

2023 AFR CONVENTION

What to Expect

TOP SPEAKERS

Economy: Perhaps other than drought and supply chain issues, nothing has captured our attention more than perhaps the state and national economy and rising interest rates to curb inflation, impacted by a world stage of military conflict and other international issues which impact agriculture, rural communities, and urban cities and suburban towns. Two speakers will address the issues. Megan Williams, an associate economist and manager of regional affairs for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City – Oklahoma City Branch, will speak on the “U.S. and Oklahoma Economic Outlook,” and Patrick Zeka, president and CEO for Oklahoma AgCredit covers the “Oklahoma Ag & Rural Economy: A Lenders Perspective.”

State Legislation: Oklahoma House of Representatives Speaker Charles McCall, R-Atoka, will preview the current and upcoming actions for the legislature this session which begins in February. AFR Cooperative legislative liaison Bray Haven will provide a snapshot of the upcoming state legislative session and associated activities.

National Legislation: NFU President Rob Larew will give the latest on the National Farmers Union – Fairness for Farmers Campaign, as well as a Washington, D.C., legislative update on the politics of Congress and the work toward a new Farm Bill.

Cooperative Development: “Farmers Union Enterprises/Farmers Union Industries Success Stories and Concepts for Oklahoma” will be shared by Mark Watne, president of the North Dakota Farmers Union, and Dave Velde, counsel to the National Farmers Union. These entities have not only found historical solutions to local problems farmers and ranchers, but also have provided opportunities for the membership organizations which comprise FUE and FUI to help accomplish their missions. Learn about the possibilities and how they might apply to Oklahoma.

General: Newly appointed USDA-FSA Oklahoma State Director Steve Kouplen will bring an update and expound on the value to Oklahoma of the permanent disaster program helping farmers and ranchers meet their business obligations, as well as other FSA program updates. Oklahoma State Ag Statistician and AFR Member Troy Marshall will discuss the value of participating in the 2022 Census of Agriculture and how it can impact funds received by farmers and ranchers. Oklahoma Beef Council Director of Marketing and Communications Nikki Snyder will bring an update on a NEW online beef directory that producers can participate in, as well as other topics.

Organization/Company History: Created from an original 1917 photograph, “The Cottonwood Farmers



HONOR
TRADITION
EMBRACE
CHANGE

Union Band” state capitol painting project focused around the first band to play at the Oklahoma Capitol. The band from a local union chapter had been attending the annual convention in Oklahoma City. Speakers include AFR Agent and State Senator Darcy Jech and former State Representative Harold Wright, whose family is captured in the painting recently dedicated at the state capitol. State Secretary Paul Jackson will cover the early history of the farmers union and how that band fit into the people of the time activities and issues.

Agritourism: Join this educational, fun breakout on Saturday afternoon to learn how you can potentially increase your income stream for your farming and ranching operation through “Thinking about Agritourism” as various ventures are explored. Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry agritourism staff, including former AFR Youth Coordinator Micaela Halverson and former AFR Youth Council Member and Intern Whitney Wilkinson will be present.

REGISTRATION

Once again, registration is FREE and underwritten by AFR Insurance and AFR Cooperative. General education sessions are open to non-delegate members, but members must be credentialed delegates to participate in business sessions. Non-delegate members must check in at registration. General education session participants may contact Jamie Goodson at jamie.goodson@afrmic.com for non-delegate pre-registration. All participants will receive BEEF bags sponsored by the Oklahoma Beef Council. Custom Promotional Products is sponsoring attendee badges and pens. Convention registration and office needs are supported by R.K. Black, Inc.

BUSINESS SESSION

Friday afternoon will be dedicated to the annual meetings of the AFRMIC and AFR Cooperative (Oklahoma Farmers Union), which will include financial reports, officer reports, proposed AFRMIC bylaws consideration, director candidate speeches and consideration and adoption of policy resolutions in the AFR Cooperative.

YOUTH PROGRAM

Recognition of top AFR Youth and a look back at last year’s activities will be part of Friday evening’s activities. Oklahoma 4-H President Abby Logan will bring greetings. AFR Speech Contest Winner Fletcher Inman, Mulhall-Orlando 4-H, presents “Cooperatives: A Business Model with Benefits.”

OCBA

The annual meeting of the Oklahoma Certified Beef Association will be held on the first day of the convention. Voting members of the association will conduct business. AFR Cooperative members can attend to learn more about OCBA and how they can benefit from the newly-formed entity to help market Oklahoma bred, born, raised and processed beef to put more money back in the pockets of the cattle producer. Sidwell Strategies President Brady Sidwell, Enid, will share how his company can help OCBA members distribute their products to a statewide network of restaurant and retail outlets.

