



2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

MEMBERSHIP

519,849 Total Member Families

730 Member Family Gain

139 Counties Gaining

88.03% Retention

17 in 17 Membership Awards Program

976 Qualified Membership Applications Received

90 Counties Participated

275 Participants

(See also Youth Organizations)

"VOICE OF AGRICULTURE"

Communications

Social Media: Through social media networks, TFB Communications drives timely issues important to agriculture and promotes an open discussion. Facebook has grown to more than 109,800 followers, making it the largest state Farm Bureau Facebook page. Weekly posts reach averaged more than 300,000 interactions. More than 125 CFBs have started Facebook pages. A weekly Facebook tip is sent to all CFB Facebook administrators. Twitter has grown to 17,800 followers, and engagement increased by about 30 percent. In one year, TFB has more than 4,300 followers, making it one of the top state Farm Bureau Instagram accounts. TFB Pinterest and LinkedIn accounts also help reach various target audiences.

Blogs: *Your Texas Agriculture Minute* (a TFB weekly commentary in both print and audio form) has appeared more than 100 times in newspapers around the state and followed heavily in social media. YTAM is also part of the radio program, Farm Bureau Roundup. *Texas Table Top* remains a successful product to communicate with the consumer audience.

Electronic Communications: Grew the subscriber list to 30,000 emails for *Texas Agriculture Daily*, an email daily of Texas and American agriculture, with an open rate of 20 percent. That is consistent with industry standards. *The Friday Report*, a leadership email newsletter, is a popular piece with a 26.5 percent open rate—above industry standards.

Website: Now in the second year of new responsive design. The visual components, responsive design, and daily-updated content help drive a continued increase in page views.

Texas Food Connection Week: Conducted Texas Food Connection Week activities—primarily in support of CFBs as the major media event of the year—providing support materials that included:

- A local proclamation for city and/or county officials to declare an event
- Speech materials
- Fill-in-the-blank news releases
- How-to information on working with local media
- Prepared advertising and radio copy for advertisements
- Talking points

CFBs used Facebook pages to cover and publicize the event. The “Farmers’ Share” meal events remain the most popular.

U.S. Farmer and Ranchers Alliance: Continued to work with USFRA on uniform messaging.

Texas Agriculture Challenges Team: The number of TACT participants has grown to 230 TFB members.

County Farm Bureau Newsletters: Most of the 206 CFBs used the newsletter service this year to give notice of CFB meetings and key CFB activities. Postcards were the most popular format.

Fill-in-the blank news releases have appeared more than 2,700 times this year in newspapers across the state.

TFB Radio Network: From a start of six stations in January 2002, the network now features 69 affiliates in November 2017. With a talent line-up of Gary Joiner, Tom Nicolette, Jessica Domel, Dr. Bob Judd, the highly-rated programming has become #1 in Texas. According to the 2017 AMR study, the TFB Network has forged a dominant lead over every state competitor with farmer and rancher listening audiences. Our product received 48 percent of the audience in all Texas counties surveyed, with the nearest competitor receiving 38 percent.

Videos Produced: TFB Video Services continues to produce quality videos, news stories, and promos to promote agriculture and TFB programs and policy to the public and TFB members. Produced approximately 90 videos this year and assisted with various media trainings. We continue to have a strong video presence on social media, with Facebook continuing at approximately 5.5 million views and YouTube increasing to about 558,000 views. This is an increase of over 200,000 views, compared to last year. Vimeo views almost doubled from the previous year.

Educational Programs

Summer Agriculture Institute: Conducted the 23rd annual Institute for the first time at the TFB Conference and Training Center in Waco. A record 28 teachers attended. 25 CFB’s provided scholarships for all teachers to attend, with some counties sponsoring multiple teachers. Field trips and exposure to experts helped teachers make the connection between real world agriculture and the classroom. The teachers attending have a direct impact to more than 2,000 students. Each attendee received various AITC resources.

Teacher Workshops: Conducted 10 one-day workshops with 137 teachers in attendance. These science-based workshops provided Ag in the Classroom materials and hands-on lessons blending agricultural concepts with current teaching standards. Attending teachers have a direct impact to 8,386 students. Educational Outreach staff also participated with a booth in the two-day North East Texas Teachers Conference, seeing over 1,500 teachers. TFB staff also hosted two breakout sessions on AITC curriculum for K-6 and the Journey 2050 online farm simulation for grades 6-12. 24 teachers attended the two sessions with a reach to 1,691 students. In 2017, Teacher Workshops accounted for a total outreach to 10,077 students and 161 teachers.

