

## Women In Ag Seek Leadership Roles

Women are active advocates for agriculture and successful business owners interested in filling leadership roles, according to a new Farm Bureau survey.

A majority of those surveyed, 91%, also believe there should be more women in industry leadership roles. More than 3,000 women completed the survey, conducted to determine goals and achievements of women in agriculture.

"Women play a vital role in modern farming and ranching," said Sherry Saylor, an Arizona farmer and chair of the American Farm Bureau Federation's Women's Leadership Committee. "We hope to use the survey results to drive our program of work and also to give women their voice and help them make even more of an impact in their communities."

Over half of women surveyed have started their own business that's still in operation; 25% have not started a business but indicated they would like to. Respondents cited prioritizing and finding time to accomplish tasks, acquiring financial support and marketing plan development as challenges.

Respondents ranked communicating effectively, inspiring and motivating others, and managing conflict among the most important leadership skills.

Seventy-five percent of those surveyed are local leaders, 50% are statewide and 26% serve nationally.

All women who are farmers, ranchers, farm/ranch employees, employed in agricultural businesses, pursuing ag-related higher education or supportive of agriculture in other ways were invited to participate.

Find full results at [fb.org/women](http://fb.org/women).

## Foundation Fundraiser Is A Blast



The 4th annual Alabama Farmers Agriculture Foundation Skeet Shoot was Nov. 8 at Selwood Farm in Alpine. Thirty-eight teams competed and raised over \$35,000, which will benefit agriculture education. From left are Pike County Farmers Federation (PCFF) team members James Jordan; state Rep. Mike Jones, R-Andalusia; state Rep. Wes Allen, R-Troy; and Alabama Farmers Federation District 10 Director and PCFF President Steve Stroud.

## USDA Livestock Assistance Available

Alabama livestock producers who suffered grazing and feed losses because of Hurricane Michael in October 2018 can sign up for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance through Jan. 30.

In order for farmers to access the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), USDA has agreed to waive the loss notice, which is typically filed within 30 days of the loss.

"In the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, very few applications for ELAP assistance were submitted, and it appeared farmers were not aware of the program at the time," said Alabama Farmers Federation National Affairs Director Mitt Walker. "The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries worked with USDA to waive the loss notice so producers in impacted counties can now benefit from this program."

Eligible livestock must be

- Grazing animals, such as adult or non-adult dairy cattle, adult or non-adult beef cattle, adult or non-adult buffalo, equine, goats and sheep

- Livestock that would normally have been grazing the eligible grazing land or pastureland during the normal grazing period for the specific pasture type of grazing land or pastureland in the county where the weather occurred

- Owned, cash-leased, purchased, under contract for purchase or been raised by a contract grower or an eligible livestock producer during the 60 days before the adverse weather

- Maintained for commercial use as part of the producer's farming operation on the beginning date of the eligible adverse weather

ELAP covers losses not provided for in the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program or the Livestock Indemnity Program.

To learn more, visit [fsa.usda.gov](http://fsa.usda.gov).

## Ag In Action

**Bob Sharp** was appointed to a five-year term as commissioner for the Alabama Forestry Commission by Gov. Kay Ivey. The Auburn University forest management graduate was co-owner of Mobile Forest Products Inc. until 2007. Sharp, who lives in Mobile, replaces Commissioner Jerry Dwyer of Auburn and is one of seven commissioners.

**Randy Thomley** of Fayette County won the Alabama Farmers Federation member benefits Grill & Chill Giveaway. He was randomly chosen after registering for the member perks app. Thomley received a Blackstone Products

griddle and Yeti cooler as his prize.

**A new Koch Foods feed mill** is coming to Alabama. The poultry company is building a \$55 million grain storage and distribution facility in Attalla in Etowah County. The 130-acre feed mill will bring about 30 jobs and should be completed by fall 2021.

**Alabama Forage Conference** registration closes Nov. 19. The event is Dec. 3-4 in Rogersville and focuses on forage-livestock hot topics, current research and field demonstrations. Register for this Alabama Extension event at [AlabamaForages.com](http://AlabamaForages.com).

