

President's Message (cont'd)

Fair, and helped sponsor their pancake breakfast. At the same time, the BKW FFA helps promote ACFB.

ACFB attended Lobby Days in March. Unfortunately, this was done virtually and we could only meet with two representatives, John MacDonald and Michelle Hinchey. We discussed many things, but the hot topic seemed to be labor with the likelihood of the agricultural overtime threshold being reduced from 60 to 40 hrs/wk. Albany County will continue to work with NY Farm Bureau and the NY Growers Coalition on this very important topic that affects

all of agriculture. We also discussed solar energy, investments in processing facilities, and legislation that prohibits the use of agricultural pesticides.

These are just a few things our board has been working on. If there is a topic that you feel important to share with our members, please let one of our board members know so we can put it in our newsletter. If there are ever any concerns or questions you have, please don't hesitate to contact me or one of our board members. We are here to serve you.

Sincerely, Jim Gade

Future Farmers of America



ACFB board members Mike Zakens Jr. and Mike Zakens Sr. consulting with FFA students.

The Berne-Knox-Westerlo (BKW) school district is one of the schools in Albany County that has a Future Farmers of America. "FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premium leadership, personal growth and career success through agriculture education".

Albany County Farm Bureau makes an effort to try and support the FFA because we feel that

these individuals are the future in agriculture.

- * The BKW FFA students have been restoring a John Deere Model B and are close to having it finished. They will be selling raffle tickets soon.

- * BKW and Greenville FFAs have been asked to join forces and take over the AG Science building for the Altamont Fair. They are in the process of gathering ideas for this

exciting opportunity. They plan to meet again on April 19. The goal is to bring in more attractions which will then bring more visitors through this building.

- * The New York State FFA Convention is May 12-14 in Syracuse and the BKW FFA will be sending students out to join in on some of the activities like the Jr. FFA tool ID, career development event which they will be practicing for from now until then.

Meet Your Albany County Farm Bureau President

Alban County Farm Bureau's board thought it would be a good idea to have our members get to know us a little better. Each newsletter will have a bio of one of our board members. Hopefully this will help our members identify with the board and know a little more about who is representing their agricultural needs.

In 1878 my great grandfather, Peter Gade, came from Germany and bought the first parcel of land on Route 20 where our farm is today. The Great Western Turnpike (Route 20) was a dirt road. Four generations later, my brother John and I own and operate the farm. We raise approximately 50 acres of fresh vegetables that we wholesale at the Menands Market, Hannaford, Price Chopper and at our own roadside market. We also have a little over an acre of greenhouses where we grow annuals, perennials, baskets and much more. This we sell all at our location in Guiderland.

I graduated from Alfred State in 1987 with a degree in soil science. I took a little time to travel, came back

and continued my education at Cobleskill graduating in 1991 with a BT degree in plant science. My main duties are managing the greenhouse operation and marketing, and John runs the vegetable production. We have both been working on the farm since college.

In 1992 I married Diane, who also worked on the farm in high school and college. We have five wonderful children who may someday, with any luck, continue farming. I have been an ACFB board member for at least 10 years and I am also on the board of the Capital District Regional Market in Menands. In my spare time I like to ski, fish and travel.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity you have given me to be your county Farm Bureau president. I will do my best to represent all our members and to help improve agriculture in Albany County. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me or any board member.

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Heidi Renaud from Equinox with ACFB board member Mike Waldenmaier presenting a donation to their local food distribution program Equinox.

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Albany County Farm Bureau



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Albany County Farm Bureau

April 2022



President's Message

Albany County Farm Bureau (ACFB) has been busy since our annual meeting in October. If you were not at the meeting, you may not realize that I was elected President of ACFB, and while I did not seek this position, I am very grateful for the opportunity.

Along with my fellow board members we will do our best to serve our members and represent agriculture in Albany County.



Since our annual meeting it seems like we have turned the corner on COVID with restrictions being lifted and life getting back to some normalcy. To replace that concern, we now have to worry about an economy that seems out of control. Prices are being seen at the fuel pump and the grocery store that will make your head spin! The ACFB Board has decided again to donate \$500 each to eight local food pantries in the Capital Region. This is a total of \$4,000 being used to help feed the hungry in our area. This is one example of how some of your membership dues are put to work. Thank you!

We have also been working closely with the Berne/Knox/Westerlo FFA (BKW) Chapter. They have attended one of our monthly meetings to inform us of what they are working on and seem very interested in working with Farm Bureau. ACFB is helping the FFA chapter in writing grants for their students, coming up with ways to attract more visitors to the Ag Building at the Altamont

(Cont'd inside)

New Members Are The Glue That Holds Farm Bureau Together

NOW is the absolute BEST time to encourage your friends, coworkers, and neighbors to join with you in becoming a member. The \$149 "Spring Membership Special" is a great value. This special incentive program runs through June 30, 2022. New members will get the rest of this year (2022) and all of 2023! That is 21 months of membership and all its benefits for just an additional \$50 over the regular new member rate of \$99. Please consider signing up several new members today. This is an excellent introductory offer for new members. Your field advisor can supply you with prospect lists and membership materials. Make every effort to sign up new members in April and May!!!

You may also wonder what only one new member can do? Let's take a look at what the power of one can do. Our legislators know what one determined voter can do, so let me explain it to you as well. Each member is, on average, married or has a "significant other" that usually votes the same way they do. That already has doubled that person vote. These people already have a circle of friends that tend to agree with what they believe and would be willing to listen to new ideas that they have. This circle of friends is usually at least five people and up to twenty or more. When you consider that each of these direct friends also has a close partner and their own circle of friends, you can easily see how signing up only ONE NEW MEMBER can significantly change agricultural policy at the state and/or national level.

By Todd Heyn, County Manager & Training Specialist