Texas Ag Teachers’ Conference: Exhibited at the conference in Arlington, where approximately 2,000 Ag teachers visited the booth to discuss youth leadership and scholarship opportunities for their students. Teachers were also given information on the Journey 2050 curriculum.

AITC Matching Grant: Matching Grants were made to 45 counties. TFB awarded \$10,024 to CFBs that sponsored AITC activities. These efforts by counties impacted 17,600+ individuals. 2017 has been a record school year for county involvement, with \$51,690 spent in promoting agriculture across the state.

AITC Outstanding Teacher Award: Presented to Hillary Rollins of Brazos County. Hillary was recognized at the annual meeting of Texas Farm Bureau in San Antonio and the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Hillary received an additional honor in Kansas City as a winner of a CHS, Inc. Scholarship at the National Ag in the Classroom level.

School Visit Program: TFB's school visit program, *Planting the Seed*, was a great success in the inaugural year of conducting statewide. 18 trained presenters delivered a 40-50 minute, science-based lesson on the vital role of farmers and ranchers. 32,275 students in grades K-5 took part in the hands-on lessons. This outreach provided TFB the opportunity to distribute AITC curriculum and other TFB programs to over 1,850 teachers. Program areas this year included Amarillo/Lubbock, DFW, Waco/Austin, Corpus Christi/Victoria, San Antonio, Abilene/Stephenville, and the Rio Grande Valley.

Garden Grant: The *Learning from the Ground Up* garden grant program continued to support schools teaching agriculture concepts. With CFB's acting as the point of contact, schools or other organizations directly affecting students are encouraged to apply for our \$500 grants. The grants are for the construction of, or improvements to gardens or greenhouses. With emphasis on the benefits of taking student learning outside, this program seeks to draw a connection between small scale gardening and the larger scale efforts of farmers and ranchers. The 2016-2017 grant cycle awarded 33 grants totaling \$16,500.

AITC Curriculum: Eight new Ag in the Classroom curriculum units were completed in 2017. Summer Ag Institute and Teacher Workshop attendees received the curriculum. The units included soil and water, flowering plants and seeds, 2 nutrition units, careers in agriculture, top 10 Texas commodities, *Farmland* documentary, and Texas food crops. The new curriculum is also available via the TFB website.

Mobile Learning Barn Trailers

Showed to 35,694 school children in 111 days.

Showed to 25,989 people in mixed groups of adults/children in 84 days.

Urban Relations/Planet Agriculture

Planet Agriculture had almost 750,000 visitors during the 2017 Spring and Fall tours, which consisted of 9 venues: Ft. Worth Stock Show & Rodeo, San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, Earth Day Texas, Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo, West Texas Fair & Rodeo, East Texas State Fair, State Fair of Texas, Heart of Texas Fair & Rodeo, and the Texas Motor Speedway NASCAR event with the Texas Corn Producers. Different agriculture commodity and related displays were used during the -event schedule.

29 county Farm Bureaus provided 74 workers who logged 1,234 hours during 213 shifts to advocate agriculture to our urban neighbors. Planet Agriculture displays were on exhibit 108 days during the 2017 show schedule.

The Harvest Experience trailer registered more than 10,000 hits on its digital counter in 2017 (which equates to approximately 40,000 visitors) The Harvest Experience appeared during the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Earth Day Texas, West Texas Fair and Rodeo, State Fair of Texas, and The Texas Motor Speedway NASCAR event.

Urban Relations Steering Committee was formed to recommend the future direction and scope of TFB's Urban Relations and Planet Agriculture program. Committee recommendations will be presented to the TFB Board during its May 2018 meeting.

TFB Legal Defense Fund

Property Rights Cases:

Forest Oil v. El Rucio Land & Cattle Co. et al

This case addressed the issue regarding a landowner's right to sue an oil company for contamination on his property. The oil company argued that the Texas Railroad Commission had exclusive or primary jurisdiction over contamination disputes. TFB along with Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, Texas Land and Mineral Owners Association, Texas Wildlife Association, Texas Cattle Feeders Association, Landowner Coalition of Texas, and Texas Forestry Association filed an amicus brief in support of the landowners' right to make common law claims in court. The Texas Supreme Court on April 28, 2017, agreed and held that the Railroad Commission did not have exclusive jurisdiction over contamination claims.

Aderholt v. Bureau of Land Management

The Red River Property Owners sued the BLM over the BLM surveys that would extend federal control over what had been considered private land for decades. TFB filed an amicus brief on May 22, 2017, in support of the landowners arguing that BLM by admission never performed the proper surveys that are required by the US Supreme Court making these new surveys legally invalid.

