative forward with provisions that allowed for research production under a permit-type of program. Since then, the number of permit requests in Kentucky has risen and the quantity of industrial hemp has grown so much that processing facilities are beginning to take an interest in locating here.

Current Ag Commissioner Ryan Quarles has picked up the mantle and has worked to get even closer to the advent of true, legal hemp production by way of the research pilot program overseen by the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

That cause got its biggest push yet with the introduction of the Hemp Farming Act of 2018 by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. The bill, co-sponsored by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) legalize and clearly define hemp as an agricultural commodity and remove it from the list of controlled substances.

A press release from McConnell's office denoted, *"The legislation will also give states the opportunity to become the primary regulators of hemp, allow hemp researchers to apply for competitive federal grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and make hemp farmers eligible to apply for crop insurance."*

Comer, who now sits in Kentucky's 1st Congressional District seat, introduced similar legislation in the House late last year and recently introduced the companion bill to McConnell's proposed legislation.

Many in the ag industry feel legal hemp production appears to be closer than ever. And it probably couldn't come at a better time. The most recent USDA planting intentions report noted that the coming burley tobacco season will likely see its lowest production numbers on record. With those declining numbers, the idea that industrial hemp could be a replacement has floated around the ag industry for some time.

But before the remaining state burley producers cease their operations, Kentucky Farm Bureau President Mark Haney emphasized that burley production can still be a moneymaker, and industrial hemp still must prove itself as a viable crop.

"Adding hemp to Kentucky's diverse list of agricultural commodities will allow farmers to grow and innovate, and hopefully strengthen our overall agricultural economy."

-Senator Mitch McConnell

"We may be seeing declining planting intentions but tobacco can still make money for the family farm and is still an important crop in Kentucky. Burley production is tied to a rich tradition in this state and one many producers are not willing to give up," he said. *"Industrial hemp production could certainly be a part of their overall farming operations, it just could take some time to get it re-established as a profitable crop."*

Haney added that KFB supports the efforts being made to move forward with hemp production and certainly supports both pieces of legislation introduced by McConnell and Comer.

"Senator McConnell and Congressman Comer have long been champions for agriculture in this state and I think adding a crop to our farming arsenal at this time is a good idea. With the success we have historically seen from hemp in Kentucky, it only makes sense that we could once again be a leader in its production. But as with any new venture, it will take some time to get there."

During his recent state work period, McConnell talked to a number of farmers, manufacturers, and small business owners who expressed enthusiasm for hemp's potential.

"I am proud to introduce the bipartisan Hemp Farming Act of 2018, which will build upon the success of the hemp pilot programs and spur innovation and growth within the industry," he said. *"By legalizing hemp and empowering states to conduct their own oversight plans, we can give the hemp industry the tools necessary to create jobs and new opportunities for farmers and manufacturers around the county."*

Quarles applauded the move by McConnell and said upon the bill's introduction, it was a historic day for the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

"This is an incredible milestone for the Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program we've built here in Kentucky," he said. *"I want to thank Leader McConnell and the entire Kentucky federal delegation for recognizing the successful program the Kentucky Department of Agriculture has built and for working to remove hemp from the list of controlled substances."*

In touting the newly introduced bill, McConnell also said he understands the many ag-related issues farm families are currently facing and feels this "new" crop may be beneficial in alleviating some of their concerns.

"I'm hopeful that legalizing the farming and processing of industrial hemp will help energize agricultural communities throughout Kentucky," he said. *"This legislation will finally give farmers the ability to take advantage of the growing marketplace for hemp products and materials. Adding hemp to Kentucky's diverse list of agricultural commodities will allow farmers to grow and innovate, and hopefully strengthen our overall agricultural economy."*



2018 KFB Beef Tour attendees.

2018 JOHN C. HENDRICKS BEEF TOUR

This year's John C. Hendricks Beef Tour took attending Kentucky Farm Bureau (KFB) members to an area of the country known historically for its beef cattle industry. The tour included stops in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, all ranking in the top five of cattle producing states with a total cattle/calf population of nearly 24 million.

Fritz Giesecke, KFB Second Vice President, is a cattle producer from Hart County and serves as chair of the Beef Cattle Advisory Committee. He said this tour enabled members to get a firsthand look at both purebred and commercial cattle operations, a feedlot as well as the Creekstone Farms processing facility in Kansas.

"Having grown up in the cattle business, I know this area of the country has always been known for its premiere operations. Getting a look at some of these farms and ranches is a real learning opportunity for our producers in Kentucky," he said. "But in seeing them, I think it also allows our producers to realize we are in this same league being the largest beef cattle producing state east of the Mississippi."

