

# Farmers get a say in wetlands

Farmers in Tillamook County are the first in the nation to have a say in wetland siting after a unanimous vote by the Tillamook County Board of Commissioners on Aug. 2.

"Thanks to legislation Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Dairy Farmers Association worked on in 2016, Tillamook County has adopted an ordinance that allows local farmers to have a voice in designing conservation projects that may have spillover impacts on their land," said Mary Anne Cooper, OFB public policy counsel.

The ordinance requires that new wetland projects must not have any negative impacts on neighboring agricultural operations. It's part an innovative 10-year pilot project supported by Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) and Oregon Dairy Farmers Association (ODFA), and authorized by the Oregon Legislature in 2016 with the passage of SB 1517.

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The project is the first of its kind in the nation where state agencies, conservation groups, farmers, and other stakeholders will work collaboratively on new wetland sites to achieve the goal of fish and wildlife improvements, while balancing the needs of the local agriculture community.

"Oregon Farm Bureau championed the legislation authorizing this project and has been an active participant in the planning process on behalf of our Tillamook County members. While there's still a lot of work to do, we're proud to help foster more collaboration on conservation efforts in the county," said Cooper.

Tillamook County dairy farmer Chad Allen, ODFA president and member of Tillamook County Farm Bureau, was



OFB Public Policy Counsel Mary Anne Cooper and Tillamook County Farm Bureau member and Oregon Dairy Farmers Assn. President Chad Allen attended the Tillamook County Board of Commissioners meeting on Aug. 2 where the ordinance was passed. We thank both for their excellent work!

instrumental from the project's conception to its passage by the county commissioners.

"Farmers in Tillamook County have always valued habitat restoration and healthy fish populations, but we also think these sort of projects shouldn't harm adjacent landowners. It's part of being a good neighbor," said Allen.

"I'm happy the county will now have a role in making sure farmers and conservation groups are working together to achieve common goals," he said.

In recent years, environmental groups and governmental entities have purchased many acres of prime farmland in Tillamook County's Exclusive Farm Use zone and taken it out of production for conservation purposes. However, this can alter rain drainage patterns in the area and create serious flooding problems for neighboring farms. Given that farmers in wetland areas already struggle to combat flooding in rainy years, new projects can drastically decrease their productivity.

"The dairy industry forms the backbone of Tillamook County's economy. We worked on this project so family farms can coexist with conservation efforts and maintain





OFB thanks the farmers who were featured in our series of short summer #Harvest17 videos, which were big hits on Facebook. See the videos at [oregonfb.org/videos](http://oregonfb.org/videos), on OFB's Facebook page, and at OFB's YouTube Channel. From left are cherry grower Austin Chapin of Marion County Farm Bureau, mint farmer Macey Wessels of Linn County Farm Bureau, grass seed farmer Kathy Hadley of Polk County Farm Bureau, and broccoli grower Molly McCargar of Marion County Farm Bureau. Together, these videos were viewed over 60,000 times on Facebook!

the functioning land base they need to be successful," said Cooper.

"We hope this process will create a blueprint for other communities to protect both wildlife habitat and local agriculture," she said.

The legislation passed in 2016 contains three primary provisions:

- 1) Gives Tillamook County the option for local approval of wetlands projects sited in Exclusive Farm Use zones to ensure that the project will not impact nearby agricultural operations;
- 2) Allows Tillamook County to create a collaborative process that a project applicant can choose to use to achieve agreement regarding conditions necessary to protect neighboring agricultural operations; and
- 3) Directs Tillamook County to enter into a planning process involving a diverse group of stakeholders that will allow the county to more effectively plan priority areas for restoration, and priority areas where the maintenance of ag operations will be protected.

The project will sunset in 10 years.

## AFBF needs comments on tax reform

Congress is starting to get serious about tax reform. Both the president and leaders in Congress say they want to develop a tax reform plan this fall and now is the time for our legislators to get involved.

American Farm Bureau needs members to tell Congress to reform the tax code so that it's simpler, more transparent, revenue neutral, and fair to farmers and ranchers.

Farm Bureau believes tax reform should embrace the following:

- **Be Comprehensive:** Tax reform should help all farm and ranch businesses, including sole proprietors, partnerships and sub-S corporations.
- **Effective Tax Rate:** Tax reform should reduce combined income tax rates enough to account for any deductions or credits lost.
- **Cost Recovery:** Tax reform should allow businesses to deduct expenses when incurred, continue cash

accounting, and keep Section 1031 "like-kind exchanges."