Endangered Species Act Case:

The Pacific Legal Foundation – Endangered Species Downlisting

TFB along with Arizona rancher Jim Chilton, New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association, New Mexico Farm & Livestock Bureau, and New Mexico Federal Lands Council joined with the Pacific Legal Foundation and filed to downlist five species on the endangered species list. The petition proposed delisting five species including two Texas species the Black-Capped Vireo and Tobusch Fishhook Cactus from endangered to threatened. USFWS responded by publishing an initial positive finding on downlisting in September 2013. The USFWS was supposed to issue a final finding by September 2014. TFB and the other groups filed suit against USFWS because the final determination was not made. USFWS made a settlement offer to make the findings by December 30, 2016, and the payment of \$4500 in attorneys' fees. The USFWS is now in the process of de-listing instead of just downlisting the Black-Capped Vireo, and is now in the process of proposing the downlisting of the Tobusch Fishhook Cactus.

Eminent Domain Case:

KMS Retail Rowlett v. The City of Rowlett

A City condemns a private road for the benefit of another private developer and the property owner sues. TFB is preparing an amicus brief to submit to the Texas Supreme Court arguing for stronger protections for landowners from entities using their eminent domain authority for private-like development activities.

Water Case:

The rule for "Waters of the United States" litigation

TFB along with AFBF, the Matagorda CFB and other agricultural and industry groups filed suit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) new rule under the Clean Water Act for the definition of "Waters of the United States". The suit was filed originally on July 2, 2015, in federal district court in Galveston, Texas. The group also filed protective complaints in the federal appellate court. The suits challenge the vagueness and the constitutionality of the new Rule, and request the courts to vacate the Rule and enjoin EPA from enforcing it. While the Rule has been stayed by the U.S. 6th Circuit, an appeal was filed to the United States Supreme Court where a hearing was held on October 11, 2017, contesting the jurisdictional determination that the Rule must be first challenged at the appellate court instead of the district court.

Regulatory

Continued an aggressive lobby program to influence state and federal agencies as they implemented their statutorily mandated programs, and took opportunities to assist on emerging issues.

Water:

- Continued public outreach regarding the impacts of the WOTUS Rule on Agriculture—including separate testimonies before both the state House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Private Property and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Economic Development
- Communicated with the TCEQ and irrigators selected to serve on the steering committee for the Brazos River Watermaster Program.
- Communicated with LCRA and ag irrigators regarding LCRA's Water Management Plan and water availability for the 2017 growing season.
- Served on the Water Conservation Advisory Council as chair the Agricultural Subcommittee. Assisted in drafting and reviewed the 2017 WCAC Report to the Texas Legislature.
- Worked with Jackson CFB to effectively block a water quality permit seeking to land-apply grease and grit trap waste under a "beneficial use" designation, as per newly-amended TFB policy.
- Coordinated with the Texas Water Conservation Association, Rio Grande irrigation interests, and the TCEQ to change recently-amended water accounting practices deemed harmful to irrigators in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.
- Reviewed and provided comments to the Texas Water Development Board regarding the 2016 State Water Plan opposing the continued use of unique reservoir designations in the plan.

Endangered Species:

- Continued to lobby U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior, and NRCS staff for an increase of agriculture's interest of marketable credits for Lesser-Prairie Chicken.
- Worked with other state Farm Bureaus, state and national governmental agencies, and conservation organizations to develop, promote, and implement the Recovery Credit System, thus helping landowners with endangered species habitat to receive payments for term contracts for conservation practices.
- Worked with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to grant funds for mitigation of Monarch Butterfly habitat.
- Participated in the NRCS State Technical Advisory Subcommittee on Wildlife to develop mitigation income to landowners providing conservation for endangered or threaten species.

Risk Management/Profitability:

- Worked in concert with National Cotton Council in the effort to have Secretary Vilsack designate cottonseed as another oilseed.
- Served on the American Farm Bureau Farm Bill Working Group to examine current farm program policy and develop white papers for membership to use for policy development.
- Worked with Texas Corn Producers and Congressman Thornberry's office regarding ARC-CO payment disparities.
- Worked with membership and grain producer organizations to develop and coordinate an educational effort for the Texas Grain Producers Indemnity Fund.

- Served on the USDA-NRCS State Technical Advisory Committee; therefore, gaining the opportunity to help direct implementation of conservation title programs in a manner that can increase producer profitability through adoption of programs that fit their operations.
- Worked with RMA on crop insurance products such as SCO and Prevented Planting that affected our members.

