

# Lewis County Farm Bureau

Policy Development Edition



## IT'S POLICY DEVELOPMENT TIME!

Although policy development happens throughout the year, we put an emphasis on it now as we plan for the County Annual Meeting in October and the State Annual Meeting in December. Policy is the core value the organization brings to their members and agriculture. Policy is what forms lobbying efforts in Albany and Washington DC, a push for what the members want and need to help their businesses thrive, and be productive and profitable. Our policy is formed at the grass roots level by individual members, voted on at county annual meetings, and brought to the state annual meeting for a final vote. Once passed, that policy becomes the platform from which Farm Bureau staff utilizes in their efforts on our behalf.

If you have policy issues that you want addressed, please plan on attending our Policy Development

Meeting - see details below. You can also reach out to one of the board members. We want everyone to have an opportunity to contribute to our policy development!

### LEWIS COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**PRESIDENT:** Joe Shultz..... 315-376-7548

**VICE President:** Ryan Nortz..... 315-376-2059

**DIRECTORS:**

Barry Widrick..... 315-376-6910

TIM YANCEY..... 315-346-6356

MARCIA GOHLERT..... 315-376-4047

JEN KARELUS ..... 315-486-8820

MELVIN PHELPS..... 315-688-2508

**COUNTY MANAGER:** John Wagner 315-761-9770

### LEWIS COUNTY FARM BUREAU **POLICY DEVELOPMENT MEETING\***

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

begins at 7:30 pm

held at

**CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION LEWIS COUNTY**

7395 E. Rd., Lowville, NY 13367

This is your opportunity to help shape our policy book, to help remove or change burdensome regulations/laws that exist that will help make your farm more profitable, efficient and sustainable.

Every single Farm Bureau policy is first passed at the county level. This is a grassroots organization where all policy comes from the bottom up. Now is the time that we ask for your thoughts, ideas and vision on how to make a more ideal farming system.

Every member is encouraged to attend and be part of the discussion that will help strengthen and protect agriculture. It all starts with you! We'll have some light refreshments available.

\* We will be VOTING on resolutions for submission to the New York Farm Bureau Resolutions Committee.

## FARMING FAMILIES RECOGNIZED

At the annual Cheese Auction during the Lewis County Fair, our ag community took the opportunity to recognize the achievements of some of our hardworking farmers with the Distinguished Farmer Award and the Young Farmer Award.

### **Lewis County Distinguished Farmer Award**    *Submitted by:* Jen Karelus

Since 1977, Lewis County Farm Bureau has been recognizing a farmer or farming couple who are over 60 years old, actively involved in farming, and are Farm Bureau members involved in their community with the Distinguished Farmer Award. This year, the award was given to Glenn and Emily Beller of Beller Farms.

A 4<sup>th</sup> generation centennial farm, Beller Farms was started by Glenn's grandfather and uncle. In 1985, Glenn and Emily took over the operation from Glenn's parents. They were milking 75 cows in a tie stall and cropping approximately 250 acres. It was just the two of them with Emily doing most of the milking and calf care while Glenn did the barn chores and crop management. They knew they had to position their business to be sustainable in the future with 4 children to support and one showing interest in returning to the farm. In 1997, they built their first freestall and converted their tie stall barn into a milking parlor. They continued expanding, buying and renting land until they reached their current size of 1500 cows and 4700 acres. Over time, their roles changed as employees milked and took care of the cows and barn. Emily concentrated on the calves and was responsible for the financial aspect of the business. When their son, Jon, returned after graduating from SUNY Cobleskill in 2003, he took over the management of the cows. In 2005, they formed Beller Farms, LLC and Jon joined the farm as a partner. Today, the 3 partners work together with Emily doing the financials, Glenn managing the crops and machinery and Jon looking after the cattle and barns.

Very supportive of the dairy industry, Glenn and Emily have always jumped at any opportunity to educate the public about agriculture. The farm has twice hosted Family Farm Day. Whenever Cornell Cooperative Extension would have a guests or elected officials asking to visit a farm (usually with short notice), the first farm they called was Beller's. Glenn would always say, "It's important to educate nonfarmers so, of course, we will help."

Glenn and Emily continue to give back to their community with Glenn currently on the Lowville Dairy Producers Co-op board. Both have served in other capacities in other organizations, including Farm Bureau, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water, Lowville Farmer's Co-op, American Dairy Association, as well as their church and schools. They are members of Farm Bureau and Northeast Dairy Producers and their farm is a Dairy of Distinction.

For all their accomplishments, they are proudest of their four children (Jim, Jon, Jody and Jennifer) and their four grandchildren (Owen, Ty, Daxx and Quinn).

### **Lewis County Young Farmer Award**    *Submitted by:* Melissa Spence, CCE Lewis County

The Lewis County Young Farmer Award is sponsored by the Lewis County Dairy Industry Building Committee and was first awarded in 1975. Nominated by an individual or business in the local community, recipients are recognized for their level of farm management, dairy herd management, crop management, as well as business and financial management. This years recipients are Andrew Flansburg and Marissa Ehlers.

