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BRIAN RICKER

LET'S VOTE!

Since AgCredit is owned and governed by its members it is vitally important we encourage our members to be involved in their cooperative and at the very least VOTE during the upcoming elections.

Let's all remember to vote in 2016!

When hearing these words, the presidential election or the recent primary election may come to mind. Yes, those elections are very important for our nation and even our world. However, the comments can also refer to AgCredit's 2016 director and nominating committee elections. The ballots for the nominating and director elections will be arriving in your mailbox around the end of April.

Since AgCredit is owned and governed by its members, it is vitally important we encourage our members to be involved in their cooperative and at the very least VOTE during the upcoming elections. On page 16 of this edition is a reminder for you to VOTE! This article is also meant to remind you to VOTE. Your vote is important and necessary for the success of your cooperative. Who better than farmers know what farmers need? Your board and management team believe this simple concept and your vote supports it.

AgCredit is thankful to all of the candidates who have stepped up and agreed to run for either a nominating or director position. The nominating process began last December when the 2015 nominating committee met. They were tasked with identifying candidates for three director positions along with possible candidates for the 2016 nominating committee. During the meeting, the committee learned more about the Association's structure and the importance of participation in their cooperative. The meeting demonstrates the value of cooperative principles that includes democratic member control because cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members who use the services or buy the goods of the cooperative. The members participate in setting policies and making decisions. At this meeting held each December, the nominating committee is truly following this cooperative principle.

By now you might be asking the question, "Brian, why all the fuss about cooperative principles and voting for director and nominating candidates?" I will share with you the rest of the story. Starting in 1998, AgCredit

permitted voting through a mail-in ballot process rather than in person at our annual meetings. (At the time, we held several annual meetings in various locations within our 18-county territory.) The change to vote through the mail was very effective with 1,303 votes cast - 31 percent returned in the first year. This surpassed the votes received from the annual meeting process. The return rate remained above 24 percent for the next 10 years. Unfortunately, in 2007 we began to see a noticeable decline, and last year we had the lowest return ever - 12.4 percent. Because of this trend, we are placing greater emphasis on voting in hopes of increasing awareness and member participation.

How does our ballot return rate compare with other cooperatives? At a recent meeting of Farm Credit chief executive officers from across the country, I shared our ballot return trends and 2015 results. To my surprise, many CEOs in the room were envious of our ballot return rate. This led me to ask the question, "Is 12.4 percent really good enough when considering our 18-year trend?" My thoughts are, "No, we can do better." It starts, of course, with informing our members about the numbers and communicating our goals.

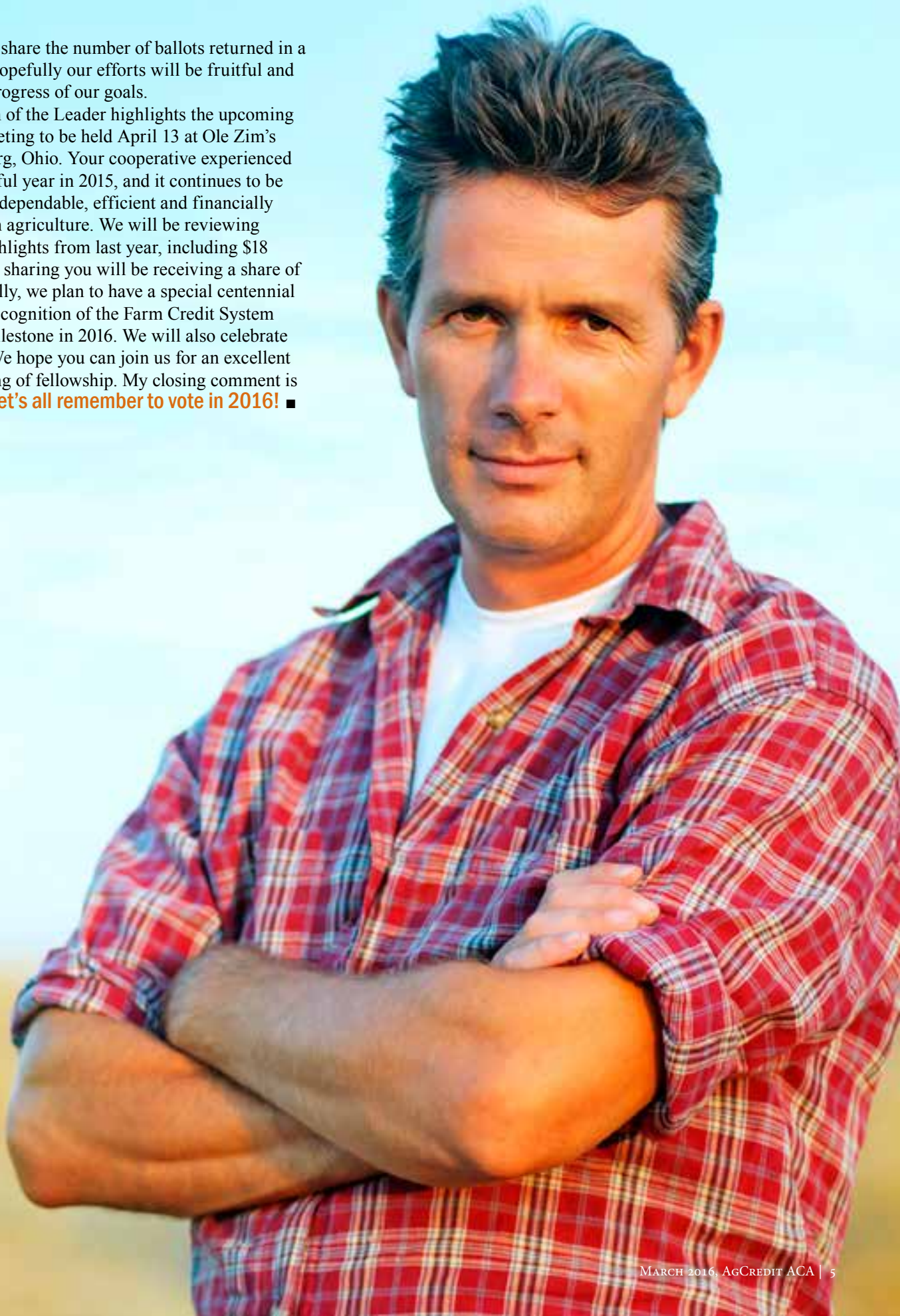
We know 31 percent is attainable because it was achieved 18 years ago. We believe a more conservative initial goal would be to raise our returned ballots to a level above 12.4 percent and stop the decline. A secondary stretch goal would be to receive at least 15 percent of our stockholder ballots returned during the 2016 election period.

What are we doing to improve in this area and achieve our goal?

- We are extending the time frame members can vote from 10 to 20 business days.
- Members will receive a postcard reminder during the 20-day election window.
- We are promoting overall greater awareness of our election process.
- Ballot materials were reviewed with changes made to simplify the process.

I do plan to share the number of ballots returned in a future article. Hopefully our efforts will be fruitful and we can report progress of our goals.

This edition of the Leader highlights the upcoming 2016 annual meeting to be held April 13 at Ole Zim's near Gibsonsburg, Ohio. Your cooperative experienced another successful year in 2015, and it continues to be one of the most dependable, efficient and financially sound lenders in agriculture. We will be reviewing a number of highlights from last year, including \$18 million in profit sharing you will be receiving a share of soon. Additionally, we plan to have a special centennial celebration in recognition of the Farm Credit System reaching this milestone in 2016. We will also celebrate our new logo! We hope you can join us for an excellent meal and evening of fellowship. My closing comment is how I started: **Let's all remember to vote in 2016!** ■



WHAT ARE CROP PRODUCTION RECORDS?

BY THOMAS MILLIGAN



We at the Milligan Agency are now in our ninth year of working with AgCredit and their members and their crop insurance needs. It is a privilege for us to work with such fine people.

Crop insurance is a government-sponsored program, and, as such, it has many unique and changing facets. We frequently hear questions asking about what constitutes valid crop production records. Production records are often referred to as either “hard” or “soft” records.

A hard record is one that proves the final disposition of the total crop and is verifiable by a company-approved disinterested third party. Most common are Settlement Sheets from a marketing outlet, commercial elevator, grain processor or first handler. The record must include the name and address of the buyer, insured’s name and address, load number, crop, gross weight, moisture and test weight.