Crop Protection:

- Coordinated with EPA, TDA, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, and other agricultural organizations to inform agricultural employers of EPA's new Worker Protection Standards.
- Led a statewide effort to oppose sweeping changes to the Certification and Training rules for pesticide applicators proposed by EPA. Staff also met with Ron Carlton, EPA Agricultural Advisor, in Washington, D.C. to discuss possible changes to the proposal.
- Successfully petitioned EPA for a Section 18 for sulfoxaflor, and submitted comments on the Section 3 Label for sulfoxaflor.
- Submitted comments opposed to changes to the chlorpyrifos label.
- Submitted comments opposed to EPA's Ecological Risk Assessment of Atrazine, Propazine, and Simazine, which would render these crop protection tools useless.
- Submitted comments to support the continued use of imidacloprid.
- Discussed pollinator protection with a number of agricultural industry groups, AgriLife, TDA, and Texas A&M's Apiary Inspection Service.

Animal Health:

- Met with USDA and Mexican officials along with other industry representatives to deliver concerns and requested action on traceability of Mexican feeder cattle entering the U.S. These meetings are influential in holding the two governmental agencies accountable for progress on disease prevalence and eradication efforts. Staff particularly argued the value of keeping the "M" firebrand on all imported live cattle from Mexico, upgrading to electronic ID, and the need for enhanced control of Tuberculosis in Mexico.
- Staff has worked diligently with the Texas Animal Health Commission to communicate disease control and eradication efforts for Cattle Fever Ticks, Tuberculosis, and other diseases in Texas.
- Coordinated outreach efforts with communication staff and AgriLife Extension to deliver Veterinary Feed Directive information to stakeholders.
- Participated in developing the Cattle Fever Tick Working Group in cooperation with the Texas Animal Health Commission.
- Worked with AFBF and Livestock Marketing Association to develop supporting language for modernizing GIPSA.

Commodities and Regulatory Miscellaneous:

Staff and select commodity chairmen participated in 2nd National Commodity Conference in Des Moines, Iowa.

Maintained memberships and remained active in the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Meat Export Federation.

Staff coordinated the development of a state beef quality assurance steering committee with AgriLife Extension, the Texas Beef Council, and all beef cattle stakeholder organizations in Texas.

Staff successfully worked with the Texas Sheep and Goat Raisers Association to notify sheep and goat producers of the Predator Management Control Board referendum to increase the assessment. The referendum passed with 84% support.

Submitted comments as follows on issues of key interest to TFB members:

- To EPA supporting the approval of new pesticides that give farmers another tool to help fight herbicide resistant weeds.
- To TDA supporting the development of the East Texas Management Area for the Boll Weevil Eradication Program.
- To TPWD regarding the emergency rules that address the CWD outbreak in white tail deer.
- To USDA-APHIS opposing new Tuberculosis and Brucellosis rule changes
- To the U.S. House of Representatives asking them to oppose efforts to end FSIS inspection of domestic and imported catfish.
- To Agriculture Marketing Services in opposition to harmful changes to the National Organic Program.
- To USF&WS regarding new ESA species listings.
- To USF&WS regarding proposed rule changes dealing with ESA mitigation and landowners.
- To USF&WS regarding proposed rule changes dealing with Candidate Species Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA).

State Chemist: Continued to work with the State Chemist office by encouraging elevators to adopt the aflatoxin One Sample strategy program and to continue improving the procedures and accuracy of the testing kits.

State Comptroller: Served on the State Comptroller's Business Tax Advisory Group to look at tax policies of the state and how they are collected by the state.

Staff worked with the Comptroller's staff in updating the States Ag Use Property Tax Manual.

TXDOT: Staff continued to serve on the Texas Department of Transportation's (TXDOT) Texas Freight Advisory Committee, which will develop priorities for the comprehensive multimodal transportation plan that focused on the state's freight transportation needs.

Staff concluded final year of serving on a transportation committee coordinated by the University of Texas, Arlington Engineering Department exploring underground transportation to help relieve future congestion.

Crop Insurance: Contacted verbally and by email requesting information from RMA about what the requirements are to qualify for organic crop insurance and how t-yields are figured.

POLITICAL ACTION

State Legislative Accomplishments

85th Texas Legislature Regular and Special Session:

TFB accomplished the following priority legislative issues established by the Board of Directors for the 85th Legislature:

- Expanded the agriculture lien statute to include crops held in open storage as well as crops stored in licensed and bonded facilities to be eligible for an ag lien. With the exception of those who defer payment, most producers now have the option of obtaining a priority lien that attaches to the crop upon the first date of the first delivery.