This farming couple started farming in 2011 and built a free stall barn in Constableville. Most recently they purchased the Robert Wendt farm moving their dairy this last winter to the tie stall facility. Now the free stall barn houses their dry cows and heifers. They raise their calves in hutches.

They currently milk 130 Holstein cows and a few registered Brown Swiss and Jerseys with 120 young stock. They grow 170 acres of corn and 130 acres of hay forages with a total of 300 acres.

They are members of the Lewis County Holstein Club, and their children are involved in 4-H.



**Photo:** Glenn (l) and Emily Beller (2nd from l) with grandson Dax Beller (front) are presented the Distinguished Farmer Award by Peggy Murray (2nd from r), former CCE educator and Jen Karelus (r) Lewis County Farm Bureau board member.



**Photo:** 2023 Young Farmer Award recipients Andrew Flansburg (l) and Marissa Ehlers (c) of Constableville, NY, pictured with 3 of their 4 children, Mason, Lane, Hayes and Hanson.

# NEW YORK FARM BUREAU POLICY DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION FORUM 2024

This forum explores several emerging issues relevant to agriculture in New York and the U.S. Please review these topics and bring this to the county Farm Bureau policy development meeting as a jumping off point for discussion in your county. These issues are only suggestions. Unique ideas generated from your county Farm Bureau should be an important part of your consideration. These questions are also available on [www.nyfb.org](http://www.nyfb.org) and in the July issues of Grassroots.

## **STATE TOPICS**

1. Should New York Farm Bureau support legislation that would require solar and wind companies to offer a 12.5% royalty on all profits made off of farmers' lands from solar panels and wind turbines?
2. Should New York Farm Bureau support tax credits for farmers to help transition swine operations to group housing from the use of gestational crates?
3. Should New York Farm Bureau support legislation that would prohibit any foreign government from purchasing agricultural land in New York State.
4. What positions should New York Farm Bureau take on the following labor related questions? Should New York Farm Bureau support/oppose:
  - Requiring collective bargaining to be included in the license agreements for cannabis production
  - Invalidating any union card or vote which takes place on foreign soil as the regulatory agencies do not have jurisdiction in these locations
  - Decertifying unions through the same procedures allowed to certify unions
  - Including unions in the same regulations and standards employers must follow with regards to bullying, lying and coercion in their unionization efforts.
  - Establishing a moratorium on new union petitions until PERB has bilingual resources in place to facilitate union decertification
  - Allowing employees to file coercion and bullying complaints against unions
  - Requiring unions to reimburse employers for all legal fees incurred when their union petition is proven to be out of order.

- Exempting H2A employees from unions as they are under a contract negotiated by the state and federal Departments of Labor.
5. Should there be a limit on how many times farm commercial vehicles have to stop at a DOT inspection checkpoint in a certain time period, especially if that vehicle is carrying livestock, fish or bees?
  6. Should New York State have a real property tax abatement on perennial farm crops for one year during a state or federally declared disaster area.
  7. Should New York State establish a Brand Owners License under the alcoholic beverage control law?
  8. Should farm implements, such as tractors and farm machinery, be allowed to be transferred to designated beneficiaries upon death of the owner?
  9. Should DEC provide deer damage permits for damages to new maple tree growth?

Is there a state law or regulation that you believe should be changed?

## **NATIONAL POLICY TOPICS**

NYFB members are encouraged to review the federal policy book to determine if any existing federal policies need to be amended or added/deleted to be more reflective of changing agricultural issues. Think about federal issues that have impacted you the most over the past year from USDA programs, labor, commodity prices, crop insurance, specialty crop needs, agrochemical, organic standards, etc., are there policy changes needed to better address these issues. The federal policy book is available online at: <https://www.nyfb.org/advocacy/legislative-affairs/priority-issues>.

### **BE ON THE LOOKOUT!**

We are firming up plans for our upcoming Annual Meeting in October.

A postcard will be arriving shortly with all the details.



New York Farm Bureau  
159 Wolf Road, Suite 300  
Albany, NY 12205

@Lewis County Farm Bureau

**FARM BUREAU NEW YORK** MEMBER BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

**20% OFF TRUCK AND MILEAGE RATES**

A white Budget truck is shown from a side profile. The Budget logo is visible on the side of the truck.

Farm Bureau discount may NOT be applied to commercial account rentals or stacked with other discounts. Reservation must be made in advance. Not available in AK or HI and is subject to availability; some blackout dates may apply. Discount applies to truck rental only. Taxes, surcharges, fees, refueling, moving supplies and optional items are extra. Rate may vary by location and seasonality. Renters must meet Budget Truck age, driver and credit requirements. Budget Truck Rental reserves the right to void this offer without notification.



Congratulations to these graduating seniors, Hanna Lighthall (c) and Merric Laribee(r) pictured here with Joe Shultz (l), President of Lewis County Farm Bureau.

Both students applied to the New York Farm Bureau scholarship program and placed at the county level. Thank you for attending our monthly board meeting to share your essays. It was a pleasure meeting you both and we look forward to hearing more about your future adventures in agriculture!

The future sure is brighter with young people like these in it