Giesecke emphasized how valuable the investment made in the state's cattle industry by the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board has been in growing a quality industry.

"These investments have helped to grow and improve our cattle operations, strengthening our position as the eighth largest producer of quality beef cattle in

the country," he said. "We can hold our heads up high when it comes to being one of the premiere cattle producing states in this country."

One of the stops for Beef Tour attendees included the Kansas State University Purebred Beef Unit, which is benefitting from new on-campus facilities that support its mission to provide students with practical experience in breeding, feeding, management and marketing of purebred seedstock along with the opportunity to evaluate cattle.

The tour also stopped at Blythe Angus Farm, in White City, Kansas; the Oklahoma City National Stockyards; the Noble Research Institute's Red River Farm, in Burneyville, Oklahoma; and WHR Shorthorns, in Van Alstyne, Texas, to name a few.

This year marked the 13th for the Beef Tour named after former KFB First Vice-President John C. Hendricks who also served as the chair of the KFB Beef Cattle Advisory Committee. He knew

the value of educational opportunities and how the knowledge gained on these tours would benefit producers here. The tour is named to honor his memory.

KFB Tours are an integral part of the organization's efforts to assist members, and sponsor partners are critical in making these tours possible. This year Farm Credit Mid-America helped KFB sponsor the tour.

Jennifer Ferris, Financial Officer for Farm Credit Mid-America, said the ag financial services cooperative was honored to be able to help with the Beef Tour.

"This tour brings new ideas and opportunities to Kentucky cattle farmers, promoting innovation, knowledge and collaboration that enhances the success of our industry. As we live out our purpose of securing the future of rural communities and agriculture, we are proud to partner in initiatives that bring hands-on experiences to our farming community."

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COLD WIND DOESN'T CHILL ENTHUSIASM, AS TEENS THROG UK FIELD DAY

By Carol Lea Spence

LEXINGTON- Nearly 2,000 FFA and 4-H members from Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana gathered on a cold April day on the University of Kentucky campus for the 48th annual UK Field Day. Throughout a busy day of competition and networking, they also learned about the many educational opportunities available in the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

The field day attracts some of the best and brightest young men and women interested in pursuing agricultural-related careers. They had the chance to participate in the college's opportunity fair, where they were able to talk to UK students, staff and faculty, and also competed in various 4-H and FFA contests, with the winners receiving prizes and scholarships.

Students assembled under the big tent for an opening ceremony that resembled a pep rally, driven in part by music provided by DJ Warren Peace.

"The atmosphere in our college becomes electric when the students arrive, and I believe it is because we are excited to share the wonderful opportunities our university provides," said Stacy Vincent, UK associate professor in agricultural education and event organizer. *"That electricity is addictive, and it sets the tone for the day."*

The college's Dean Nancy Cox extended a warm welcome.

"You're going to meet a lot of our ag family today who have come out to show you all the different majors and all the different things you can do if you're a student in our college. One of the not-well-kept secrets about the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is we all love our jobs, and

we want to prepare you for a career in agriculture, where you're going to love your jobs. How good is it to love your job every day and have fun?" Cox asked the crowd, who responded with enthusiastic cheers.

Warren Beeler, executive director of the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy, greeted the students on behalf of Gov. Matt Bevin.

"The atmosphere in our college becomes electric when the students arrive, and I believe it is because we are excited to share the wonderful opportunities our university provides."

-Stacy Vincent

"I bring greetings from Gov. Matt Bevin. Gov. Bevin grew up in 4-H, and I myself grew up in 4-H and FFA, and I couldn't do what I do if it weren't for those organizations," Beeler told the crowd. *"The most important thing we need in agriculture these days is people. Agriculture basically employs 15 percent of all the people in this country. We don't just need farmers, we need teachers, we need geneticists, we need scientists, we need researchers, we need environmentalists, we need conservationists; we need you."*

Noah Carter, vice president of Kentucky 4-H, and Martin Williams, president of Kentucky FFA, also said

a few welcoming words, and then the students dispersed across the ag campus to compete in any of 20 events. Teens showed off their skills and knowledge in areas that included a quiz bowl, floriculture, agronomy, auctioneering, welding, tractor driving, dairy evaluation, farm management, the equine industry, nurseries, forestry, veterinary science, land and soil, livestock evaluation and meat judging.

"They use this as a springboard for competing at their respective state competitions. It's a good dry run," Vincent said.