- Successfully defended attempts to pass legislation to take landowners' water rights.
- No adverse tax legislation was passed this session.

In addition to the legislative priorities outlined by the TFB Board, TFB was helpful in the passage of key legislation that:

- Prevented political subdivisions from adopting regulations on agricultural seed, including planting seed or cultivating plants grown from seed. A purpose of the legislation was to keep uniformity in the application of seed regulation across Texas.
- Increased the penalty for causing death to one or more head of cattle, bison, or horse by discharging a firearm or other weapon to a third degree felony criminal mischief offence.
- Required consent by residents being annexed through either an election or petition process which protects homeowners from forced annexation and makes the municipal annexation process more democratic.
- Allows Texans to take out home equity loans on agricultural homesteads.
- Blocked legislation that would have prevented TDA from approving the use of lethal pesticides for feral hog control until a study by a state agency or university recommended the pesticide be registered for that use.

Interim Committee Charges of the Texas House, 85th Legislature:

- TFB pushed for critical issues to be included among the list of charges to be studied by the committees of the Texas House of Representatives during the interim. Speaker Straus included eminent domain reform as a charge in the House Land and Resource Management Committee. The House Agriculture and Livestock Committee Important will also study important issues including the impact of Hurricane Harvey to agriculture and livestock industries. The interim committee meetings have begun and will last well into 2018 before reports are released.

Freshman Legislators Agriculture and Rural Legislative Issues Briefing:

- Over 20 new members of the Texas Legislature were sworn into office in 2017, many of them from urban areas. TFB hosted and planned its 4th biannual briefing for these new legislators in advance of the 2017 Session to educate them on issues that will impact our industry, communities and organization and also to promote TFB as the lead organization on these issues.

National Legislative Accomplishments

Farm Bill Listening Session/West Texas Legislative Conference: TFB played a key role in the U.S. House Agriculture Committee Farm Bill listening session held in conjunction with the West Texas Legislative Summit in San Angelo. Chairman Mike Conaway, Ranking Member Collin Peterson, and Reps. Jodey Arrington, David Rouzer, Glenn Thompson, Rodney Davis, Roger Marshall and Darren Soto were present at the session. President Russell Boening testified on behalf of TFB. TFB State Directors Dan Smith and Val Stephens also testified along with other TFB members from the West Texas area.

TFB was one of the largest sponsors of the West Texas Legislative Summit. Mr. Boening participated on a Farm Bill panel and Laramie Adams, TFB National Legislative Director, participated on a regulatory panel.

Appropriations: TFB was actively involved in the House agriculture appropriations process. Amendments to the agricultural appropriations were all considered by the House Committee on Rules, Chaired by Congressman Pete Sessions. Due to TFB's strong relationship with Chairman Sessions, we were able to play a key role in defeating bad amendments and passing good amendments for agriculture.

TFB was able to make sure funding for cattle health, which can help with fever tick, was protected. TFB opposed an amendment that would have prohibited funding for biofuels programs under the farm bill. TFB also opposed an amendment to impose a \$500,000 AGI test on commodity and conservations payments and another one to impose a \$125,000 pay limit on commodity, conservation and crop insurance payments. Additionally, TFB reached out to Sessions staff to oppose an amendment to ban horse slaughter. All of these amendments were defeated.

TFB supported an amendment by Rep. Long which prohibits funds from being used to enforce reporting requirements of hazardous substances from farms in accordance with Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). TFB also supported an amendment by Rep. Brian Babin to prohibit funds from being used to implement or enforce the Electronic Logging Device (ELD Mandate). These amendments were passed in the House appropriations bill.

Farm Policy: TFB worked with House and Senate Agricultural Committee Chairmen and their staffs to ensure Texas farmers and ranchers receive the tools needed in the 2018 farm bill to help them continue operating. In 2017, the TFB Board or Directors started having regularly scheduled conference calls with House Agriculture Committee staff to discuss farm policy issues being surfaced from Texas farmers and ranchers. These calls have resulted in TFB members having a more direct influence on farm bill policy.

Farm Labor: TFB helped secure House Judiciary Committee passage of the Agricultural Guestworker Act, by Chairman Bob Goodlatte. TFB's action had a positive influence on the final outcome. TFB staff coordinated conference calls with the Texas committee members to stress the importance of a workable guest worker program for our farmers. TFB members explained to our lawmakers exactly why new legislation is needed and what would happen without a workable program. The bill passed out of the committee with a 17-16 vote. Without TFB's direct contact with Texas committee members, the bill likely wouldn't have garnered the votes needed to pass out of committee.