## Ragan Named Alabama Junior Beef Expo Intern

The Alabama Farmers Federation welcomed Madden Ragan to its home office in October. The DeKalb County native will assist with preparations for the Junior Beef Expo March 19-21.

As show coordinator intern, the Auburn University (AU) senior will help with data entry, exhibitor correspondence, volunteer organization and other show management aspects.

She is pursuing minors in agribusiness and crop and soil science. At AU, she is involved in AU Young Farmers; Collegiate FFA; the Crop, Soil and Environmental Science Club; and Collegiate Cattlemen and Cattlewomen.

The Fort Payne High School graduate is the daughter of Derwood and Celeste Ragan and grew up on a farm.

## COMMODITY CORNER

### AFVGA

U.S. Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency (RMA) Administrator Martin Barbre met with specialty crop farmers while visiting the state. Barbre visited blueberry, satsuma, kiwi and other fruit and vegetable growers. Farmers used the opportunity to give feedback on challenges, concerns, and opportunities they encounter when utilizing RMA programs. Producers discussed ways RMA can streamline and strengthen programs they depend on to assist with unknown and unforeseen challenges.

*-Hunter McBrayer, executive director*

### POULTRY

Alabama poultry leaders met in Montgomery in early November to discuss the state's avian influenza outbreak plan. Producers should be mindful of migratory birds potentially posing disease threats to their farms. Farmers are cautioned to follow strict biosecurity protocol on and off the farm.

*-Russ Durrance, division director*

### PEANUTS

Culinary educators, chefs, editors and food bloggers attended a farm-to-table peanut harvest tour in Dothan Oct. 20-23 hosted by the Alabama Peanut Producers Association, Southern Peanut Growers and National Peanut Board. Along with seeing peanut harvest, they toured the Wiregrass Research and Experiment Station, a buying point, a shelling plant and Golden Boy Foods peanut butter plant in Troy.

*-Jacob Davis, executive director*

### WILDLIFE

Earlier this year, a new bait privilege was passed by the Alabama Legislature. The new license endorsement allows hunters on privately owned or leased land to hunt white-tailed deer and feral swine with the aid of any grain, minerals or salt. All hunters, regardless of age or status, must purchase this \$15 license to legally hunt over bait.

*-William Green, division director*

### COTTON, SOYBEAN, WHEAT & FEED GRAIN

The Alabama Row Crops Short Course is Dec. 10 at the Hotel at Auburn University & Dixon Conference Center. The free course is an excellent opportunity for producers to expand their knowledge with researchers on the cutting edge of agricultural technology. Register at [aces.edu/go/1102](http://aces.edu/go/1102).

*-Carla Hornady, divisions director*

### MEAT GOAT & SHEEP

The Meat Goat & Sheep Checkoff Referendum passed with overwhelming support from Alabama producers. This means the checkoff program will continue to serve producers through research, education and promotion for at least the next five years. The State Meat Goat & Sheep Committee would like to extend a special thank you to the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Farmers Federation's area organization directors for their efforts in facilitating the referendum.

*-Brady Ragland, division director*

## Events & Deadlines

**Nov. 21-22** - Alabama Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Conference in Clanton

**Nov. 22-28** - Farm-City Week

**Dec. 3-4** - Alabama Forage Conference in Rogersville  
• [AlabamaForages.com](http://AlabamaForages.com)

**Dec. 3** - Catfish Industry Update Meeting in Greensboro

**Dec. 8-9** - Alabama Farmers Federation annual meeting in Montgomery

**Dec. 10** - Alabama Row Crops Short Course in Auburn  
• [aces.edu/go/1102](http://aces.edu/go/1102)

**Jan. 15-17** - Gulf States Horticulture Expo in Mobile  
• [gshe.org](http://gshe.org)

**Jan. 17-22** - American Farm Bureau Federation annual convention in Austin, Texas  
• [fb.org](http://fb.org)

**Jan. 20** - Alabama Catfish Checkoff Referendum

**Feb. 3-4** - Federation Commodity Organization Meeting in Montgomery  
• Register by Jan. 7 at [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org)