At the end of the event, winners were announced, with Locust Trace Agriscience Center in Lexington recognized as the Overall Field Day Winner and Montgomery County High School accepting second place. All competition winners received plaques to hang in their schools or extension offices, and everyone, whether they placed or not, took home memories of an extraordinary experience.

"I hope they leave our college's event with ownership in the University of Kentucky and the knowledge that UK cares about their well-being, and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment is a close-knit, family-friendly place that they may consider as their future home," Vincent said.

Principal sponsors of the 2018 UK Field Day include the UK College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the UK Student Government Association, Gatormade Trailers, Hinton Mills, Integrity Premium Advertising, Kentucky Welding Institute, Tarter Farm and Ranch Equipment, National Association of Agricultural Educators and Whayne Supply.

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BOONE COUNTY'S CHAMPION ELITE EQUESTRIAN DRILL TEAM

4-H members are learning leadership skills on horseback

BURLINGTON- In a place known as the Horse Capital of the World, the 4-H organization has long enjoyed a special relationship with the equine population. Nowhere is that more evident than in Boone County, Kentucky, home of the 2017 State Champion 4-H Elite Equestrian Drill Team.

This group of 4-H members, along with local program leaders and a supportive parent-base are continuing a nearly three-decade tradition of drill team participation. In fact, some current participants represent a second generation in their respective families involved in the sport.

Pam Pickett, known as the Drill Master of the team, actually got the Boone County program started 29 years ago.

"I started a team here with a group called the "Desperados" and at that time, there were no other drill teams of that type in the state," she said. "But now, they have become quite popular."

It is so popular in Boone County that the team is actually comprised of two groups, similar to the traditional varsity and junior varsity model. Pickett said the younger, less experienced riders participate on the "Fillies" team while the more advanced riders are a part of the "Mares" team.

During their routine, "Mares" team members carry an American flag as they compete while the "Fillies" concentrate more on learning the different maneuvers and managing their horses.

Pickett said while there is a 24-person limit for the 4-H teams, she

never turns away a student who wants to participate. Many of those coming to her have never ridden and are often quite shy about it. But after being a part of the program, which involves having six hours of 4-H classes related to horsemanship, they begin to get used to their horse, and for many it really changes them, she added.

A TEAM EFFORT

In order to create and continue such a program, a facility is needed to accommodate the horses and students as they go through their practices, which take place two or three times a week during their training and completion season. Susan Elslager and her Johnny Walker Stables farm, a boarding and dressage training facility, have served that purpose for many years.

The local 4-H leader, who named the farm after the first horse she ever owned, said she grew up being a member of 4-H and both her daughters were in the equestrian program.

"This is just something I really enjoy and, as far as 4-H goes, we want to produce good citizens and teach them to be good mentors and learn to be responsible," said Elslager. *"And while we are very competitive and serious about what we are doing, we do a lot of fun things to build the team and to build friendships. A lot of these friendships will last for many years, if not the rest of their lives."*

She added that while the students are learning so much about their horses and each other, their parents are also learning and pitching in to help, including the simplest things that go with being around horses such as scooping poop from the training arena.

It takes a team to help the team and Elslager opened up her facility years ago to give these young people a chance to work with a horse perhaps for the first time. As they learned, through the 4-H program all about the caring for the animals, they also gained responsibility skills.

Elslager, offering the use of her farm, is indicative of the support system the Boone County team enjoys. Pickett said the program benefits from great community support and with the successful year they had in 2017, which included riding in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., many more community members have discovered the team. The attention and support received to help get the students, coaches and horses to the nation's capital was outstanding, she noted.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Like many of her students, Pickett also grew up with 4-H and she refers to her efforts with the drill team as, "paying it forward." And that is something her older riders are learning.

"To see the older members mentor the younger ones, my heart just swells because that's what they are learning, to be leaders," she said.

The three seniors on this year's team bring much experience to the program and have fulfilled that leadership role, according to Pickett.



Senior team members from left: Flo Daspremont, Audrey Reed and Hannah Wagner.



Drill Master Pam Pickett gives instructions to team members during a practice session.



Celebrating after winning the 2017 state championship.

Audrey Reed, Flo Daspremont, and Hannah Wagner are spending their last season on the team but have all enjoyed being a part of it and have embraced becoming those leaders.

Reed who has ridden for a total of 12 years, spent half that time as a drill team member. She said she feels like it's part of her role as a senior to help those with less experience.