Regulatory Reform: TFB played a key role in securing House passage of the following bills to improve the federal regulatory process.

- H.R. 5/S. 951, The Regulatory Accountability Act: Requires federal agencies to issue the most "cost-effective" rules necessary to accomplish their goals and involve all stakeholders in the process
- H.R. 953/S. 340, Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act: Clarifies the Congressional intent regarding the regulation of the use of pesticides in or near navigable waters
- H.R. 5226, Regulatory Integrity Act: Requires agencies to post basic information, beyond what is provided in the Federal Register about communications on pending regulatory actions

BLM Red River Property Rights: TFB worked very closely with Rep. Mac Thornberry and Sen. John Cornyn to help provide solutions on the BLM/Red River property rights issue. TFB strongly advocated and influenced House passage of *H.R. 428, The Red River Gradient Boundary Survey Act*.

(See also "Grassroots" for National Affairs Trip to Washington, D.C. and District Congressional Meetings)

Political Programs and Activities

Texas Farm Bureau held the bi-annual Campaign Seminar at the Waco office this year. It was a successful seminar with 14 participants. Of those 14, 6 are currently involved in elections at the county and state level.

Staff developed an AGFUND County Farm Bureau Report to provide CFB Presidents and TFB State Directors information on their members' contributions to AGFUND. This report will be sent on a monthly basis to all CFB Presidents and State Directors. It will provide the following information: how many CFB members contributed, how many are AGFUND Cabinet members, and how many of the CFB board members contribute to AGFUND, as compared to the state organization.

The TFB Board Public Affairs Committee completed a study of the current practices for soliciting the voluntary AGFUND contribution on membership renewals. As a result, the state board approved two initiatives: 1) Collect the voluntary contribution as an “opt-out” option when memberships are paid online, and 2) increase the recommend minimum contribution to \$5 from the current \$2. These changes are anticipated to increase revenue to AGFUND.

Friends of Agriculture Fund (AGFUND), Inc.

The AGFUND Cabinet continues to be a successful addition to fundraising for the PAC—raising over \$127,000 this year, an increase of \$14,000 over 2016. AGFUND Cabinet Senior members increased to 133, an increase of 32 over 2016. AGFUND ended the membership year with approximately \$1,509,825 cash on hand.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATION

New County Farm Bureau Presidents Orientation

Hosted 21 new county Farm Bureau Presidents for orientation in Waco.

County Farm Bureau Board Training

Hosted 42 Board members from 12 CFBs for training sessions.

AgLead and FarmLead

The 12-member AgLead XIII class successfully completed its 2017 curriculum with sessions in Austin (with FarmLead VI), Rio Grande Valley, California and Lubbock.

The 14-member FarmLead VI class successfully completed its 2017 curriculum with sessions in Austin (with AgLead XIII), Chicago/Midwest and California.

AgLead XIII is supported in part by John Deere through an established agreement.

Master Marketer Program

Contributed \$10,000 to Texas A&M's Master Marketer Program designed for agriculture producers to enhance their marketing skills.

Commodity Advisory Committees and Issues Committees

Held meetings for 25 advisory committees during the TFB Leadership Conference and during the 2017 Summer Conference in San Marcos.

Conferences

Conducted 4 statewide meetings for Farm Bureau leaders covering topics as follows:

2017 Texas Farm Bureau Leadership Conference:

- 2017 Priority Legislative Issues- Ag Lien, Eminent Domain, & Water
- Federal Regulatory Reform Initiative
- Commodity Outlook & 2018 Farm Bill
- International Animal Disease

- Transportation in Texas
- Success and Future Challenges for AGFUND

YF&R Leadership Conference:

- Veterinarian Feed Directive – How we got here and what to expect
- Developing Relationships in Politics – It’s all about who you know
- Generational Differences in Texas Agriculture – What makes you different and how can it be an asset in meeting future challenges?
- GMO’s and Food Labeling – Overview of where we are at and where it is going
- Politics and Policy – What we see on the road ahead

Summer Leadership Conference:

- Review of 2017 Legislative Session
- Agriculture Advocacy
- Building Coalitions to Advocate for Agriculture
- Challenges for the Next Farm Bill
- Australia Global Ag Education Tour
- Agriculture and Trade
- Controlling Feral Hogs
- Texas Fence law
- Groundwater Lawsuits

County Farm Bureau Presidents’ Conference (three sessions repeated):

- Employee and Legal Issues
- Telling Your Story at Ag Days
- Getting Young Leaders Involved in Your CFB

Conference Attendance

115 CFB Presidents, 7 CFB Vice Presidents, and 392 other CFB leaders from 138 counties attended the CFB Presidents Conference and Summer Conference held in San Marcos, Texas.