Soft records can consist of several different categories, such as loads, storage structure markings and combine monitor records.

Production records are often referred to as either “hard” or “soft” records.

Acceptable load records are: a written contemporaneous record by crop, unit, field ID, calendar date, ID of the conveyance and estimated bushels of the conveyance. The insured may reduce the bushels by RMA moisture calculations. Typical conveyance types are combine hoppers, commodity bins, grain carts, wagons and trucks.

Storage Structure Markings are acceptable when they are marked on the structure with a permanent marker with the unit number(s), field ID, date and initials. Anything less than the above are not acceptable.

Combine monitors are acceptable when the printed records show location of the field, name of the crop, number of pounds/bushels, field ID and unit number. (Moisture corrections by the monitor can be used.) Anything less than

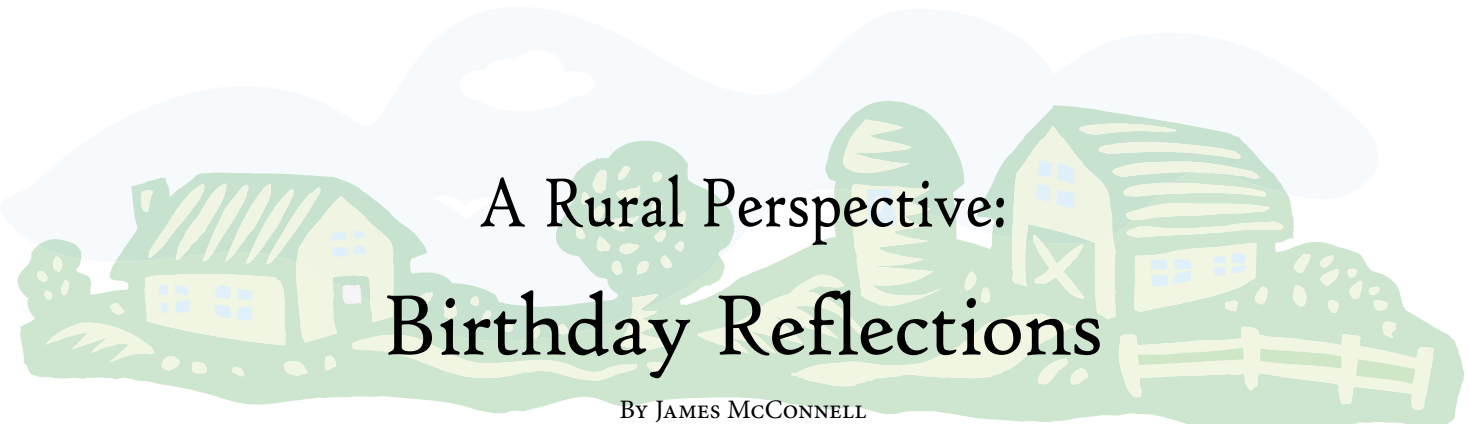
the above is not acceptable.

Production from different units must be separate loads when using load logs (soft records). Please keep an accurate load log by units - truck loads, cart loads, wagons, etc. Please remember that a field needs to be inspected prior to replanting or replant payments may be voided. Also, should there be a prevented planting circumstance, please call us as soon as you believe that situation arises. These issues must be reported in a timely manner. Success to you in 2016! ■


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A Rural Perspective: Birthday Reflections

By JAMES McCONNELL

JAMES McCONNELL IS A MEMBER OF AGCREDIT WHO FARMS 2,500 ACRES IN SOUTHERN LORAIN COUNTY WITH HIS TWO BROTHERS.



JAMES McCONNELL

Birthdays have a way of making me reflective—especially the ones that end in zero. I just had another one of those and here are some of the things that crossed my mind.

First of all, how did I get to be this old this quick? Lots of things I remember vividly seem not so long ago. So how much do birthdays really matter? On that subject a couple of my favorite quotations come to mind. When discussing birthdays and getting older himself, Satchel Page, the ageless big league pitcher said, “How old would you be if you didn’t know how old you was?” I can relate to that. And I believe it was Yogi Berra, the modern day Aristotle as well as a baseball Hall of Fame catcher, who, when asked about his age replied, “I’m the same age I’ve always been.” Discounting such minor problems as forgetting where I left the truck keys or the fourth and fifth items my wife asked me to pick up at the grocery store, some memories are still crystal clear.

For instance, it doesn’t seem possible that it’s been nearly 20 years since we quit milking cows. I used to watch every sunrise through the milking parlor window. Now, I have to admit, the sun can sometimes be up before I am. I always loved walking among the cows in the pasture. I can remember clearly bringing them to the barn as a youngster but, my goodness, that was indeed a LONG time ago. It seems more like just a few years, at most.

I’ve always liked working the fields in preparation for planting. I still enjoy it in the comfort of our air-conditioned tractors and covering a 30-foot swath with every pass across the field. We can move into a 50-acre field and within a few short hours it is ready to plant. It takes no effort at all, though, to recall the luscious smell and seat-of-your-pants feeling of sitting on the seat of an open, 45-horsepower tractor pulling a three bottom plow through an alfalfa field. It would likely take us more than two days to cover that same 50 acres just once back then. I used to hope Mother Nature would cooperate and give us good weather during the Easter break from school. That way I could spend those perfect spring days in the fields. Again, it doesn’t seem all THAT long ago.

A chance encounter led me to the mother of my three daughters. On leave after returning from VietNam, a good friend asked me to accompany him on a weekend visit with his then girlfriend and her roommate. While he and his girlfriend were otherwise occupied, the roommate and I talked the night away. I soon found out Louise didn’t want to marry a farmer. Less than seven months later, I was out of the Army, and we were married. We had 25 beautiful years together, on this farm before her death in 1997. I’m glad I said yes to that blind date.

I also got to thinking about how so many of the really important things in my life seemed to happen almost by chance. At age 15, I was invited to join a county Farm Bureau Youth Council and, by 17, was elected to the Ohio Farm Bureau Youth Committee. There, I met

a girl named Sharon from Van Wert, Ohio, who, 35 years later would become my wife. On top of that, we now farm her family’s farm, 150 miles from home. There were weddings and divorces, relocations, chance phone calls and an opportune plane changeover in Atlanta that brought us back together.

I had a Vo-Ag and an English teacher who convinced me college was the right path to take following high school. Prospects for staying on the home farm didn’t look very good when I was 18. College and military service took up the next seven years and by then there was an opportunity to come home. I think of all the different choices I could have made in those seven years that would have sent me in other directions. Instead of spending over 45 years as a steward to land my great grandfather farmed, I would likely have had to be content with a few weekends and holidays at this place I would always call home.

I have a crystal clear image of my grandfather when he was 75. It was June and he had his straw hat on and was mowing a heifer pasture on his Ford tractor. I remember hoping I’d be that physically able and mentally sharp if I made 75. I’m not there yet but it’s closing in rapidly, or so says the calendar. Maybe, if I’ve inherited his longevity in addition to his name and live into my 90s as he did, all I’ll have to remember is to forget how old I really am. ■



KENT JORGENSEN

GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

BY KENT JORGENSEN, ATTORNEY

For many farmers, the winter months are spent attending numerous seminars on a variety of Ag-related topics. As an attorney who focuses on agriculture and farm succession planning, my winter months are also spent attending multiple meetings. I spend a lot of time in front of groups of farmers all over the state addressing issues such as farm succession planning, farm liability and employment law issues. Throughout all of these meetings, there is one question I am asked quite regularly that perhaps we don't talk about enough, and it is "How do I get the conversation started about farm succession?" Generally the question is asked by a younger individual who is concerned about the future of the family farm, but this question is also asked by parents who may be concerned about their child's involvement in the operation. In truth, this question isn't addressed a lot because there is no right or wrong answer for any family. Every situation is different, but I would like to address three principles I believe can be applied to any family dynamic to help get the conversation started.