WHEAT TREATS

The Oklahoma Wheat Commission is back again with their famous treats! Swing by the convention trade show to enjoy samples, such as bread pudding, cinnamon rolls or small pies. This is always a “something not to miss” as we celebrate the products of Oklahoma wheat farmers.

AG & HISTORIC

Visit the AFR Ag & Historic Conference trade show booth to discover the adventures in store both domestically and internationally – Fall 2023 to Coastal Maine and Spring 2024 to Scotland!

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Enjoy a Saturday after-lunch ice cream sponsored by DairyMAX before heading back into the general session. Additional milk and cookie breaks are scheduled three times during the event, sponsored by DairyMAX, Cox and the Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council.

BANQUET/RECEPTION

The event will open to a rousing rendition of the National Anthem played by AFR member Jolie Marshall. Banquet attendees will enjoy a NEW entrée this year with beef from the members of the Oklahoma Certified Beef Association! Legislative awards will be presented. Special recognition will be given to farm and rural mental health advocate and former Foundation employee Mona Lee Brock, who was declared by Willie Nelson as "The Angel on the End of the Line" when taking farm crisis calls in the 1980s. Dinner musical entertainment will be provided by AFR member and Oklahoma's own Susie McEntire!

LOCAL & COUNTY

Returning this year is a luncheon honoring the service of local and county AFR Cooperative boards. "Proven Successful Strategies for Farmers Union Chapters" will be addressed by Mark Watne, president of North Dakota Farmers Union, and Abby Perdue, membership director for National Farmers Union. This is one local and county officers will not want to miss as they build local chapters through activities and involvement of members. The luncheon is sponsored by Oklahoma AGCredit, Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma, BancFirst and Whitworth, Wilson and Evans, PLLC.

JJ'S SHOE SHINE

Just inside the door of the trade show, bring your boots and dress shoes to JJ's Shoe Shine where service will be available FREE throughout the convention courtesy of BancFirst. Tips are always appreciated for a job well done and the good conversation is FREE!

TRADE SHOW

Enjoy a comprehensive trade show with more than 50 vendors where you can learn, get freebies and shop!

GRAND DOOR PRIZES

Several major door prizes will be drawn at the banquet and on Sunday morning following the worship service. Featured door prizes include a John Deere S220 Lawn Tractor valued at \$3,000, a Green Mountain Daniel Boone Stainless Steel/Wifi Pellet Grill valued at \$899, and a John Deere AC-215 Kerosene Heater valued at \$915. Convention delegates must be in attendance at the banquet and the worship service to be eligible to win prizes on those respective days. Grand door prizes are sponsored by Farm Credit of Western Oklahoma, Oklahoma AGCredit and P&K Equipment.

PAC AUCTION

NEW this year is top-notch items to be "live" auctioned at the conclusion of the banquet for the AFRPAC. The funds will be used to assist with legislative efforts, giving to candidates and legislators who support the organization, and company legislative initiatives. Items include a Hochatown/Broken Bow cabin experience, OSU and OU firepits, a branded cattle hide with the winning bidder's brand or logo, an all-expense-paid trip for two to the Fall 2023 Ag & Historic Conference in Maine, an AFR and retro OFU branded rifle and shotgun, and a Carnival cruise for two for five days. The AFRPAC silent auction items will be available for bid on Friday and Saturday. Both live and silent auctions are open to all attendees; you do not have to be a convention delegate to participate. AFR PAC Chair Scott Blubaugh will provide a PAC update.

WORSHIP SERVICE

The convention will close out with the Convention Worship & Memorial service on Sunday morning. The service will feature a video tribute honoring members who passed away in 2022, congregational singing participation, special music and a message from AFR Chaplain Eddie Whitworth. Returning at the piano with soothing southern gospel music and hymns is Gathan Graham. Special recognition will be given to retiring AFR Agent Dorothy Richey, a longtime cornerstone of the worship service. To top off the morning, enjoy the inspiration and singing of Susie McEntire!

DRAWINGS

Be early for the general sessions to have a chance to win door prizes sponsored by MIDCON, LegalShield, the cotton and pecan industries, as well as trade show vendors. Drop by the BancFirst booth to enter special drawings to be awarded at the convention banquet.

NFU DELEGATES

Contact the AFR State Secretary for a delegate card and biographical form to be considered to represent the Oklahoma Farmers Union at the National Farmers Union Convention. Cards and biographical information (up to 175 words) must be received back no later than Saturday, Feb. 18 at NOON. NFU bylaws changes at the last convention required all delegates to be currently or formerly "actively engaged in farming," as defined by USDA and further described by NFU. A signed representation of eligibility is required. The NFU delegate election will occur Saturday afternoon during the general session. The NFU Convention is March 5-7 in San Francisco, Calif.



2023 Convention Ice Cream Social

Saturday
February 18, 2023

1 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Located in the foyer prior to the beginning of the Third General Session of the 2023 AFR Convention.