Global Agriculture Education Program

Conducted tour of agriculture, trade and commodity interests for Board and select Commodity Advisory Committee Chairmen in Australia/New Zealand and Canada.

YOUNG FARMER AND RANCHER COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Conducted 14 district meetings across the state to promote TFB, YF&R contests/activities, and AgLead XIII interest.

(see also Youth Contests and Scholarship Programs)

Young Farmer and Rancher Programs

Conducted the Outstanding Young Farmer & Rancher Contest (18 applicants); the Excellence in Agriculture Contest (10 applicants); and the Discussion Meet Contest (23 applicants).

2016 TFB winners competed at the 2017 AFBF annual meeting in Phoenix, AZ. The Outstanding Young Farmer & Rancher and Excellence in Agriculture contestants made the top 10.

Conducted a Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest (13 participants from 4 universities). State winner received \$1,500; remaining three finalists each received \$500; and the winner's university received \$500.

Conducted an YF&R Leadership Conference in Austin (61 attendees).

The YF&R Fall Tour was scheduled in Huntsville for September 8-10 highlighting Southeast Texas agriculture. 90 young farmers and ranchers registered for the event, which was canceled due to the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

54th Annual Youth Leadership Conference

Conference held at Tarleton State University with 359 students attending from 132 counties.

20 Junior Counselors were selected from 30 applicants. 22 TFB staff members chaperoned.

Youth Organizations

Exhibited TFB youth programs and scholarships at the Texas 4-H Roundup in College Station, where approximately 500 students visited the booth.

Exhibited at the Texas FFA Convention in Corpus Christi, where approximately 12,000 FFA members attended. Approximately 2,000 students visited the booth receiving youth programs and scholarship promotional materials.

Exhibited at the Texas 4-H County Extension Agent conference in Lubbock, where 150 Agents visited the booth to discuss youth leadership and scholarship opportunities for their 4-H members. Agents were also given information on the Journey 2050 curriculum.

Supported 4-H in Texas as a major sponsor of the Texas 4-H Livestock Ambassador program.

Hosted FFA Chapters to the State Office for contest training and preparation.

Hosted a Texas FFA Officership Series focusing on self-image, relationship building, and goal-setting.

Supported FFA in Texas as a Four Star Corporate Sponsor. TFB staff made a presentation to the Agriculture Teachers LEAD Class.

A joint TFB/FFA/4-H Youth Advocacy Working Group was formed to develop a collaborative youth advocacy program and to revive/strengthen relationships between the three organizations. The three organizations agree advocates are needed to tell a positive agricultural story, that young people have a great story to tell, that young people can convey the "emotional side" of agriculture, and that a proactive approach is required to spread a sound science and factual agricultural message. Working Group recommendations are to be approved by the respective organizations with a targeted kickoff for the 2017-2018 school year.

1,060 FFA Chapters from 206 counties participated in the FFA Membership Program.

1,535 4-H Chapters from 206 counties participated in the 4-H Membership Program.

Youth Contests and Scholarship Programs

TOTAL OF \$137,100 STATE-LEVEL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED + \$3,500 IN CASH AWARDS

Awarded \$20,000 **S.M. True, Jr Agricultural Scholar Award**. There were 25 applicants in 2017.

Completed a **District Scholarship Program** in all 13 districts. 39 scholarships valued at \$1,000 and 13 memorial scholarships valued at \$1,200 were awarded. 189 applications were received for the 52 scholarships.

Free Enterprise Speech Contest awarded 13 state contestants \$27,500 in scholarships. 45 young people entered the Free Enterprise Speech Contest across the state.

Dick Mitchell Scholarship awarded in the amount of \$1,000. (81 applicants)

Presented 2/\$4,000 scholarships to members of Texas 4-H.

Presented a \$4,000 scholarship to the outgoing Texas FFA President, and at his request, split the scholarship with the outgoing Texas FFA 1st Vice President.

Presented a \$4,000 scholarship to the selected Texas FCCLA area/state officer.

YF&R Committee sponsored and awarded 13/\$1,000 scholarships for high school students. (217 applicants).

YF&R Committee sponsored and awarded 3/\$2,000 scholarships for enrolled college students. (29 applicants).

