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Friday, July 23, 2010

Issue Concerns for Farm Bureau Members:

Is your family-owned farm or ranch in jeopardy because of estate taxes? Share your story to assist Farm Bureau in its campaign to “Put Death Taxes to Rest” at <http://www.nefb.org/legislative/actioncenter.htm>

FB Calendar

- July 24 Centennial Celebration, Panhandle Research and Extension Center, Scottsbluff (link)
- Aug. 4 State Legislative Policy Committee Orientation Meeting, Ramada Inn, Kearney
- Aug. 16 NFAA Golf Tournament, Hilcrest Country Club, Lincoln
- Aug. 18 Regional Policy Development Meeting, Northeast Community College, Norfolk
- Aug. 24 Regional Policy Development Meeting, Monsanto, Gothenburg
- Aug. 27 Nebraska State Fair, Fonner Park, Grand Island
- Sept. 6

YF&Rs, Board Members Lobby in Washington

In meetings with Nebraska’s Congressional delegation this week, six NEFB Young Farmers and Ranchers used examples from their own families and farms to illustrate how increased federal regulation and lack of Congressional action on the estate tax will affect their efforts to build and maintain their businesses.

Hilary and Brian Maricle of Boone County Farm Bureau, Zach and Anna Hunnicutt of Hamilton County, and Matt and Tina Schwartzkopf of Keith County, visited Washington, D.C. this week (July 19-21) on a lobbying visit. Nebraska Farm Bureau President Keith Olsen of Grant, three members of the Farm Bureau Board of Directors and Farm Bureau staff members also participated in the trip. Click [here](#) for more.

NEFB's Nelson To Join Nebraska Trade Mission to Taiwan, Hong Kong

NEFB First Vice President Steve Nelson of Axtell will represent the State of Nebraska and Farm Bureau on the state's trade mission to Taiwan and Hong Kong, Aug. 5-14. Gov. Heineman announced two weeks ago that Nebraska Director of Agriculture Greg Ibach will lead the trade mission. Nebraska agriculture representatives will travel to the two countries with the goal of creating more trade opportunities.

The U.S. Census Bureau's foreign trade division reports that Hong Kong was Nebraska's fifth-largest agricultural trade partner and Taiwan was sixth in 2009. Ibach was quoted as saying, "Exports are important to our agriculture industry, and the Asian market has been a good customer. We continue to conduct outreach through our agricultural trade representative and we have an opportunity to grow our trading relationship with importers in both Taiwan and Hong Kong."

Forms 1099 Could Increase Five Times Under Obama Health Care Law

Three little-known paragraphs in the new health care law would require business owners such as farmers and ranchers to report all payments that total more than \$600 for services or merchandise to the IRS on a Form 1099 beginning in 2012. Farm Bureau Board Member Andy DeVries described how farmers would be affected by the requirement in a commentary in the Omaha World-Herald on July 14. Currently only payments for services to individuals which total more than \$600 in one year have to be reported on a 1099.

His record-keeping, purchasing decisions, tax preparation fees and more would be affected, DeVries said. For example, filling the semi he uses in his hauling business one time exceeds \$600; he would need to issue a 1099 to the company that sold him the fuel. Likewise, he would be on the receiving end of more 1099s from companies that bought his crops or hired him for hauling. Click [here](#) to read the complete commentary.

Ag Organizations Urge Fast Passage of Free Trade Agreements

The American Farm Bureau is among 42 agricultural organizations that sent a letter to leaders of the House and Senate urging swift passage of free trade agreements. The letter stated: "On Monday, June 21, the Canadian Senate voted to implement a free trade agreement with Colombia, following approval by Canada's House of Commons on June 15. With these actions, Canada's legislature responded to the needs of that nation's producers and exporters, who will soon have a significant competitive advantage over U.S. products in the Colombian market.

"So, not only have we lost two or three years of benefits of duty-free or reduced-tariff access to the Colombian market under a U.S. FTA, we now face the certainty that Canada's producers will instead reap those benefits. The fact is, literally hundreds of FTAs are being negotiated around the world, and global trade liberalization is taking place. But it is taking place with the United States standing on the sidelines. We urge you, therefore, to work with the Administration to

remove any remaining impediments to a rapid implementation of the FTAs with Colombia, Korea and Panama.”

Farm Bureau to EPA: Crop Production Not Subject to NPDES Permits

Nebraska Farm Bureau submitted comments July 19 to the Environmental Protection Agency on the agency’s “Draft National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Pesticide General Permit for Point Source Discharges from the Application of Pesticides.” NEFB expressed support for EPA's decision to exclude pesticide applications to agricultural crops, regardless of whether those crops are grown in or adjacent to wetland areas that may be viewed as “waters of the U.S.”

NEFB also said the Clean Water Act makes plain Congress’ intent that the production of agricultural crops, including the use of pesticides, is not subject to federal (NPDES) permit requirements and cannot lawfully be subjected to such requirements. According to Farm Bureau, Congress has always intended agricultural activities, including pesticide use, to be addressed through state and local programs and not through NPDES permits.

Farm Bureau Seeks Silver Eagle Award Nominations

Nebraska Farm Bureau is seeking nominations for its Silver Eagle Award, the organization's highest honor. Farm Bureau members and County Farm Bureaus may nominate individuals, organizations or other entities for the award, which will be presented during the 2010 Nebraska Farm Bureau Convention in December. Selection is based on nominees' contributions to Nebraska agriculture. Nomination deadline is Sept. 1. More information, go to <http://www.nefb.org/legislative/>

Sarpy County FB Questions Sarpy Assessor’s Valuation Methodology

Sarpy County Farm Bureau expressed concerns this week with the property tax assessment practices of the Sarpy County assessor in a letter to the Nebraska Department of Revenue. The letter, from Sarpy County Farm Bureau President John Knapp, expressed concerns with the methodology used by the local assessor to value one-acre farm home sites. The assessor valued all such farm home sites in Sarpy County at \$64,000, a figure considerably higher than neighboring counties. The letter asked the department to look into the matter and take the necessary steps to insure that all property owners in the state are treated equally and fairly.

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