"It feels awesome to give some of my knowledge to the younger riders and that's what 4-H is all about," she said.

Wagner, who grew up around horses, has also spent six years with the team. She said leadership comes with being involved in 4-H.

"I feel like we can demonstrate our leadership roles to our fullest potential"

with this team and 4-H teaches us not only leadership but responsibility," she said.

Although it was her first year with the team, Daspremont has been involved in riding for a number of years, as well. She had heard about the program and wanted to be a part of it during her final high school year.

"Even though it is my first year, I have found myself in a leadership role handing down what I know to the new riders," she said.

EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES

While senior leadership is critical to the success of this program, many of the young riders also bring quite a bit of experience with them.

Emily Walden, an eighth-grade member, has grown up riding and when not practicing with the drill team, spends much of her free time riding and showing her Saddlebreds. She said she discovered the team by way of one of her horses.

"When I was younger, my parents bought an Arabian horse that had been on another drill team," she said. "I didn't know anything about 4-H until then and that's how I got started."

Walden was nine years old at the time but she began riding at the age of three. That experience has helped her contribute to this very talented team and she plans to continue through her high school years.

"We can only participate on the team until we are 18 but I want to be involved with horses the rest of my life," she said.

Alyssa Mosmeier is another younger team member with a long history of riding, having grown up on a horse farm and participating in dressage. She said there is a lot of work that goes into being a part of the drill team but that it is a lot of fun.

"Probably riding in the Inaugural Parade was one of the most fun things I've done with the team," she said. "But winning the state championship was really fun, too."

Mosmeier said the team, in addition to competitions, gets to ride in many parades, the most recent being the Pegasus Parade, which is held each year in Louisville as part of the Kentucky Derby festivities.

A NEW PURPOSE

As much of a role as all the "people" play when it comes to making this drill team work, the horses have their own stories to tell. There is no certain breed that is necessary to make a good drill team horse. In fact, there are several different breeds represented every time the Boone County 4-Hers take the arena. But perhaps what is most rewarding for these animals is the fact some are rescue horses.

Pickett and Elslager decided early in the formation of the team to use these rescues for those members who needed a horse.

"Susan and I wanted to use rescues and give them a good home

and their riders the chance to have their own horses," said Pickett. "It's not that these animals were neglected, it's just they were in need of a new purpose."

In watching the team practice, it is evident the efforts everyone puts into this program; the riders, as they maneuver around the ring in precision movements; their parents, as they watch and encourage their children; the leaders, as they instruct and mentor these young people; and the horses as they enjoy a second chance in this Horse Capital of the World as part of the Boone County Elite Equestrian Drill Team.



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“Down the Backroads”

By Tim Thornberry

Just before entering the fifth grade, my family moved, and in doing so changed my school district. I went from a small country school with barely 100 total students to the “city school” with four times as many classmates. To say the least it was scary for me.

I had grown accustomed to my little country school. My bus driver, Junior Cornish, knew each one of his passengers by name; and there was Miss Gillis, the lunch room lady who always gave me a little extra on spaghetti day; and there was dear Ms. McCoun who was the teachers’ aid for every teacher; all six of them. She was such a blessing to those teachers and the students.

Even Ms. Hawkins, our principal was like a second mother to us; tough when she needed to be, but always ready with a hug or a pat on the head. I loved that place and was terrified to leave it.

But I had little say in the change and did my best to be strong on that first day in my new classroom. To be honest, I had to fight back tears on many occasions at first, but after a few weeks, I had met new friends, learned my new bus driver’s name and found the lunches to be quite good, even though my Miss Gillis wasn’t there.

That was the first of many “life changes” I would face, and each time was a little scary. But in many cases the change was unavoidable, and often it was for the best.

I suppose we all go through a period of uncertainty when something we have grown so accustomed to changes for whatever the reason. Whether it be a new house, a new job, a new town, or even a new crop, making any change doesn’t seem to come without some