**Feb. 3-5** | **MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

# MEETING SCHEDULE

**MONDAY**  
**FEB. 3**

Alabama Farmers Federation Home Office  
Dairy  
Hay & Forage

**TUESDAY**  
**FEB. 4**

Embassy Suites, Montgomery  
Bee & Honey  
Beef  
Pork  
Soybeans  
Wheat & Feed Grains  
Wildlife

**WEDNESDAY**  
**FEB. 5**

Embassy Suites, Montgomery  
Cotton  
Equine  
Forestry  
Greenhouse, Nursery & Sod  
Meat Goat & Sheep  
Poultry

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Catfish Industry  
Update Meeting

**TUESDAY**  
**DEC. 3**  
**GREENSBORO**

Alabama Peanut  
Producers Association  
Annual Meeting  
& Alabama-Florida  
Trade Show

**THURSDAY**  
**FEB. 6**  
**DOTHAN**

Visit [AlfaFarmers.org](http://AlfaFarmers.org) under "EVENTS" to learn more.

# COMMODITY ORGANIZATION MEETING

## FEB. 3-5 in Montgomery

# DEADLINES AND DETAILS

Early bird registration  
through **JAN. 7**  
**\$45 | PER DAY**  
[includes lunch]

Registration  
through **JAN. 21**  
**\$60 | PER DAY**  
[includes lunch]

On-site registration  
**\$70 | PER DAY**  
[does not include lunch]

## STATE COMMODITY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

During this meeting, county commodity delegates will elect leaders for 14 Alabama Farmers Federation state commodity committees. These committee members and officers help direct farmer education projects, drive policy, and, when applicable, review and oversee use of checkoff funds.

“The Alabama Farmers Federation is a grassroots organization – founded and directed by farmers, for farmers,” said Federation Governmental & Agricultural Programs Department Director Brian Hardin. “We are thankful for farmer-members who sacrifice time away from their operations to learn and serve their fellow farmers through state commodity committees. If you have questions, our staff is available, or I suggest talking with a current or past state commodity committee member. They know the time commitment and can tell you the value in serving.”

## REMEMBER:

- Each county is eligible for no more than two delegates per state commodity committee election, who are commercial producers of that commodity.
- Each county may also nominate a member who is active in the commodity to run for the state committee. These names will be on ballots distributed at the meetings. This person may also serve as a voting delegate.
- If a county currently has a member on a state commodity committee whose term is not expired, that county is ineligible to submit another name for that state committee. A list of those is found at [tinyurl.com/CurrentCounties](http://tinyurl.com/CurrentCounties).
- If someone has served three consecutive terms on a committee, they cannot run for the same committee for one year. A list of those can be found at [tinyurl.com/ThreeTerms](http://tinyurl.com/ThreeTerms).
- A member may only serve on one state commodity committee.
- For delegates or nominees to serve, the county must submit their names and current membership numbers on the registration site.

**QUESTIONS?** Deborah Long at (334) 613-4268 or [dhlong@alfafarmers.org](mailto:dhlong@alfafarmers.org)  
Brian Hardin at (334) 613-4217 or [bhardin@alfafarmers.org](mailto:bhardin@alfafarmers.org)



## Thompson Triumphs In AU Discussion Meet

Elizabeth Thompson, center, won the Auburn University Young Farmers Discussion Meet contest Nov. 7. Participants discussed creative ways to address the U.S. labor shortage. From left are contestants Gavin Rankins, Chambers County; Madden Ragan, DeKalb County; Thompson; Kaycee Wright, Cullman County; and Calvin Pearson, Madison County.

## Get Ag-tive

- **No-cost hay hauler permits** are available from the Alabama Department of Transportation through Dec. 31 to provide emergency relief to livestock producers affected by drought this year. Learn more at [dot.state.al.us](http://dot.state.al.us).
- **Row crop acreage and production** will be surveyed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) this fall. The survey will collect information on total acres planted and harvested, and total yield and production of row crops down to the county level. Selected growers will be contacted by USDA officials to complete the survey.

