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Friday, Jan. 13, 2012

Farm Bureau Calendar

Jan. 27 & 28 NEFB Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference, McCook

Chief Motel and McCook Christian Church

Info at

http://www.nefb.org/programs/media/2012_YFR_Conference_brochure.pdf

Feb. 9 & 10 NEFB Legislative Conference, Embassy Suites, Lincoln

Registration form at

http://www.nefb.org/media/2012_Legislative_Conference_Registration_form.pdf

On Farm Bureau's Blog <http://nefb.wordpress.com>

Farmer/rancher profile: Sherry and Chris Vinton of Whitman

<http://nefb.wordpress.com/2012/01/12/get-to-know-your-nebraska-ranchers-chris-and-sherry-vinton/>

AFBF Delegates Adopt Nebraska Priorities on Farm Bill, Other Issues

The 2012 American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting took place this week and provided the organization a timely look at its policies and the opportunity to make adjustments based on the ever-changing policy landscape of U.S. agriculture. Nebraska Farm Bureau's delegates were President Steve Nelson, First Vice President Mark McHargue and State Board Members John Martin, Scott Moore, Tanya Storer, and Del Ficke.

Farm Bureau's policy on the 2012 Farm Bill was one of the key topics discussed by the delegates. Delegates established priorities for the bill in the face of certain budget constraints. Again this year, the policies Nebraska Farm Bureau's members sent to the convention were used as the building blocks for the new policy selected for the next farm bill.

The delegates supported a strong safety net designed to help farmers through catastrophic revenue losses, but not to guarantee a profit, and they supported conservation programs to protect natural resources. They also approved a sense of the delegate body resolution expressing the desire for both political parties to work together to resolve the federal budget deficit and national debt, leaving no department off the hook for cuts. The resolution also said Farm Bureau wants the deficit reduction to occur primarily through spending reductions as opposed to tax increases.

Nebraska Farm Bureau also was very successful in getting a number of resolutions which originated in the state passed at the AFBF meeting. They include: support for a federal balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution; preventing non-marginal land from being enrolled in CRP; support for allowing producer-generated GPS measurements when verifying crop acres with the Farm Service Agency; support for exempting cattle under 18 months of age or going directly to slaughter from any government-mandated livestock traceability program; support for continued use of the hot-iron brand as an official identification method; and indexing the estate tax to reflect the current high cost of farm land.

Learn more about the AFBF delegates' policy actions at <http://www.fb.org/index.php?action=newsroom.news&year=2012&file=nr0111.html>

Governor Focuses on Child Welfare, Health Care, Econ Development

Gov. Heineman presented his "State of the State" address to the legislature Thursday. He outlined some of the key challenges facing the legislature in the next several months, including addressing the safety of children who are part of the state's child welfare system. He commended the Health and Human Services Committee for its work on this issue and indicated that its proposals will lead the discussions on this topic.

Heineman also said that senators will need to tackle the issue of implementing the federal health care law -- with the balance falling between not leaving things to default to the federal government, but also not jumping the gun before the U.S. Supreme Court has the opportunity to rule on the validity of the federal law. He also indicated he wants the legislature to merge the Department of Labor into the Department of Economic Development, as he has proposed.

The governor also outlined his goals for more improvement in economic development and tax relief, saying there is more work to do. He proposed a tax relief package that would remove the state inheritance tax, reduce the corporate tax rate, and reduce individual income tax rates, which together would result in a \$326.6 million tax cut over three years. The cuts would begin Jan. 1, 2013, with \$273.7 million going to individual income taxpayers and \$52.9 million for Nebraska businesses.

NEFB Legislative Conference Set for Feb. 9 and 10 in Lincoln

Nebraska Farm Bureau will hold its 2012 Legislative Conference on Feb. 9 and 10 at the Embassy Suites in Downtown Lincoln. The conference gives Farm Bureau members the opportunity to hear about current federal and state legislation and other issues affecting the profitability and viability of farming and ranching. Confirmed speakers include Jason Henderson, a vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank, to discuss Nebraska's economic outlook; Roberto Lenton, the new executive director of the Water for Food Institute at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Gov. Dave Heinemann; Susan Littlefield of Three Eagles Communication on challenges facing agriculture; and inspirational speaker Matt Rush of the New Mexico Farm Bureau. To learn more and to register for the conference visit www.nefb.org

Nebraska Soybean Board Seeks Candidates for Three-Year Terms

The District 1, 3 and 6 seats on the Nebraska Soybean Board are up for elections in 2012. Soybean farmers in those districts are eligible to run for election to the board by filing a candidacy petition by the April 15 deadline. The election will be conducted via direct-mail ballots and candidate information will be provided to all soybean farmers residing within the district in which an election will be held.

NSB directors receive no salary but are reimbursed for expenses incurred while carrying out board business. They will serve a three-year term that begins Oct. 1. Candidates must be Nebraska residents, age 21 or older, and a soybean producer in Nebraska for at least five previous years. Candidates must collect the signatures of 50 soybean farmers in their district, using an official Nebraska Soybean Board Candidacy Petition, which must be returned to the Nebraska Soybean Board office on or before April 15 to be eligible for placement on the ballot.

To obtain a candidacy petition, contact Victor Bohuslavsky at the Nebraska Soybean Board by calling 402/432-5720. \The nine-member board collects and disburses the Nebraska share of funds generated by the checkoff (one-half of 1% times the net sales price per bushel of soybeans sold).

Districts up for election are:

District 1: Antelope, Boyd, Cedar, Holt, Knox, Madison and Pierce counties.

District 3: Butler, Colfax, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders and Washington counties.

District 6: Fillmore, Jefferson, Gage, Saline, Seward and Thayer counties.

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