1. Ask and then LISTEN!

Oftentimes when someone wants to start a family conversation about farm succession planning, they are mostly thinking about their part in the plan. They have an idea in their head about how they would like the plan to be laid out and what their role will be in the process. However, this doesn't

mean other family members don't also have their own ideas about how a farm succession plan should work. Working off the assumption that everyone wants the same things out of a plan can be a recipe for disaster. In short, once the conversation is started about farm succession planning, you must be prepared to listen. Listen to the perspective of each person involved before any major decision-making happens. Take time to see the situation from the other person's perspective and reflect upon it before the conversation continues. Stepping back and getting a fresh perspective will help the whole process move forward more smoothly. This is especially important when multiple people are involved in the plan. In many families there is one person who generally calls the shots, but an effort should be made to include all family members in a farm succession discussion. Although someone may say, "That's fine," it may not be what they are really thinking. Take the time to ask what the other person wants and really listen to what they say; it may be important to the future of your operation.

2. Enlist the Help of a Professional

I have noticed over the years that people can be much more civil to people they don't know than they are to those they love the most, especially in a family business. Seeking out a trusted professional to help moderate a discussion and offer unbiased insight can be invaluable in the farm succession process. Having a third-party moderator in the room can help keep the emotions under control and keep the conversation on track. A qualified professional can also offer suggestions on tools helpful in accomplishing the established plan. Many of the people I have spoken with about farm succession planning admit they didn't believe there was a viable solution for their situation. There is almost always a way to make a farm succession plan work, and seeking the advice of a qualified professional can help you find those solutions. A qualified professional can also ask the hard questions no one wants to ask in order to accomplish

your family's goals. One of the first things I tell people when they ask what they can do to get the conversation started, is to suggest their family speak to an attorney or other qualified professional. If you can get a qualified professional involved, it is much more likely a successful plan will be put in place.

3. Be Patient

Building your family's operation didn't happen overnight, and it's not likely that putting a plan together to pass it to the next generation will either. Keep in mind—for most farmers these are difficult decisions and they may take some time. While speaking at different events throughout the state, I often see the same people attending several events. I may have multiple conversations with a person before they set up an appointment to move forward. These are simply hard decisions to be made, and every family moves at their own pace. There is nothing wrong with taking your time to put a plan together as long as forward progress is being made. If your family's process is not moving fast enough for you, keep in mind the plan involves the entire family and it can be complicated. Please do encourage your family to move forward, but be respectful of the fact that these are difficult decisions affecting everyone involved; it will pay off in the end.

There are many possible suggestions regarding how to get the conversation started, but ultimately it boils down to common sense, patience and endurance. If you put forth the effort, putting a farm succession plan together is a worthy endeavor and will benefit your family and your operation for generations to come. Each family situation is different, and this article is not intended to be construed as legal advice. Each individual is encouraged to seek the advice of a qualified legal professional regarding their individual circumstances. ■



IS IT GOOD TO FARM?

BY DR. DAVID KOHL

In 2013, Dodge ran a Super Bowl commercial for its Ram Truck featuring Paul Harvey's tribute to farmers. Showing the difficulty, reality and beauty of a farmer's work, this ad was wildly popular because so few actually get to experience farming. The agriculture industry, in many sectors, is going through an economic reset. A dedicated Farm Credit Association team member recently asked me the question, "Is it good to farm?" She inquired in earnest on behalf of her clients, family and neighbors who are each concerned about industry challenges. I hope as we examine the elements of the answer to this question you will remember the positive most certainly outweighs anything else in agriculture, especially for farmers.

Immediately, my first response was yes. The agriculture industry is strong and opportunistic, particularly farming. According to farm record summaries, the top 20 percent of managers consistently earn a 6 percent rate of return above long-term rate of inflation and above long-term rates of borrowed capital. Granted, these are above average managers who maintain good financials and management practices, and are prudent in investments, living withdrawals, and farm costs. These managers do not handle the largest operations but manage within the realm of their resources. Therefore, if profits are a priority in measuring long-term success, analysis finds opportunities abound.

Globally, the big picture for agriculture is bright. By the year 2050, estimates suggest an additional 60 to 70 percent more fiber, food and fuel will be consumed globally. However, for our next generation of producers, this increase will only require 70 percent of the current resource base. In that light, innovation and technology will be the keys for success. Build upon the principles of the past generation and focus on productive assets. The philosophies of "efficiency before growth" or "better is better before bigger is better" can lead to prosperity in agriculture.

In addition, farming encourages the entrepreneurial spirit. Farming rewards creativity and innovation in several areas, including production and marketing. Additionally, every farm operation is structured differently offering flexibility in the alignment of the many moving pieces. In farming, there is no formula or magic strategy that guarantees success. Instead, success can be created in numerous ways. In the future, growth may be in local, natural or organic products, or perhaps, in traditional farm



operations, or maybe in larger, more complex, extended family corporations. Farming is a widely-varied profession and depending on your destination, there is a type of farming to get you to there.

Just days ago, I spoke to a Future Farmers of American (FFA) group in Franklin County, Va. During my presentation, a young participant asked if there was a bright future for young people in agriculture. As with the Farm Credit representative, my response was a quick and energetic, "Yes!" The agriculture industry directly or indirectly represents approximately one in six jobs in America. Young people who understand technology and exhibit good work habits, such as timeliness, ability to follow direction and social maturity,

will have boundless opportunity. Tanner and Sawyer, a senior and freshman in the group, had both attended our young farmer seminar sponsored by Farm Credit two weeks prior. At the end of the day, another speaker, Dr. Alex White, professor at Virginia Tech, and I were impressed with the pages of notes taken from our talk. What was even more impressive, however, was Tanner, the high school senior, assisting another classmate on his spreadsheet cash flow statement for a start-up beef operation. After seeing this, one cannot help but be enthusiastic about the future of the agriculture industry and the profession of farming.

Finally, life on a farm is special. I often hear in informal conversation with producers that raising a family on the farm is priceless. Growing up on a working farm affords children a unique perspective as less than 2 percent of our country's population is directly involved in production agriculture. Additionally, farm life allows children to gain emotional intelligence. Whether or not they ever learn to drive a tractor, children growing up on a farm absorb a heightened sense responsibility, teambuilding, life-and-death as well as the seasonal nature of the industry. This type of intelligence is a life-building, rare skill. Benefits of farm life do not always have a dollar amount assigned.

Regardless of the economic outlook, the cycle, or even where we are in the cycle, it is still good to be in agriculture and yes, to farm. The agriculture industry is integral to global economics, continuing innovation, and generations of sustainability. Farming requires strength of body, mind and heart. It is meaningful and fulfilling work that provides the food, feed, fiber and fuel upon which life is sustained. That is honorable and good. ■

About the Author

David Kohl received his master of science and Ph.D. degrees in agricultural economics from Cornell University. For 25 years, Kohl was professor of agricultural finance and small business management and entrepreneurship in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia. He was on special leave with the Royal Bank of Canada working on advanced initiatives for two years, and also assisted in the launch of the successful entrepreneurship program at Cornell University. Kohl is professor emeritus in the AAEC Department at Virginia Tech.

Kohl has traveled more than seven million miles throughout his professional career! He has conducted more than 5,000 workshops and seminars for agricultural groups such as bankers, Farm Credit, FSA and regulators, as well as producer and agribusiness groups. He has published four books and more than 1,000 articles on financial and business related topics in journals, extension, and other popular publications. Kohl regularly writes for *Ag Lender* and *Corn and Soybean Digest*.



DAVID WHITE

LEGISLATION UPDATES

BY DAVID WHITE

CAUV

It was my first week on the job working for AgCredit last spring, calling on farm equipment and machinery dealers. The relationship manager I was working with asked the sales manager at the dealership how it was going, to which he replied, “I thought I had a deal for you, but the guy called me back and said he’d got his bill for his property taxes, and they had doubled, nearly tripled.”

For property tax purposes, farmland devoted exclusively to commercial agriculture may be valued according to its current use rather than at its highest and best potential use. This provision of Ohio law was created in 1975 and is known as the Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) program. The program was originally designed to reduce the taxable value of land being used for commercial agricultural production. By permitting values to be set well below true market values, CAUV normally results in a substantially lower tax bill for working farmers.

While CAUV is a beneficial program, the Ohio Farm Bureau has identified flaws in the calculation that should be addressed to create a more accurate CAUV computation. The calculation started drawing scrutiny following an update in 2014 that resulted in a 200 to 300 percent increase for some landowners.