## Obituaries

**Harold Powell** of Greenville died Oct. 3. He was 89.

Powell was a Butler County Farmers Federation board member.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Virginia Brown Powell. Survivors include wife Janell Powell; sons Larry (Clarine) Powell, Lanier (Gail) Powell and Lynn (Charlene) Powell; grandchildren Griffin, Lance and Lauren Powell; step-children Robin (Bruce) Lovett and Cindy Bender; step-grandchildren Chelsea and Austin Lovett; and step-great-grandchild Jax Lovett.

**Mike Henry** of Pintlala died Oct. 15. He was 49.

Henry previously served as Montgomery County Farmers Federation president and State Young Farmers Committee chairman. The Henrys were named Outstanding Young Farm Family in 2005.

He is survived by his wife of 17 years, Denise Lowery Henry; children Abby (Phillip) Smith, Amber Whittington, Amy Whittington, Porter Henry and Davis Henry; and granddaughter Laney Kate Smith.

**Dan Robertson** of Scott Station died Oct. 16. He was 71.

Robertson was a former Alabama Farmers Federation state board member and former Perry County Farmers Federation president.

He is survived by his wife, Paula; daughters Carrie Williams, Casey (Keith) Hardeman and Brook Robertson; and grandchildren Charlee and Katie Williams and Nolan Hardeman.

## Dig Deeper

**The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)** has issued a "pause" to its previously mandated transition to radio frequency identification (RFID) for official identification of cattle through Animal Disease Traceability. USDA is reviewing the guidelines, which originally required all sexually intact adult cattle

sold or moved by interstate to bear an RFID tag by 2023.

**Dean Foods**, which manufactures milk and dairy products including Land O' Lakes and Organic Valley, filed for bankruptcy. It blames struggles on declining consumption of white milk. Sales dropped 7% in the first half of 2019, with profits falling 14%.



## Alabama Ag Advocates Plan 2020 Agenda

Members of the Alabama Agriculture In The Classroom (AITC) Steering Committee met Oct. 29 at the Alabama Farmers Federation home office. They recapped 2019 projects and began preparing for the 2020 AITC Summer Institute. From left are Stacey Thrash, Gloria Jeffcoat, Amy Belcher, April Schrader, Marjory Johnson and Chair Kim Earwood.



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## Sign Up For Sweet Grown Alabama

*Sweet Grown Alabama, the state's new agricultural branding program, held a series of press conferences Oct. 21 to promote farmer membership signups. Joel Sirmon, pictured, hosted one media event on his Baldwin County farm. Other stops included Tate Farms in Madison County and the Alabama Farmers Market in Birmingham. Visit [SweetGrownAlabama.org](http://SweetGrownAlabama.org) to learn more.*

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## Irrigation Tax Credits Available For 2019

Producers who performed agriculture irrigation upgrades in the 2019 calendar year are encouraged to apply for an irrigation tax credit. Questionnaires are due Jan. 31 and are found at [agi.alabama.gov/s/irrigation](http://agi.alabama.gov/s/irrigation).

The Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industries will collect questionnaire responses, while the Alabama Department of Revenue will issue the irrigation tax credit to eligible applicants.

Tax credits are available thanks to legislation signed in 2018.

Eligible taxpayers may claim one credit for qualifying equipment purchased and installed during tax years 2012 through 2017, one tax credit for 2018-2022 and one credit for tax year 2023 or beyond.

The credit was implemented to incentivize irrigation infrastructure improvements in Alabama.

Compared to neighboring state Georgia, which has over 1.5 million acres of irrigated land, Alabama has just 150,000 acres of irrigated farmland.



## Richardson Represents Alabama In Contest

*Hank Richardson represented Alabama in the Southeastern Farmer of the Year contest, sponsored by Swisher Sweets and the Sunbelt Ag Expo. Richardson, who owns Dixie Green in Centre in Cherokee County, was honored during a reception Oct. 14 in Moultrie, Georgia. From left are Cherokee County Farmers Federation President and former regional contest representative John Bert East; Alabama Farmers Federation Area 3 Organization Director Kyle Hayes, who nominated Richardson; and Shelia and Hank Richardson.*