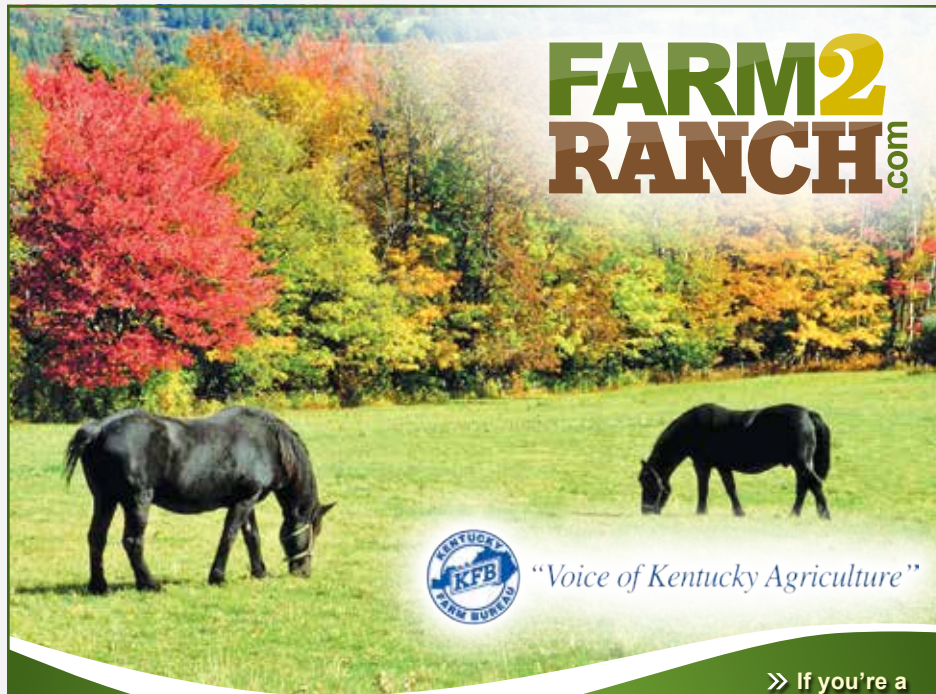
apprehension. I would guess that is human nature.

No matter how uneasy a change has made me feel, I have found that new opportunities have usually come from it. For instance, the first real job I ever had was hard to give up even though I had grown restless with it. But by the time I had completed my 16th year there, I had also been granted the opportunity to further my education; I had started a freelance photojournalism business; and I had prepared myself for the next step, career-wise, even though, at the time, I didn’t realize that’s what I was doing.

In hindsight moving on and making that change was the best thing that could have happened to me. It actually changed my life. But it was tough to leave something that was a constant for so long.

Taking a leap of faith is often a terrifying event but regretting not having made changes when opportunities came along is even more troublesome.

I have found that while my life’s path may have taken several different twists and turns over the years, I’ve always ended up moving in the right direction, as I have traveled down the backroads.



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COUNTY CORNER

Snapshots of County Farm Bureau activities



ANDERSON COUNTY

Anderson County Farm Bureau donated a grain rescue device known as a "Turtle Tube" to the Anderson County Fire District. Pictured left to right: Director of Emergency Management Bart Powell, KFB Director Randy Chrisman, Judge Executive Orbreys Gritton, County Fire Chief Pat Krogman, Battalion Chief Chris Harrod, Battalion Chief Brandon Brown, and City Fire Chief Bobby Hume.



CHRISTIAN COUNTY

Christian County Farm Bureau Women attended an exciting event during the Women's State Leadership Conference in Bowling Green. They had a wonderful meal at Highland Stables and entertainment from a "grandpa jones" impersonator.



FAYETTE COUNTY

Fayette County Farm Bureau Young Farmers Burger Bash event was held on April 13. Pictured from left: Danielle Milburn, Fayette County FB Young Farmer Chair; Rod White; and Carrie McIntosh, Fayette County FB Executive Director.

HARLAN COUNTY

Harlan County Farm Bureau donated \$1,000 to the Harlan County FFA. County President and State Director Don Miniard said, "Harlan County Farm Bureau is investing in the education and future of our youth. We have an outstanding group of young future farmers." Miniard presented Rachel Mason, Harlan County's Agriculture Teacher, with the donation.





KNOX COUNTY

Knox County Farm Bureau Federation Directors and Knoxville County Farm Bureau Insurance Agency purchased food during Food Checkout Week for the Back-Pack Program for Knoxville County school students. The food is sent home on Friday in back packs with students who would otherwise have no food for the weekend. The food purchased was divided equally between the Knoxville County Schools.



LINCOLN COUNTY

To celebrate Ag Literacy Week members of the Lincoln County Farm Bureau Women's Committee went to each elementary school and read the book, *"John Deere, That's Who"* to a 1st through 3rd grade class. Each person played Farm Bingo with the class and gave prizes to the winners. The markers were edible items like Cheez-its, M & M's, or cheerios. The book, teacher's guide and magazines were donated to the school.