The Ohio Department of Taxation enacted Farm Bureau’s first round of suggested changes: to more closely tie tax values to current economic conditions in agriculture; include more recent data on crop mix, prices, yields and production costs; and better represent the true value of woodlands compared to cropland. This resulted in an approximate 15 percent reduction in cropland value.

Legislation (House Bill 398 and Senate Bill 246) is currently being considered in the Ohio General Assembly that would result in more accurate valuations for farmland owners. The legislation challenges what the Farm Bureau considers two inaccurate assumptions in the CAUV formula capitalization rate: that land is a short-term investment and that it becomes more valuable as its mortgage is paid down. The proposed legislation would also prohibit certain non-agricultural factors from being used in the formula and remove disincentives for farmers to engage in certain conservation practices. The General Assembly plans to conduct hearings on both bills in its current session.

A representative from the Ohio Farm Bureau met with AgCredit’s board of directors during their December meeting to discuss the proposed legislation and its benefits. State Sen. Cliff Hite (R-Findlay), chair of the Senate Ag Committee, was the original sponsor of Senate Bill 398. You may wish to contact your respective state representative and state senator to encourage them to become sponsors of the legislation. Doing so might result in paying less for property taxes.

PATH

In late December, Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the “Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) of 2015.” The legislation included numerous tax extenders and made many of them permanent, which included Section 179 tax expense deduction.

Under the previous law, for 2015, the maximum expensing limit was \$25,000 and the ceiling was \$200,000. The limit has now been increased to \$500,000 and the investment ceiling increased to \$2 million before the phase-out begins. These amounts were made retroactive to the beginning of 2015 and were made permanent for future use. Eligible taxpayers will be able to claim a 50 percent bonus



depreciation allowance for qualified property in 2015, 2016 and 2017; 40 percent in 2018; and 30 percent in 2019.

For additional information about this piece of legislation and how it may benefit your operation, please visit [http://aglaw.osu.edu/blog/wed-01132016-856am/section-179-changes-under-protecting-americans-tax-hikes-act\[aglaw.osu.edu\]](http://aglaw.osu.edu/blog/wed-01132016-856am/section-179-changes-under-protecting-americans-tax-hikes-act[aglaw.osu.edu]).

Grain Farmers Rejoice!

This past summer, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that grain storage bins are personal property pursuant to state law and may not be taxed as real property. The court’s unanimous decision affirmed a ruling of the board of tax appeals, which had previously determined that the actual value of property owned by Metamora Elevator Company in Fulton County was \$738,240 instead of the auditor’s assessed value of more than \$1.8 million that included the storage bins.

The court observed that historically the distinction between fixtures that were real property and those that were personal property was elusive. However, in 1992, the Ohio General Assembly clarified that storage bins are personal property.

The state statute defining personal property (Ohio Revised Code 5701.03) includes “business fixtures,” which are items of tangible personal property permanently attached or affixed to the land or to a building, structure or improvement and primarily benefiting the business conducted on the property. The statute then lists “storage bins” as one type of business fixture.

(The information contained herein does not constitute legal or tax preparation advice. Please consult an attorney for legal advice and a certified public accountant for tax information.) ■



Enter our 2017 Calendar Photo Contest!

2017 Calendar Contest Guidelines:

Ideas include: large and small farm operations, country kids, farm animals, flowers, outdoor landscape scenes, nature scenes, harvesting, sunrises, sunsets, barns, silos, wildlife, classic and/or antique farm equipment, and daily farm life.

The contest is open to all creative work—you don't have to limit yourself to the ideas above. You may submit new ideas or any combination of the above.

- Who is eligible: Members, employees and their family members are invited to enter our 2017 Calendar Photo Contest.
- Photos must be taken within our 18-county AgCredit territory.
- Photos must be submitted by the person who took the photos, and each person is eligible for a maximum of two prizes.
- Watch for instructions and a link on our website.
- All photos must be at least 1 MB in size.
- Orientation of photos must be horizontal (landscape).
- Please limit your entries to five photos. We will not accept more than five photos per person.
- Deadline for submission is June 30, 2016.
- All photos, used or unused, become the property of AgCredit.

Cash Prizes Awarded:

1st Place—\$100

2nd Place—\$75

3rd Place—\$50

\$25 prize to each of the other nine winning photos. Photos featured on the back will receive a calendar.

Winning entries will be announced and featured in the 2017 AgCredit Calendar, the AgCredit Leader, social media, and our website.

To submit an entry, go www.agcredit.net.

If you have any questions, please contact Kayla Laubacher at 800-686-0756 or klaubacher@agcredit.net.



AGCREDIT.NET



New Look, Same Great Service!



We are pleased to announce that we now have a new AgCredit logo! After more than a year of research and design, the above logo has been chosen to represent AgCredit moving forward. The green BioStar is the national logo of the Farm Credit System, of which AgCredit is a proud member. The capital A and lowercase G help to emphasize the word agriculture, our main business. Although Country Mortgages is no longer represented on the main logo, it is still an important part of our cooperative. By removing the Country Mortgages and removing the space between Ag and Credit, we are signifying the unity of all departments as one AgCredit family. The new logo implementation process will take place throughout 2016 and 2017 with the plan to complete implementation by the end of 2017. Even with a new look, we plan to provide you with the same great service for the next 100 years.

Calendar

- April 13** Annual Meeting
- May 30** Offices closed for Memorial Day
- July 4** Offices closed for Independence Day

Years of Service Awards

5 Years



Ashley Burger
Sr. Account Officer,
Tiffin



Lauren Martikan
Account Officer,
Fremont



Josh McBride
Credit Analyst,
Agribusiness

10 Years



Mandy Stacy
Mortgage Loan
Originator



Terri George
Accounts Payable



Danna Myerholtz
Operations Support
Specialist,
Bowling Green

25 Years



Sandy Coppus
Branch Operations
Assistant



Greg Siebenaller
Controller



John Orians
Branch Manager,
Tiffin

15 Years

25 Years

30 Years

35 Years

Meaning of the BioStar

It was designed to portray the Farm Credit System as a strong, unified, national credit system ready to meet the challenges of a changing and competitive financial industry.

The BioStar is a living symbol of progress and commitment consisting of five visual elements: three leaves, a root system, and a star. The leaves represent the three types of lending done by the Farm Credit System: long-term real estate, short-term operating, and cooperative financing. The roots represent our member-borrowers, and the star represents light and direction. The prefix "Bio" describes life while the suffix "Star" captures the strong, energetic shape within the symbol.



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Contact the Norwalk Ag Credit office if you are interested in advertising in the *Leader* magazine, which goes to more than 7,000 households in 18 Ohio counties. Call Connie Ruth at 1 800 686 0756 for more information.

Find us on Social Media!



Ryan McClure named 2015 Beck's Young Farm Leader of the Year

Congratulations to Ryan McClure, Van Wert member, for being named Beck's Young Farm Leader of the Year. The award was established to highlight and recognize young Ohio farmers who have taken leadership roles in their communities while developing a foundation for farming success.



Ryan McClure and family

Piggyback Foundation Donation

AgCredit chose the Piggyback Foundation in Norwalk as it's annual Christmas charity. In December 2015, team members donated nearly \$2,000 in gift cards and checks to help support the foundation.

The purpose of the Piggyback Foundation is to help carry families through times of need when a serious physical illness challenges the family.



Norwalk team presents gift cards to Piggyback Foundation

Government Relations



Account manager for government relations, David White (left), represented AgCredit at a recent lender's round table hosted by U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown. Additional lenders attending the meeting included commercial banks, community banks and credit unions from the Toledo area and northwest Ohio.

2016 Farm Management Meetings



2016 Farm Management Meeting, Robert Moore & Brian Watkins

In January, AgCredit held two Farm Management meetings in Mt. Gilead and Upper Sandusky. Topics included marketing terms and strategies, farm management productivity software, crop insurance and farm liability and succession planning. Featured speakers were Joanna Linder Gall, Mandy Warwick and Jenn Deck of Interstate Commodities Inc., Brian Watkins of CropZilla, Eric Niemeyer of Buckeye Soil Solutions, Thomas Milligan and Allen Douce of Milligan Insurance Agency and Robert Moore and Kent Jorgensen of Wright & Moore Law.



Estate Planning - Business Planning
Farm Succession Planning - Agricultural Law

(740) 990-0750 92 N Sandusky St., Delaware, OH

Serving Ohio Farmers For Over 20 years.

