



Carey's Comments

News and Views from Northwest and Central Louisiana

March 15, 2013

My Thoughts: Family First

I've written about the Farm Bureau family in the past, but this time I want to focus on the most important family. That's the one you have at home.

The past two months have reminded of how important my wife and kids are to me. I haven't really been home much since the beginning of this year.

Farm Bureau meetings have had me crossing the country, from the AFBF Convention in Nashville to the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference in Phoenix, to our membership incentive trip to Santa Barbara. Add in my regular trips to Baton Rouge for meetings and all the parish board meetings and you have a husband and dad who hasn't been at home much at all.

I spent last week at home. I slept in my own bed every night. I took my seven year old daughter Mary to lunch on Tuesday and spent the afternoon with her. I spent a day with my wife CJ and our youngest three kids on our farm in Pleasant Hill, enjoying the peace and quiet. I watched my son Calen score his first goal in Lacrosse, a sport that he just started playing last month. Then I took my son James to Lake Charles for the weekend to attend the State Swim Meet, which he qualified for in two events. I did attend a couple of local board meetings and take care of other Farm Bureau business during the week, but my focus was on my family last week.

I'm going to do the same thing this week. I need to take my other daughter Molly to lunch. I'm going to spend some time with my oldest son Cody, who will be leaving our home this fall to attend Louisiana Tech. And most importantly, I'm going to take my beautiful wife out on a date night.

Farm Bureau is very important to me. Of course, it's what pays the bills and puts food on the table, but there's more to it than that. I believe in what Farm Bureau stands for and why it exists, and I get really wrapped up in everything that the Farm Bureau family is doing. But sometimes I have to take a step back and refocus my life on the family that's really important.

Thanks for all you do for Farm Bureau, but don't let it get in the way of the important things in your life. Make some time for your family, which should always come first.



My beautiful family. I am a very lucky guy.

Every Poultry Grower in Louisiana Should See This:

There are a lot of poultry growers in Louisiana who do not belong to Farm Bureau. I think every one of them should see this video to understand how Farm Bureau can help them.

Lois Alt, a West Virginia poultry farmer, with support from the American Farm Bureau and the West Virginia Farm Bureau, decided to sue the EPA after the agency claimed her farm required a discharge permit for storm water. Click here to see more, and pass it on to your fellow chicken farmers: [Farm Bureau Helps Poultry Grower Sue EPA](#)

Farm Bureau Calendar:

The LFBF Pecan Advisory Committee will meet on Saturday, *March 16th* in conjunction with the Louisiana Pecan Growers Association at 10:00am on the Rosalie Plantation, south of Alexandria.

Food Checkout Week will be observed in Louisiana through donations to the Ronald McDonald Houses in Monroe and New Orleans. The Monroe donation will be made on *March 18th* and the New Orleans donation will happen on *March 20th*. There will also be a Food Check-Out Week activity held on *March 23rd* at the Lafourche Central Market in Raceland. Please join the Women's Leadership Committee as they promote our Louisiana commodities with interactive activities, cookbooks for sale, and free recipe cards and shopping bags to give away.

The Toledo Bend Golf and Fishing Tournament will be held *March 27th & 28th*. It is presented by the Sabine Parish Farm Bureau and benefits the Louisiana Farm Bureau Foundation and the Louisiana Ag in the Classroom Foundation. I've attached a brochure and entry form to this email.

A Farm Bureau Legislative Appreciation Dinner for Northwest Louisiana is on the calendar for *March 28th* at 6:00pm at Ralph and Kacoo's in Bossier City.

Another Farm Bureau Legislative Appreciation Dinner is scheduled for Central Louisiana on *April 2nd* at 6:00pm at Bistro on the Bayou in Alexandria.

The LSU AgCenter is hosting the **Northwest Louisiana Beef and Forage Field Day** on Tuesday, *April 16th* at 9:00am at the Red River Research Station in Bossier City.

You and your spouse are invited to attend both of these dinners. We will be inviting all the State Legislators in the area to attend, so come help Farm Bureau make an impact for the upcoming session.

All convention forms are due at the State Office on *May 1st*.

The Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation's 91st Annual Convention will be held on *June 27th – 30th* at the New Orleans Marriott.

AITC Info

The first AITC e-newsletter was published recently. Click here to take a look at it: [Sow, Know & Grow](#). If you would like to be added to the subscription list, contact the State AITC Coordinator Lynda Danos at LyndaD@LFBF.org.



Louisiana Ag in the Classroom is offering mini-grants of up to \$500 for parish Farm Bureaus. The purpose of the grants is to increase Agriculture in the Classroom involvement at the parish level by funding projects that will enhance agricultural literacy. The Mini-Grant can provide funds to purchase non-consumable materials and supplies to develop and implement agricultural lessons or projects that foster ag literacy. The Mini-Grant program can assist parish Farm Bureaus in creating a planned AITC program in their parish. Examples of grant projects include commodity educational supplies, school gardening tools, cork boards or display materials used for producer presentations, agricultural expo experiences or classroom use. A Mini-Grant application is attached to this email.

Convention Time!

Plans are now in the works for the 2013 Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation's Annual Convention in New Orleans. The dates are June 27th-30th. There are a couple of things you need to be working on now, so they don't sneak up on you.



First is the Awards Book. I've attached a copy of it to this email, so print it out and get started on it now. The second thing is the voting delegates packet. They were sent out from the state office a couple of weeks ago, so go ahead and start getting the delegate forms filled out and signed at your next board meeting.

Both of these are due on May 1st.

Food Check-Out Week

Ronald McDonald House Charities in Monroe and New Orleans will receive food and cash donations from the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation in honor of National Food Checkout Week.

Food Checkout Week commemorates the time when the average American consumer has earned enough money to pay the entire year's food bill. Food Checkout Week 2013 was celebrated Sunday, Feb. 17 through Feb. 22. The theme of this year's events was stretching your food dollar with healthy, nutritious food. Donations will take place March 18 in Monroe and March 20 in New Orleans.

The Farm Bureau's Women's Leadership Committee organized this year's event by collecting Louisiana foodstuffs such as sweet potatoes, milk, Creole gumbo mixes and sugarcane products, as well as washcloths, towels and other household items such as linens and paper products from the state's cotton and timber industries. This is the 17th year the organization has donated food to the Ronald McDonald House Charities.

Capitol Watch

The main issue for Agriculture is to protect the dozens of tax programs that are currently on the books. There are tax exemptions, tax rebate programs, and tax incentive programs on the books that benefit Agriculture and the people Ag serves. The Governor intends to remove many tax programs across many industries and professions. He is calling it a "tax swap" initiative since he intends to increase the sales tax after he also repeals corporate and personal income taxes as well as adjusting some severance and ad valorem taxes.



Joe Mapes

With 60 to 80 percent of a farmer's expenses going towards inputs, an abolishment of personal income taxes would be a non-starter for farmers. A farmer must first have an income to tax, and there are no guarantees that will happen each harvest season. Farm Bureau members should make sure they have signed up for VoterVoice on the state FB website seen [here](#). It's going to be more important than ever for FB members to participate in the legislative process to make sure Louisiana Agriculture remains competitive in the world market. After you sign up for VoterVoice, you have but to scroll down a call to action email sent to you and hit the submit button. The pre-written message targets just your legislators so you are not spamming a Senator or Representative that is not yours.

In regard to funding of the LSU Ag Center, our goal is to remain as whole as possible by fighting against more cuts to the budget. Remember, we just suffered another mid-year cut of \$1.2 million and cannot afford to cut much more without losing substantial services and personnel. Please stand at the ready so when we call on you to participate in the legislative process, it will be like pulling a trigger when you hit that submit button. Then we will be doing what Bud Mapes always recommended, i.e., taking rifle shots and not shotgun blasts.

Snapshots



Louisiana Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee won a \$500 check at the AFBF YF&R Leadership Conference in Phoenix for their Food Bank fundraising auction held during the LFBF Convention.



The license plate on Bobby and Melissa Morris' GMC pickup they won last summer for winning the YF&R Achievement Award.