PERRY COUNTY

Perry County Farm Bureau made a contribution to Perry County Central FFA. The FFA students came to the Perry County Board Meeting to say thank you. Pictured are Brooklyn Noble, Joe Turner (county president) and Jacob Suffridge.



PULASKI COUNTY

Pulaski Farm Bureau purchased the book *"Manners Can Be Fun"* for all the county's public elementary schools. Pictured from left to right: Tim Hamm, Vice Principal, Hopkins Elementary; Kyle Lively, Superintendent, Somerset Independent Schools; Amy Polston, Elementary Curriculum Director, Pulaski County Schools; Judy and Bill White, Education Committee, Pulaski County Farm Bureau; and Steve Butcher, Superintendent, Pulaski County Schools. Not pictured: Jimmy Dyehouse, Superintendent, Science Hill School.



PULASKI COUNTY

During Ag Literacy Week, Tina Surber, a kindergarten teacher at Northern Elementary School, read an appropriate ag book to her students.

MARKETS

HAY YIELDS VARY GREATLY IN KENTUCKY

The Kentucky Field Office of USDA-NASS recently released 2017 hay production data by county (for counties with adequate producer data). In the "all other hay" category, the top six counties with yields reported are in the Central crop reporting district. The highest average yield was 3.0 tons per acre, the same as it was in 2016. The top county for 2017 was Meade County; it was also at the top in 2016 along with four other counties. The next five counties were Monroe at 2.95 tons, Allen at 2.90 tons and Breckinridge, Butler and Grayson with 2.85 tons per acre. The lowest yield reported was 1.75 tons per acre with 16 counties reported below 2.0 tons per acre. The state average yield of 2.40 tons per acre was unchanged from the 2016 yield. Total production was 4.80 million tons, down 240,000 tons from the previous year. The top counties in total production were Barren, Madison and Pulaski.

For alfalfa hay, only 13 counties have yield and production data published for 2017. Several remaining counties were combined by crop reporting district (4); this included Mason and Mercer which were the top alfalfa producers in 2016. The counties with the highest alfalfa yields for 2017 were Hart with 4.25 tons per acre, Simpson with 3.90 tons and

Owen with 3.80 tons. The lowest alfalfa yield among the 13 counties reported was 2.65 tons per acre. The state average yield was 3.50 tons per acre, down 0.10 tons from 2016, resulting in production of 525,000 tons of alfalfa, down three percent from 2016.

CORN USED FOR HFCS TRENDS LOWER

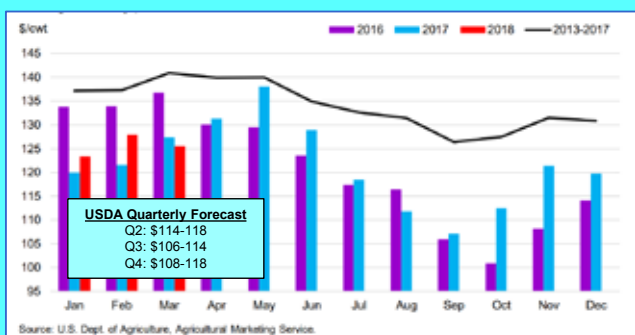
High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is one of the food products made from corn. Of the two major formulations of HFCS, one is used in the baking and food industry and the other mostly in soft drinks. According to USDA's latest Sugar and Sweetener Outlook, U.S. HFCS production declined 1.1 percent in 2017 to 8.273 million short tons; this continues a downward trend that has persisted since production peaked at 9.51 million tons in 1999. Production declines have accelerated since 2011. USDA credits lower HFCS production to: 1) rising consumer demand for HFCS-free food products; 2) higher corn prices, partly in response to increased ethanol production; 3) rising imports of refined sugar from Mexico after the sweetener provisions of NAFTA went into effect in 2008; and 4) consolidation of the wet corn milling industry increased utilization rates and decreased capacity. Also impacting HFCS demand is its rising price; 2017

marks the fourth consecutive year of higher prices. Refined sugar prices have been much more competitive with HFCS since 2013. USDA reports that HFCS production only used 460 million bushels of corn in the 2016/17 marketing year. By comparison, corn used for ethanol and by-products in 2016/17 totaled 5.575 billion bushels.