SCHULTE'S LOGGING

Pandora, Ohio

419-384-7373

John Schulte



Buyer of standing timber

Low impact logging

"Harvesting Quality Trees with Care"

Welcome New Employees



Joel Bey joined the Van Wert team as a loan specialist on Dec. 1.



Kelsey Jesson began working as an account officer trainee at our Mt. Gilead branch on Jan. 4.



Kellie Smith joined the Norwalk team as an operations support specialist on Jan. 4.



Patty Schneider began working with the Ottawa team as a part-time branch assistant on Jan. 29.



Sandy Coppus transferred from the Tiffin branch (operations support specialist) to our Administrative office to join the Operations Department as a branch operations assistant on Feb. 2.

Share your Story

What's your story? How has your relationship with AgCredit (and any of its predecessors – Production Credit Association and the Federal Land Bank) benefited your family farm, home or agribusiness?

As we prepare to celebrate the Farm Credit System's 100th anniversary this year, we'd like to gather testimonials about how a member of the Farm Credit System (AgCredit) helped you achieve and realize your goals, success and dreams. Stories such as these resonate with members of Congress, who ultimately regulate the Farm Credit System. If you have a story you'd like to share, please send an email to dwhite@agcredit.net



for Young, Beginning, Small, Minority, Women and Veteran Farmers

If you're dreaming of a future of farming, AgCredit can help make it a reality through our AgStart program.

- AgGrow Loans for farm operators
- AgGrow Loans for non-farm operators—landlords
- AgNiche Loans for non-traditional/niche farms



Board of Directors visits D.C.

Our Board of Directors visited Washington D.C. in February to attend Farm Credit Council's annual meeting. During the visit, they made congressional visits seeking support of the Farm Credit System's 100th anniversary.



Jerry Layman, Dave Conrad, Congressman Bob Gibbs, Gary Baldosser



Mike Thiel, Sarah Pearce from Senator Portman's office, Dan Rengert, Deborah Johlin-Bach



Visiting with Senator Brown's staff



Dan Rengert with Michael McLean, a member of Representative Tiberi's staff



Visiting with Congressman Jim Jordan



Brian Ricker, Representative Bob Latta, Jerry Layman and David Stott

Medal of Honor

My brass is shined
My boots are too
My uniform is cleaned and pressed,
And the ribbons of my service
Are arranged neatly upon my chest.

My family has been flown in
Mom, Dad and Grandma, too
All seated front and center
For the honor that is due.

My unit they are ready
In formation standing tall
The color guard comes forward
All salute when they are called.

My Commander reads the order
For a medal to bestow
And the President hands my Father
Our highest honor don't you know.

For I am not in formation
I'm not standing straight and tall
But instead I'm lying peacefully
My coffin says it all.

Old Glory drapes this casket
And tears flow freely here
For the medal I've been given
Is most honored and revered.

I did it in a heartbeat,
Not thinking what comes next
I only thought about my men
I can't remember the rest.

The Chaplin now is speaking
He talks of love and grace
His kind words ease the sorrow
For I've come to my resting place.

The rifles they salute me
Mom holds the flag so close
Taps slowly ends its chorus
As I meet the heavenly hosts.

Poem by Deborah L. Johlin-Bach

The Medal of Honor is the United States of America's highest military honor, awarded for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty. The medal is awarded by the President of the United States in the name of the U.S. Congress to U. S. military personnel only. National Medal of Honor Day is officially observed on March 25 because the first Medals of Honor were awarded on March 25, 1863.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Charles Bostdorff



Daniel Rengert



Dave Conrad



Dr. David Stott, Ph.D., CPA



Deborah Johlin-Bach



Gary Baldosser



Mike Stump



Mike Thiel



S. Jerry Layman



Scott Schroeder

Vote! Support your Cooperative

On behalf of the Directors and Employees of AgCredit, I invite you to our Annual Stockholder Meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2016. I encourage you to review the “Official Annual Meeting Notice,” which accompanies this issue of our Leader magazine.

As a stockholder in this member-owned cooperative, I urge you to take an active part by participating in our upcoming elections. You will be receiving your ballot by mail within ten days after the Annual Meeting. Please follow the ballot casting instructions and mail your vote back to the association prior to the established deadline. Your mailing envelope must be signed in order for your vote to be counted.

We appreciate your participation in one of the elements that sets your cooperative business apart from the rest—AgCredit, ACA Stockholders determine their own governance by electing their peers to the Board of Directors.

Your Board and Management Team have always believed in this simple observation: “Who better than farmers themselves know what farmers need?” Your vote supports this concept. Thanks for supporting your cooperative.

A handwritten signature in cursive script.



2016 ALPHABETICAL OHIO AGRICULTURAL FAIR SCHEDULE

Ohio State Fair (Columbus)
July 27-Aug. 7

County Fair & Location	Dates
Adams County Fair (West Union)	JULY 10-16
Allen County Fair (Lima)*	AUG 19-27
Ashland County Fair (Ashland)*	SEPT 18-24
Ashtabula County Fair (Jefferson)*	AUG 9-14
Athens County Fair (Athens)*	AUG 5-13
Auglaize County Fair (Wapakoneta)*	JULY 31-AUG 6
Belmont County Fair (St. Clairsville)	SEPT 6-11
Brown County Fair (Georgetown)	SEPT 26-OCT 1
Butler County Fair (Hamilton)	JULY 24-30
Carroll County Fair (Carrollton)*	JULY 19-24
Champaign County Fair (Urbana)*	AUG 5-12
Clark County Fair (Springfield)	JULY 22-29
Clermont County Fair (Owensville)	JULY 24-30
Clinton County Fair (Wilmington)*	JULY 9-16
Columbiana County Fair (Lisbon)*	AUG 1-7
Coshocton County Fair (Coshocton)*	SEPT 30-OCT 6
Crawford County Fair (Bucyrus)*	JULY 17-23
Cuyahoga County Fair (Berea)*	AUG 8-14
Darke County Fair (Greenville)*	AUG 19-27
Defiance County Fair (Hicksville)*	AUG 20-27
Delaware County Fair (Delaware)*	SEPT 17-24
Erie County Fair (Sandusky)	AUG 9-16
Fairfield County Fair (Lancaster)*	OCT 9-15
Fayette County Fair (Washington C.H.)*	JULY 18-23
Franklin County Fair (Hilliard)*	JULY 16-23
Fulton County Fair (Wauseon)*	SEPT 2-8
Gallia County Fair (Gallipolis)	AUG 1-6
Geauga County Fair (Burton)*	SEPT 1-5
Greene County Fair (Xenia)*	JULY 31-AUG 6
County Fair (Old Washington)*	SEPT 12-17
Hamilton County Fair (Carthage)	AUG 10-14
Hancock County Fair (Findlay)*	AUG 31-SEPT 5
Hardin County Fair (Kenton)*	SEPT 6-11
Harrison County Fair (Cadiz)	JULY 4-9
Henry County Fair (Napoleon)*	AUG 11-18
Highland County Fair (Hillsboro)	SEPT 3-10
Hocking County Fair (Logan)	SEPT 12-17
Holmes County Fair (Millersburg)	AUG 8-13
Huron County Fair (Norwalk)	AUG 15-20
Jackson County Fair (Wellston)*	JULY 15-23
Jefferson County Fair (Smithfield)	AUG 16-21
Knox County Fair (Mt. Vernon)*	JULY 23-30
Lake County Fair (Painesville)*	AUG 17-21
Lawrence County Fair (Proctorville)	JULY 10-16
Logan County Fair (Bellefontaine)*	JULY 11-16
Lorain County Fair (Wellington)*	AUG 22-28
Lucas County Fair (Maumee)	JULY 12-17
Madison County Fair (London)*	JULY 10-16

