

January 20, 2010

## **YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS TO BUILD LEADERSHIP, ADVOCACY SKILLS**

### ***KANSAS FARM BUREAU 'YF&R' EVENT TO BE HELD IN WICHITA***

MANHATTAN – Some 400 farmers and ranchers between the ages of 18 and 35 will gather this month in Wichita to network, learn and help position themselves as leaders in agriculture and rural Kansas.

The Kansas Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers Leaders Conference will take place Jan. 29-31 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 400 W. Waterman, Wichita. The theme for this years' conference is "We are the Faces of Agriculture."

The KFB Young Farmers & Ranchers program is designed to surface and develop the next generation of agriculture leaders. The Leaders Conference will be heavy on opportunities for young farmers and ranchers to influence farm policy and public opinion through involvement and participation in Farm Bureau.

"We are thrilled to have such a tremendous response to our Leaders Conference," said Randall Debler, a Wabaunsee County rancher who serves as volunteer Chair of the KFB Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee. "Today's 20 and 30-something producers face unique challenges and we are eager to work together to find ways to help fulfill our dream of building our lives in and around agriculture."

During a Saturday morning keynote address, the KFB Young Farmers & Ranchers will hear from Dr. David Kohl, President of AgriVisions, LLC, a knowledge-based consulting business providing cutting-edge programs to leading agricultural organizations worldwide. He is also business coach and part owner of Homestead Creamery, a value-added dairy business in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Kohl's topic is "Mega Trends in Agriculture: What's Around the Corner and Down the Road."

Also on the agenda are presentations from Michele Payne-Knoper, founder of Cause Matters, a company designed to help people understand how to champion their cause. Cause Matters focuses on agricultural advocacy, social media strategy, grassroots marketing and corporate sponsorship development. Payne-Knoper's goal is to help communicate "why your cause matters."

Young Farmers & Ranchers, an integral part of Kansas Farm Bureau, are hard-working, agriculture professionals dedicated to developing their leadership skills and empowering others to become actively involved in agriculture advocacy, promotion and education.

Kansas Farm Bureau represents grassroots agriculture. Established in 1919, this non-profit advocacy organization supports farm families who earn their living in a changing industry.