U.S. BEEF PRODUCTION RECORD LARGE

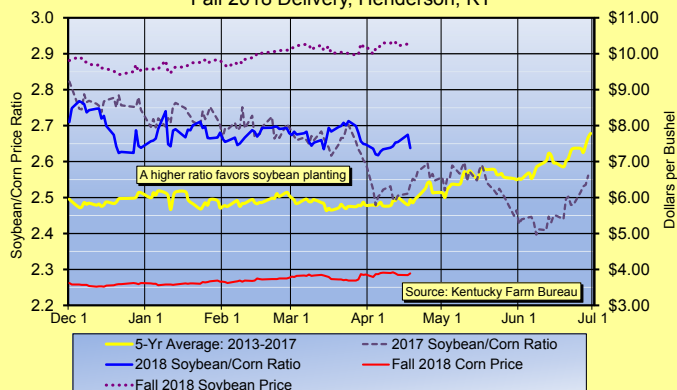
While USDA lowered its 2018 U.S. commercial beef production forecast by 50 million pounds in April, the revised 27.63 billion pounds is still a new record. The current record is 27.09 billion pounds set in 2002. For the 16 years since then, U.S. commercial beef production averaged 25.60 billion pounds. The smallest annual production occurred in 2015 when 23.70 billion pounds were produced; the last year beef production was below this amount was 1993. Per capita beef disappearance in 2015 was 54.0 pounds (boneless, retail). The 2018 USDA forecast is 59.0 pounds per capita, an increase of 2.1 pounds or 3.7 percent from last year. Record large pork and broiler production in 2018 will combine with beef for record large red meat and poultry disappearance amounting to 221.5 pounds per capita.

Average Monthly 5-Area Choice Steer Price



Source: Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook, Economic Research Service/USDA, April 16, 2018

Soybean/Corn Price Relationship
Fall 2018 Delivery, Henderson, KY



NEWS FROM AFBF

Many farms and ranches will be helped by the recently enacted estate tax exemption of \$11 million per person indexed for inflation and the continuation of stepped-up basis, but the threat of a return to the \$5.5 million per-person exemption in 2026 highlights the need for permanent relief, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

“What is needed are permanent tax policies that do not punish capital-intensive businesses like farms and ranches, and that do not hinder sons and daughters from continuing the agricultural legacy of their parents. The American Farm Bureau Federation continues to support estate tax repeal.”

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, passed in 2017, temporarily doubles the estate tax exemption to \$11 million per person through 2025. In addition, the legislation preserves stepped-up basis and continues to allow the transfer of any unused exemption to a surviving spouse. Farm Bureau supports making the \$11 million per-person exemption permanent as a step toward the eventual repeal of the estate tax.

“The new exemption level will protect the vast majority of our nation’s farms and ranches from the devastating consequences of estate taxes, but a potential return to a \$5.5 million per-person exemption in 2026 is troublesome. Instead of spending money to upgrade buildings, purchase equipment and further invest in livestock

herds, farmers and ranchers will have to continue to divert resources to pay for estate planning and life insurance,” Farm Bureau wrote in a recent letter to House members urging them to cosponsor the Death Tax Repeal Act (H.R. 5422).

Tax laws must protect the families that grow America’s food and fiber, often for rates of return that are already miniscule compared to almost any

other investment they could make, Farm Bureau said.

“What is needed are permanent tax policies that do not punish capital-intensive businesses like farms and ranches, and that do not hinder sons and daughters from continuing the agricultural legacy of their parents. The American Farm Bureau Federation continues to support estate tax repeal,” the group wrote.



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CANDID CONVERSATION

KFB Candid Conversation presents a discussion about the topical issues facing the agricultural industry and rural communities in a question and answer format. In this column, Shae Hopkins, executive director and CEO of KET (Kentucky Educational Television) discusses efforts to bring quality programming to the state from one of the oldest public broadcasting stations in the country.

Would you give us a brief description of KET and describe its mission?

KET is one of the largest public broadcasting networks in the nation and Kentucky's only statewide media, serving the Commonwealth through both locally produced and national PBS programming, as well as through the many educational services we provide, from pre-school to K-12 and adult learning.

KET has a long history of bringing very diverse programs to our state especially to our rural communities. Why is that important?

This year, we are proudly celebrating 50 years of service to Kentucky. From the very beginning, we were committed to serving everyone, regardless of circumstance. Today, one million people use our broadcast and online services every week, and they rely on KET to provide access that might not otherwise be available to them, be that a seat inside their Kentucky legislative chambers or a seat inside a concert hall thousands of miles away.

What is the value in having several different KET channels?

When KET first went on the air, with a goal of providing quality instructional services to every student in the state,

our service ran only weekdays during school hours. Through the years, our services expanded. Particularly with the emergence of digital technologies, the opportunities to better serve our diverse audiences grew. Today, KET's four channels broadcasting 24/7/365 as well as a robust website and streaming service, several apps and more allow us to serve people whenever, wherever and however they need.