County Fair & Location	Dates
Mahoning County Fair (Canfield)*	AUG 31-SEPT 5
Marion County Fair (Marion)	JULY 4-9
Medina County Fair (Medina)	AUG 1-7
Meigs County Fair (Pomeroy)*	AUG 15-20
Mercer County Fair (Celina)*	AUG 12-18
Miami County Fair (Troy)*	AUG 12-18
Monroe County Fair (Woodsfield)*	AUG 22-27
Montgomery County Fair (Dayton)*	AUG 31-SEPT 5
Morgan County Fair (McConnelsville)*	SEPT 6-10
Morrow County Fair (Mt. Gilead)*	AUG 29-SEPT 5
Muskingum County Fair (Zanesville)*	AUG 14-20
Noble County Fair (Caldwell)*	AUG 29-SEPT 3
Ottawa County Fair (Oak Harbor)*	JULY 18-24
Paulding County Fair (Paulding)*	JUNE 13-18
Perry County Fair (New Lexington)	JULY 18-23
Pickaway County Fair (Circleville)*	JUNE 18-25
Pike County Fair (Piketon)*	JUL 31-AUG 6
Portage County Fair (Randolph)	AUG 23-28
Preble County Fair (Eaton)*	JULY 30-AUG 6
Putnam County Fair (Ottawa)*	JUNE 20-25
Richland County Fair (Mansfield)*	AUG 6-13
Ross County Fair (Chillicothe)*	AUG 6-13
Sandusky County Fair (Fremont)	AUG 23-28
Scioto County Fair (Lucasville)	AUG 8-13
Seneca County Fair (Tiffin)*	JULY 25-31
Shelby County Fair (Sidney)*	JULY 24-30
Stark County Fair (Canton)*	AUG 30-SEPT 5
Summit County Fair (Tallmadge)*	JULY 26-31
Trumbull County Fair (Cortland)	JULY 12-17
Tuscarawas County Fair (Dover)*	SEPT 19-25
Union County Fair (Marysville)*	JULY 24-30
Van Wert County Fair (Van Wert)*W	AUG 31-SEPT 5
Vinton County Fair (McArthur)	JULY 25-30
Warren County Fair (Lebanon)*	JULY 18-23
Washington County Fair (Marietta)*	SEPT 3-6
Wayne County Fair (Wooster)*	SEPT 10-15
Williams County Fair (Montpelier)*	SEPT 10-17
Wood County Fair (Bowling Green)*	AUG 1-8
Wyandot County Fair (Upper Sandusky)*	SEPT 13-18

Independent Fairs

Albany Independent Fair (Athens Co.)	SEPT 7-11
Attica Independent Fair (Seneca Co.)*	AUG 9-13
Barlow Independent Fair (Washington Co.)	SEPT 22-25
Bellville Independent Fair (Richland Co.)	SEPT 14-17
Hartford Independent Fair (Licking Co.)*	AUG 7-13
Loudonville Independent Fair (Ashland Co.)	OCT 4-8
Richwood Independent Fair (Union Co.)*	AUG 31-SEPT 5

*Harness Racing

Joe Leiser Memorial AgCredit, ACA \$2,000 SCHOLARSHIP

A total of three AgCredit, ACA scholarships will be given for the 2016-17 school year*. Three students currently studying an agricultural curriculum at an accredited four-year school or at an accredited two-year school will each receive a \$2,000 award.

To be eligible, applicants must be an immediate family member (dependent) of a voting stockholder of AgCredit, ACA with a current loan. At the time of application the student must be attending a post-secondary school majoring in an agriculture-related subject. **Graduating high school seniors are not eligible to apply.**

- Children of current employees or directors of AgCredit, ACA, are not eligible for this scholarship.
- Previous recipients of scholarship funds are not eligible to re-apply.
- Previous applicants (who have not received scholarship funds) may apply every year they are eligible.
- The scholarship is to be used to pay education-related expenses and will be issued in the form of a joint check with the school.
- Applications must be postmarked on or before June 30, 2016. Mail to:
ATTENTION: Karen Welter
AgCredit, ACA
610 W. Lytle St.
Fostoria, OH 44830

The selection committee will consist of three current board members of AgCredit, ACA. They will review all complete applications and choose the three recipients. No interviews will be conducted. The process will be completed by July 31, 2016.

**The scholarship selection committee reserves the right to reduce or expand the number of scholarships awarded based upon the number of eligible and complete applications received.*



JOE LEISER MEMORIAL AGCREDIT, ACA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print or Type)

2016-2017 ACADEMIC YEAR

Name _____ County _____

Home address _____

Home phone number _____

Immediate family who are voting members of AgCredit _____

College/University/Tech School **you have been attending** at the time of application _____

(At the time of application the student must be attending a post-secondary school at least as a first quarter/semester freshman.

Graduating high school seniors are not eligible.)

School address _____

Class status: 2015–2016 school year _____ G.P.A. _____

Major _____ Minor _____

(must be agriculture related)

Two-year program

Four-year program

Attach to Application – 1) Current Official Transcript including the most recent term. Transcripts may be faxed (419-435-6847) separate from the application, however, the original is to be mailed. In lieu of an official transcript, an Advising Report **AND** copies of grade reports **from each term attended** will be accepted. 2) Two letters of recommendation from sources at the discretion of the applicant.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Please submit the following on no more than four (4) 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper (one side only). Additional sheets and backs WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. Please provide information from the past two years only. Answers must be either **TYPED** or **PRINTED**.

1) Prepare a resume including the following items:

- Your past and present co-curricular activities including offices and extent of involvement.
- Your work experience or other commitments that may involve a large amount of time.
- Your scholastic accomplishments.

(Make a definite distinction among the three categories above.)

2) From your resume, pick one activity that has benefited you the most and explain.

3) Why have you decided on an agricultural program?

4) Tell us more about yourself and explain how this scholarship would benefit you.



The information provided in this column is only a sample of recent land sales around Ohio. Since there are many factors taken into consideration when a buyer and seller establish a price, these sales may or may not reflect the current market value in any particular area and should not be used in lieu of a formal appraisal by a state certified real estate appraiser to establish a value for a particular tract of land.

AgCredit's certified specialists are qualified to prepare appraisals for residences, land, dairies, hog confinement operations, grain farms and other specialty operations. For more information about AgCredit's fee appraisal service call Bill Eirich, ARA, Chief Appraiser, 419-523-6677 or 1-800-837-3678, Ext. 1107. Bill will connect you with an appraisal specialist.

The following information was provided by:

► **Bee Gee Realty & Auction Co., LTD**
 122 N. Washington St.
 Van Wert, OH 45897
www.beegeerealty.com
 419-238-5555

Location 1
 Acres: 142.412
 County: Mercer
 Township: Union
 Date of Sale: 12/28/15
 Selling Price: \$8,777 per acre
 Unimproved

Location 2
 Acres: 13.364
 County: Van Wert
 Township: Willshire
 Date of Sale: 11/24/15
 Selling Price: \$6,600 per acre
 20 x 40 pole barn

Location 3
 Acres: 40
 County: Van Wert
 Township: Willshire
 Date of Sale: 12/16/15
 Selling Price: \$9,600 per acre. Unimproved

The following information was provided by:

► **Wilson National LLC**
 652 N. High St.
 Hillsboro, OH 45133
www.wilnat.com
 937-393-3440

Location 1
 Acres: 202.636
 County: Champaign
 Date of Sale: 10/22/15
 Selling Price: \$10,000 per acre. Unimproved

Location 2
 Acres: 175
 County: Delaware
 Township: Berkshire
 Date of Sale: 10/29/15
 Selling Price: \$8,342 per acre. Improved

Location 3
 Acres: 188
 County: Champaign
 Date of Sale: 12/2/15
 Selling Price: \$6,023.93
 Unimproved

Location 4
 Acres: 72
 County: Champaign
 Date of Sale: 12/16/15
 Selling Price: \$7,200 per acre. Unimproved

The following information was provided by:

- ▶ **Walter Bros. Inc.**
901 N. Main St.
Findlay, OH 45840
www.walterbrosinc.com
419-424-0944

Location 1

Acres: 37.453
County: Hancock
Township: Amanda
Date of Sale: 8/31/15
Selling Price: \$7,500 per acre. Unimproved
Flat, all tillable, village utilities could be available

Location 2

Acres: 29.43
County: Seneca
Township: Big Spring
Date of Sale: 10/30/15
Selling Price: \$5,000 per acre. Unimproved. Sandy, high ground

Location 3

Acres: 61
County: Hancock
Township: Van Buren
Date of Sale: 12/16/15
Selling Price: \$6,000
Unimproved

Location 4

Acres: 72.866
County: Hancock
Township: Biglick
Date of Sale: 1/8/16
Selling Price: \$6,800 per acre. Unimproved
½ black muck, ½ higher ground

The following information was provided by:

- ▶ **Craig A. Miley Realty & Auction**
703 Harding Way West
Galion, OH 44833
www.mileyrealty.com
419-468-4602

Location 1

Acres: 121.5
County: Crawford
Township: Whetstone
Date of Sale: 12/17/15
Selling Price: \$6,872 per acre. Improved
Nice 7 room, 3 bedroom, 1.5 bath farm house. Well maintained. 2 story barn, machine shed, detached garage. 100 acres tillable

Location 2

Acres: 54.9
County: Crawford
Township: Jefferson
Date of Sale: 1/5/16
Selling Price: \$6,600 per acre. Unimproved
52.2 acres tillable, 5.403 acres land locked and inaccessible

Location 3

Acres: 156
County: Knox
Township: Wayne
Date of Sale: 1/5/16
Selling Price: Northside (73.89 acres w/milking barn) \$11,050 per acre
Southside (83.64 acres w/ farm house) \$9,000 per acre. Improved
Older farm house in need of repair. All buildings were in poor to fair condition. Northside has no tile. Southside is systematically tiled.