New TSTC scholarship program awarded \$60,000 through 3 different scholarship programs. On a first come first serve basis, 50 first-year students received a \$1,000 scholarship. A matching state grant through TSTC leveraged TFB's \$25,000 to \$50,000 in scholarships. \$5,000 in scholarships were also made available to second-year students, plus another \$5,000 in Helping Hand Scholarships were awarded to deserving students.

Hosted an educational trip to Washington, DC. for all 6 eligible finalists in the 2016 Free Enterprise Speech Contest.

TFB Board approved scholarship committee recommendations to increase participation, streamline processes, improve user friendliness, online application, update judging rubrics, expand scholarship marketing, and increase scholarship amounts by a total of \$37,900 beginning in 2018.

Youth Hunting Programs

TFB made a \$2,500 contribution to the Texas Youth Hunting Program.

GRASSROOTS ACTIVITIES

Legislative Affairs

National Affairs Awards Trip: TFB successfully completed the 2017 National Affairs Awards Trip for CFB leaders to Washington D.C. 179 CFB leaders attended and met with Sen. John Cornyn, Sen. Ted Cruz, and 35 of the 36 members of the Texas Delegation. Participants discussed farm bill, trade, taxes, regulatory reform, and immigration/labor with Congressional leaders. Ray Starling, Special Assistant to the President for Agriculture, addressed NAAT attendees.

District Congressional Meetings: TFB conducted congressional recess meetings across Texas with the following 29 of the 36 member Texas Delegation: Jodey Arrington, Brian Babin, Joe Barton, Kevin Brady, Mike Burgess, John Carter, Mike Conaway, Henry Cuellar, John Culberson, Blake Farenthold, Bill Flores, Louie Gohmert, Vicente Gonzalez, Kay Granger, Jeb Hensarling, Will Hurd, Sam Johnson, Kenny Marchant, Michael McCaul, Pete Olson, Ted Poe, John Ratcliffe, Pete Sessions, Lamar Smith, Mac Thornberry, Marc Veasey, Filemon Vela, Randy Weber, and Roger Williams. These meetings provided an opportunity for CFB leaders from a large portion of the state to meet with their member of Congress and discuss issues of importance to farmers and ranchers. Over 500 CFB members attended these meetings.

Policy Development

Held 13 District Policy Development Meetings around the state prior to CFB conventions to encourage county participation in the policy development process. Approximately 906 county leaders from 171 counties attended.

921 voting delegates from 159 counties registered for the 83rd Annual Convention held in San Antonio, Texas, with a total attendance of 1,081.

COUNTY FARM BUREAU PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Ag Days

Held 85 Ag Days with CFB Leaders involvement.

CFB Board Functions

Field Operations staff attended 1,350 CFB Board Meetings.

Field Operations staff assisted with 196 CFB Budget Preparations.

County Farm Bureau Office Secretaries Appreciation and Information Functions

459 secretaries from 187 counties attended functions held in each district.

County Farm Bureau Office Secretaries/ISRs Conference

240 secretaries from 130 counties attended the statewide conference held in the TFB Conference and Training Center in Waco, Texas.

40 secretaries from 29 counties attended the regional conference in Amarillo.

39 secretaries from 19 counties attended the regional conference in Corpus Christi.

County Farm Bureau Office Secretaries/ISRs Organization Orientation

60 full-time Secretaries/ISRs from 47 counties, who have been employed with a county Farm Bureau for at least 1 but no more than 3 years, attended the Organization Orientation at the TFB Conference and Training Center in Waco, TX.

Membership Mailing Service

Provided savings of over \$500,000 to CFBs for membership mailing activities.

BENEFITS AND SERVICES FOR MEMBERS

Discount Programs for Members

Developed a partnership with Ford Motor Company, effective June 1, 2107, allowing members to receive a \$500 Bonus Cash Offer on the regular lineup of Ford vehicles, and \$750 Bonus Cash Offer on all Lincoln vehicles.

In late September, through the American Farm Bureau Federation, Kicked-off a new John Deere member benefit program with AFBF in late September offering members special access to John Deere's Loyalty Rewards program, providing members with a free two-year Platinum 2 membership. This loyalty reward program with Deere offers discounts on a variety of equipment and vehicles as well as savings on certain parts.

OTHER

Membership Appreciation Calling Program

37,618 calls were placed to randomly-selected members.

1,363 calls were placed to delinquent members.

American Farm Bureau Federation Awards

TFB received the following AFBF Awards of Excellence and will be recognized during the 2018 AFBF annual meeting. TFB won in all categories.

- Advocacy
- Education & Outreach
- Leadership & Business Development
- Membership Value

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