KET and Kentucky Farm Bureau have enjoyed a long relationship by way of Bluegrass and Backroads, KFB's participation in the tele-fund, and as an underwriter of Comment on Kentucky. Would you talk about the value of such relationships?

There is always strength in people working together. That is why we appreciate all of our partners and strive to be an essential community partner ourselves. KET has been successful for 50 years and can eagerly look ahead to the next 50 and beyond due in no small part to our many partners, which range from state leaders and educators

to corporate and individual funders to content specialists and independent producers. Among these partnerships, we are certainly thankful both for Kentucky Farm Bureau's longtime support of KET and for the service they provide through the production of Bluegrass and Backgrounds. This long-running series, a valued part of our commitment to local productions, makes us all proud to call Kentucky home.

In comparing KET to other public broadcasting stations in other parts of the country, what sets it apart from those other stations?

Over the course of our 50 years, KET has become a national leader in the development of innovative educational resources and services that bring learning to life. While so many people know KET for Sesame Street, Masterpiece, Comment on Kentucky and other programs, it's the KET not everyone sees that, in many ways, distinguishes us. As a leading producing partner for PBS LearningMedia, our resources are used to enhance instruction in every Kentucky public school. Other KET resources help childcare professionals and K-12 educators receive high quality training. And yet other resources help adults succeed in the workforce through GED test preparation and essential skills development. In fact, KET is the country's largest non-profit GED publisher and our FastForward test-prep system is used throughout the nation. Furthermore, our network of 15 transmission towers across the state help connect and protect through a reliable communications infrastructure. Agencies including the Kentucky State Police, FBI, National Guard and others utilize KET towers to provide an essential public safety link.



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BEECH SPRINGS FARM MARKET			MCGLEAN'S AEROFRESH FRUIT			WOODLAND FARM STORE		
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BI-WATER FARM & GREENHOUSE, LLC			MICHELS FAMILY FARM			EAST KENTUCKY		
Georgetown	biwaterfarm.com	502-863-3676	Sparta		859-643-2511	APPLETREE		
BRAY FRUIT			MILLVILLE COMMUNITY MARKET			Cumberland		606-589-5735
Bedford		502-255-7296	Frankfort		859-873-9772	COUNTRY GARDEN GREENHOUSE		
BRAY ORCHARDS & ROADSIDE MARKET			MORGAN'S RUN PUMPKIN PATCH & CORN MAZE			Beattyville		606-424-9379
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CHAPPELL FARMS PRODUCE			MULBERRY ORCHARD, LLC			Hindman		606-785-4891
Owenton		502-593-5500	Shelbyville	mulberryorchardky.com	502-655-2633	GOLDEN APPLE FRUIT MARKET		
COUNTRY CORNER GREENHOUSE & NURSERY, INC.			NELTNER'S FARM LLC			Whitesburg		606-633-9763
Shepherdsville	countrycornergreenhouse.com	502-955-8635	Melbourne	neltnersfarm.com	859-635-3636	IMEL'S GREENHOUSE		
EAGLE BEND ALPACAS			REED VALLEY ORCHARD			Greenup		606-473-1708
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ECKERT'S BOYD ORCHARD			SHERWOOD ACRES BEEF			Louisa		606-686-3276
Versailles	eckerts.com/versailles	859-873-3097	LaGrange	sherwoodacresbeef.com	502-222-4326	RED BIRD MISSION ROADSIDE FARM MARKET		
EVANS ORCHARD AND CIDER MILL			SUNNY ACRES FARM			Beverly	rbmission.org	606-598-2709
Georgetown	evansorchard.com	502-863-2255	Jeffersontown	sunnyacresfarmky.com	502-727-9536	SAVAGE FARMS		
FREE RADICAL RANCH			THE FARM AT LANDWORKS			Louisa		606-922-0762
Morning View	freeradicalranch.com	859-462-2344	Paris	thefarmatlandworks.com	859-987-1266	THE FARM STAND		
GALLREIN FARMS			THE GARDEN ON 68, LLC			Paintsville		606-793-0805
Shelbyville	gallrein farms.com	502-633-4849	Maysville		606-584-4613	TOWNSEND'S SORGHUM MILL & FARM MARKET		
GOLDEN APPLE FRUIT MARKET			THE GREENHOUSE IN GERTRUDE			Jeffersonville	townsendsorghummill.com	859-498-4142
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