Meet Our Appraisal Team



William (Bill) Eirich, ARA
Senior Appraiser



Lisa Shumaker
Appraiser



Cory Hohman
Appraiser



Deanna Knapke
Appraiser



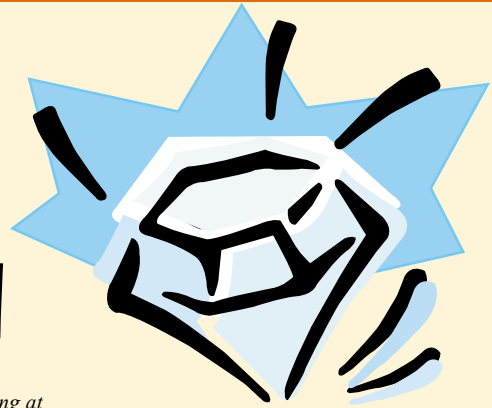
Seth Goodwin
Collateral Analyst



Amber Shepler
Collateral Analyst

Attention Auctioneers: Would you like to be featured in a future column? It's easy. Visit our website, www.agcredit.net and click on the Auctioneer's link to find the Recent Land Sale form online. Fax the completed forms to 419 663 4120 or email to klaubacher@agcredit.net.

AGATES FROM AGATHA SEMI-PRECIOUS TIDBITS OF INFORMATION



BY CONNIE RUTH, AKA AGATHA CREDIT

Agatha Credit is the nickname my late husband, Dan, bestowed upon me when I first started working at AgCredit. He enjoyed the enthusiasm I had for my new job.

100 Years

This year the Farm Credit system is celebrating its 100th birthday. Thinking about it got me to reminiscing about my grandfathers; Grandpa John Baumann (my mother's father) and Grandpa Leslie Gould (my dad's father), who both farmed during this era.

John was the older of the two. He was born in 1870 when the U.S. population was 38.5 million and the farm population was over half of the total population. At that time, farmers made up 53 percent of the labor force. There were approximately 2.6 million farms and the average farm was 153 acres.

John was born in Henrietta, Ohio (Lorain County), after his parents came to America from Switzerland the previous year. When John was a young boy, deep-well drilling, barbed wire fencing and silos came into use.

John married my grandma, Martha Schneider, in 1902, and continued to work on the family farm. They used horses for all field work to pull plows and ground fitting tools. When John was a young man, a new horse-drawn combine was beginning to be used out west. In 1904, the first successful field tractor was invented.

In 1910, at the age of 40, John bought his father's 130-acre farm for \$70 an acre. By this time, the total U.S. population had more than doubled to 91.9 million and total farm population was approximately 32 million. Farmers now made up 31 percent of the labor force and the number of farms was 6.3 million. The average farm was 138 acres. Farms were becoming more modern as open-gear tractors came into use and farmers were finding more and more ways to become efficient.

When the Farm Credit Act was signed in July of 1916, Grandpa John was 46 years old and had been farming for 14 years.



John's barn at the turn of the century

1917— Grandpa John wrote: This year we built the straw barn, a big, 48 by 48 foot addition to our barn with a gothic roof and without any pillars and posts to impede the spreading of the straw. The straw was the bedding of the dairy cows. The ground floor was for the accumulation of manure and shelter for the cows in bad weather. We used mostly native timber and sand and gravel from the river bank.

In August, I remember that while we were working on the foundation when we watched the first airplane flying over this neighborhood. This caused much excitement.

The weather was very favorable all fall. The barn was finished in December 1917. Then we did our wheat threshing. I was waiting for a place to put the straw. In those days we always threshed out of the barns. We got George Kohl to do the threshing with his machine. We cemented the ground floor late in December. We had to cover it with straw so the frost would not ruin it.

1918— John continues: In March we bought our first tractor and installed water works in the bathroom of our house. In June the Gerber brother's put up our first windmill.

About 1918 Henry Ford built a farm tractor at a very reasonable price, which revolutionized the tractor business. This was the time of the First World War, when farmers were making pretty good money and anxious to produce as many crops as possible. So it was easy to sell them a cheap Ford tractor, although the other companies got their share of the business too.

My paternal grandpa, Leslie, was born in 1885 and went to school in North Olmsted, Ohio. He married Anna Higbee in 1906. During the early years of their marriage, Leslie worked in a machine shop in Cleveland. But, in 1919, three years after President Woodrow Wilson signed the Farm Credit Act, Leslie and Anna moved their family to Avon, Ohio, (Lorain County) and began working a 13-acre garden farm of sand and muck soils.

My dad, Howard, was 7 years old. As a boy, dad helped his family raise early crops: peas, radishes, spinach, rhubarb, and asparagus—and then later crops: beets, carrots, parsley, tomatoes, cabbage, celery, turnip greens, kale, mustard greens, collards, cucumbers, melons and squash. They also raised fruit: apples, pears, peaches, cherries, grapes, strawberries, red and black raspberries.



John and Martha in sleigh (1945)

1919 — Howard wrote: What a life for a kid! On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, we prepared “loads” for the Cleveland market and on the other week days we weeded and hoed the crops. Our help consisted of from 2 to 30 south Lorain kids, depending on the need. During berry time, Dad would go after them in a truck and bring back as many as forty. On days when he was at market there would be only a few who came on their bikes. As I grew older, I became foreman of the work crew and felt the responsibility, when Dad was away.”

1920 — For the first time, the census indicated a population over 100 million people — 105,710,620 and farm population was 31.6 million. Farmers made up 27% of labor force and there were approximately 6.4 million farms averaging 148 acres. This year women were given the right to vote.

The Gould family did market gardening for many years hauling the produce to the Cleveland Markets. Grandpa Leslie taught his children the art of operating a potato digger, a mower, a hay side delivery rake, a hay loader and silo filler. My dad, Howard, and his brothers, also took lessons from Grandpa in marketing the produce to the stands of the farmers markets on Woodland Avenue in Cleveland. They would leave home at midnight and get back home at three in the afternoon.

1929-1939 - The Great Depression — Grandpa Leslie’s Farm: My dad graduated from high school at 16 and Leslie and Anna didn’t push him to go to college because of the depressed times. That winter the family decided to rent a 160-acre farm on Dean Road in Birmingham and they moved to the “Portman Place” There dad helped to care for 8 milking cows, and worked hard making hay, filling silo, threshing, shearing 50 sheep, gathering eggs from 500 hens and tended a 400-pail sugar bush as well as an apple orchard.

1930 — U.S. population reached 123 million and the total farm population 31.1 estimated. Farmers made up only 21% of labor force, number of farms 6.2 million with average of 157 acres. 58% of all farms had cars, 34% had telephones, and 13% had electricity

1933 — Leslie and Anna bought a farm in Elyria Township (Lorain County) on Griswold Rd.

1940 — Grandpa John’s son Harold took over the farm on a father and son, fifty-fifty plan. The U.S. population was 131.8 million with farm population of approximately 30.8 million farmers and 18% of labor force. The number of farms: 6.1 million with average of 175 acres.

1941-1945 - World War I

1950 — Total U.S. population was over 151 million with farm population over 25 million. Farmers were 12.2% of labor force. There were approximately 5.3 million farms averaging 216 acres. Many rural areas lost population as farm family members sought outside work.