- **Estate Taxes:** Tax reform should repeal estate taxes and continue stepped-up basis, which sets the value of land and buildings at what the property is worth when inherited.

- **Capital Gains Taxes:** Tax reform should lower taxes on capital investments. Capital gains taxes should not be levied on transfers at death.

**Take action** via AFBF's online advocacy portal at [fb.org/advocacy](http://fb.org/advocacy).

## AFBF seeks real-life stories from farmers

Help American Farm Bureau fight for policy and programs that benefit Oregon agriculture by sharing the

*[story continued on second to last page]*



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Greenhouse & nursery products (which hit \$909M in 2016) have reclaimed the #1 position among Oregon's 220+ agricultural commodities in terms of production value, according to the USDA National Ag Statistics Service. The rest of the Top 5 are: # 2 Cattle & calves, \$701M; #3 Hay, \$661M; #4 Milk, \$469M; and #5 Grass seed, \$436M.





The Washington County Fair took place during the last weekend of July and featured the popular Growing Grove booth, which is proudly supported and sponsored by Washington County Farm Bureau. The booth offers fun, hands-on activities for kids to learn about agriculture. Left photo: OFB Hall of Famer Edmund Duyck (with hat in middle) was on site, along with a few generations of the Duyck family. Right photo: Rep. Rich Vial stopped by the fair and visited with Edmund and other Farm Bureau members.

story of how federal laws, rules, and regulations impact your operation.

“Lawmakers and the media want to know how the issues are affecting real farmers, not just hear Farm Bureau’s talking points,” said AFBF President Zippy Duvall.

In particular, AFBF needs real-world examples highlighting:

- Impacts of tax challenges or, on the positive side, maintaining tax provisions that help farmers manage income volatility.
- With the 2018 Farm Bill debate gearing up, stories that explain how farm programs and crop insurance have made the difference between surviving or not surviving a bad crop/market year.
- Stories about labor shortages

and why the current H2A guestworker program does not meet ag’s needs.

- How trade deals impact crop exports and an operation’s bottom line, as well as farms adversely impacted by import surges.

AFBF staff will share these stories with members of Congress as they work to find solutions.

Share your experiences at [fb.org/advocacy/share-your-story](http://fb.org/advocacy/share-your-story).

## OFB seeks state officer nominations

The positions of OFB President and 2nd Vice President will be voted on by the House of Delegates during the OFB Annual Meeting, which takes place Dec. 5-7 in Pendleton.

## OFB Calendar

> Sept. 28: OFB Classic Golf Tourney in Oregon City. Find the registration form in this newsletter and at [oregonfb.org](http://oregonfb.org).

> October & November: County Farm Bureau Annual Meetings will occur around the state. Details will be listed in the printed OFB Newsletter and at [oregonfb.org/countyannuals](http://oregonfb.org/countyannuals).

> Oct. 8: Oregon’s Bounty Event at the state capitol. OFB Ag Ed Committee will host a booth. Contact: [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org).

> Nov. 14: OFB-hosted lunch & issue update at Willamette Valley Ag Expo in Albany. Contact: [tiffany@oregonfb.org](mailto:tiffany@oregonfb.org), 503.399.1701

> Nov. 16: County Farm Bureau Presidents’ Meeting, Salem

> Dec. 5-7: OFB Annual Meeting in Pendleton. Registration materials will be posted soon at [oregonfb.org](http://oregonfb.org). Contact [tiffany@oregonfb.org](mailto:tiffany@oregonfb.org), 503.399.1701.

> Jan. 5-10, 2018: American Farm Bureau Convention & Expo, Nashville, Tenn. Contact [tiffany@oregonfb.org](mailto:tiffany@oregonfb.org), 503.399.1701.

## County Farm Bureau Annual Meetings announced



Scene from the 2016 Yamhill County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in McMinnville.

As more County Farm Bureaus set their annual meeting dates, information will be posted on [oregonfb.org/countyannuals](http://oregonfb.org/countyannuals). The October and November OFB Newsletters will also publish meeting dates.

**Benton:** Oct. 18, 5:30 p.m., Adair Club House, 6097 NE Ebony Ln. in Corvallis. Contact: Anne Rigor, 541.754.9115, [imageanne@juno.com](mailto:imageanne@juno.com).

**Jefferson:** Nov. 18, time & location TBA

**Polk:** Nov. 9, Polk County Fairgrounds Building B. Dinner cost: \$6. Contact: Anne Rigor, 541.754.9115, [imageanne@juno.com](mailto:imageanne@juno.com).

**Tillamook:** Nov. 20, 6 p.m., location TBA