

Fannin County Farm Bureau briefs

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Jan. 27, 2011 - The following are two briefs from the Fannin County Farm Bureau.

Fannin County Farm Bureau sees member growth in 2010

Although 2010 was a difficult year for many Texas organizations, Fannin County Farm Bureau once again enjoyed membership growth, increasing by 226 member families this year.

Jerry Magness, Fannin County Farm Bureau president explained why the organization continues to grow year after year.

"It's pretty simple to understand why folks want to be a part of Texas Farm Bureau," Magness said. "TFB isn't just a cotton and cattle organization; it's a family organization representing every aspect of Texas agriculture."

Magness cited strong agricultural advocacy programs at the local level and the diverse services offered to members as another reason for membership growth.

"We are able to offer benefits to our members here in Fannin County that they won't find anywhere else. In tough times, these benefits help a lot of folks make ends meet."

The state organization grew by 15,414 member families and was in the top five states in the country for the most growth in 2010, earning a Navigator Award for exceeding American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) membership goals.

On a national level, AFBF grew to more than 6 million member families in 2010, marking 50 consecutive years of membership growth.

Texas Farm Bureau delegates vote to reaffirm water rights

In Fannin County and statewide, water rights are a big concern. Fortunately for Texas agricultural producers, delegates voted to reaffirm landowner rights to groundwater under their property.

A landowners' interest in the water under his land is a vested interest that gives him a constitutionally protected right to drill and produce groundwater, delegates said at Texas Farm Bureau's 77th annual meeting.

"Many of Fannin County producers and rural residents depend on groundwater for residential wells, livestock watering sources and crop irrigation," said Jerry Magness, Fannin County Farm Bureau president.

As the Lone Star State's booming population takes a toll on water resources, groundwater rights will take center stage as the 82nd Legislature meets in January. Delegates at the recent convention recognized, however, that water is a limited resource and will require some "reasonable" regulation to protect local supplies.

"Reasonable conservation and management of groundwater by locally controlled groundwater conservation districts is vital to the future viability of agriculture and rural communities in Texas," said Magness.