1954 — When Leslie retired from farming in 1954. 70.9% of all farms had cars, 49% had telephones and 93% had electricity. The number of tractors on farms exceeded the number of horses and mules for the first time.

1963 — Grandpa John wrote: One wonders why mankind has been so slow to make use of all these things in God’s great creation, all these thousands of years, and now by far, all these discoveries and inventions were made in the last one hundred years.

1964 — Grandpa John died at the age of 94.

1970 — Total U.S. population was over 204 million and the farm population was approximately 9.7 million and farmers were only 4.6% of labor force. There were 2.7 million farms averaging 390 acres.

1973 — Grandpa Leslie died Sept. 12 on his 87th birthday.

Both farmer grandfathers lived to experience agricultural innovations that they never could have imagined. John Baumann marveled about, “the chain saw, electric power saw, power drill and so many gadgets without number, in your mother’s kitchen, and that wonderful refrigerator!”

Times sure have changed. The U.S. population has grown to over eight times what it was when my grandparents were born. As of 2009, the farm population (including farming, forestry and fishing) was only .7% of total U.S. workforce. Today we have bigger farms averaging over 400 acres, but they have declined in number to 2.1 million according to 2012 census—down 4.3% from last census in 2007. Times are changing and will continue to change, but farming is still a great way of life.

It’s been fun thinking of my grandfathers. Both of them loved being farmers and raising their families in the country. Would you like to share your story? For the Farm Credit birthday celebration this year I am collecting old pictures for our traveling history display. I’d like to include memories from your family farm operations, so if you’ve got some old photographs you’d like to share, contact me by email for details. cruth@agcredit.net



Leslie Gould as a young man



John and Martha wed (1902)



4 Generations: Great Grandman Gould, Grandpa Leslie, baby Alice and dad Howard (1942)

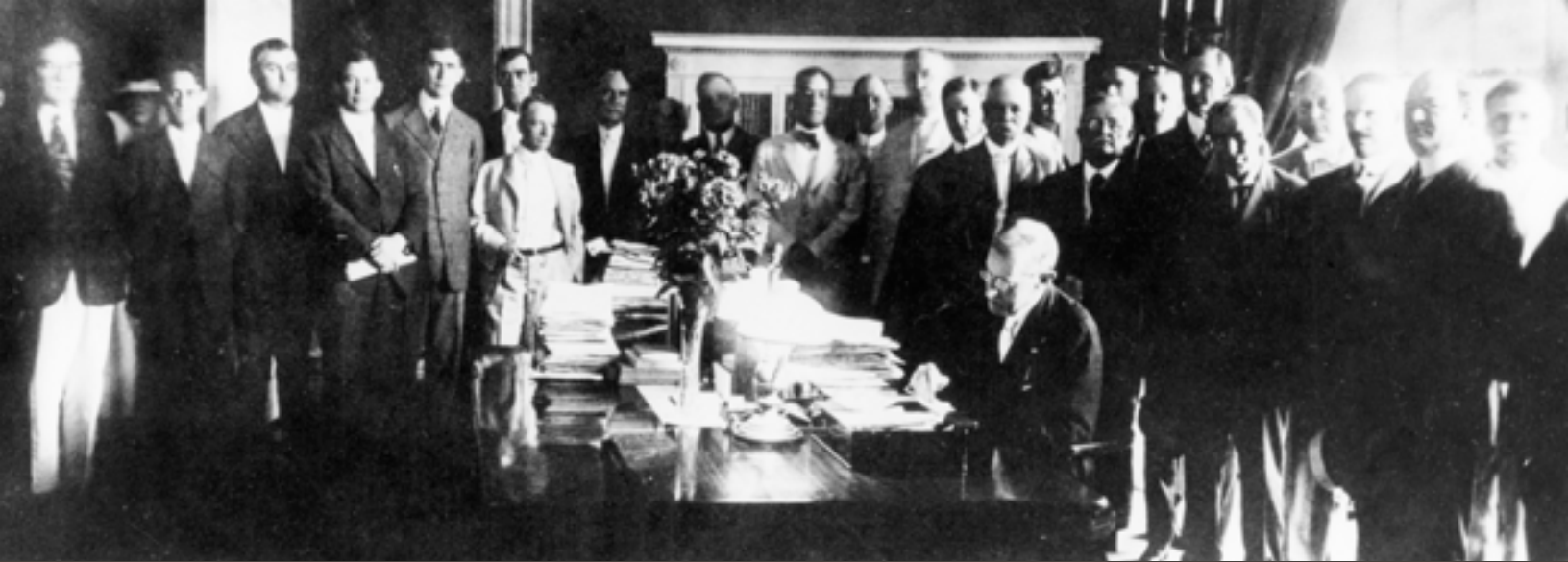


Sister, Alice with all four grandparents - Leslie, Anna, Martha and John (1948)



Agatha

Happy 100th Birthday Farm Credit System!



FARM CREDIT HISTORY TIMELINE

1908

President Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission recommended a cooperative credit system that would provide credit to farmers and ranchers.

1912

Spring: President William Howard Taft's committee and its trip to Europe to explore agricultural credit systems there and its "Preliminary Report on land and Agricultural Credit in Europe (published Oct 1912).

1916

July 17: President Wilson signs the Federal Farm Loan Act which creates the Federal Land Banks and Federal Farm Loan Board, and "provided government start-up capital for cooperative agricultural lending agencies."

1917

By November 30: Farmers had organized 1,839 National Farm Loan Associations, and 1,985 more were in process. 18,000 farmers had received a total of \$30 million in loans (out of \$200 million in requests).

1922

74,000 farmers had borrowed a total of \$234 million in current loans from the Federal Land Banks.

1923

Agricultural Credits Act, **March 3, 1923** [S.4280, 5 January 1923]: created 12 Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, providing loans at discounted rates to agricultural cooperatives, commercial banks, and other lenders.

1927

February 8: New legislation amended the Agricultural Credits Act of 1923 by authorizing national agricultural credit corporations to make loans on farm crops being grown for market.

1929

Agricultural Depression slows the rate of borrowing, and by 1929 only 17,000 farmers had outstanding loans from the FLBs, for a total of \$64 billion.

1933

Nearly half of all National Farm Loan Associations were failing, and farm foreclosures were common.

May 12: Congress passes Emergency Farm Mortgage Act, which sought to save farmers delinquent on mortgage payments, and "purchased farm mortgages from lenders or from the receivers of insolvent banks at discounted prices, pursuant to an application by the lender and the borrower, scaled them down, and refinanced them over longer terms and with lower interest rates."

June 16: Congress passes the Farm Credit Act, authorizing farmer-owned Production Credit Associations to make short- and intermediate-term loans. Within eighteen months, the Farm Credit Administration, a merger of government farm loan agencies, would refinance a fifth of all farm mortgages.

December: Land Banks were loaning more money per month than they had during the entire year of 1932.

1953

Farm Credit Act made FCA independent of USDA, set course for farmer-ownership.

1968

Farm Credit System paid off federal loans in all branches of the system.

1971

Total farm debt was \$54 billion.

Farm Credit Act of 1971 liberalized the rules for FCS lending, allowing loans to fishermen, rural homeowners, and greater support for production agriculture.

1985

FCS held \$69.8 billion in outstanding loans national farm debt was: \$212 billion.

Farm Credit Act of 1985: Separated FCA from the FCS, making FCA an "arm's-length" regulator. It also provided for a full-time, presidentially appointed three-member Board of Directors, on which one Board member serves as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of FCA. The Act restructured FCA to give it increased oversight, regulatory, and enforcement powers similar to those of other Federal financial regulatory institutions. FCA was required to examine each direct-lending institution at least annually and could use its new enforcement authority to instill safe and sound banking practices on troubled institutions and to correct any regulatory violations.

1987

Agricultural Credit Act reorganized the Farm Credit System: authorized up to \$4 billion in federal assistance to troubled institutions. Strengthened borrowers' rights and created an insurance corporation to protect bank assets. Federal Land Banks and Federal Intermediate Credit Banks within each district were merged.

2005

Farm Credit System payoff of federal loans--the institutions of the Farm Credit System once again become entirely farmer-owned.

2016

Farm Credit makes its centennial and looks ahead to continuing serving as the financial underpinning of U.S. agriculture and rural America.

