

# Rhode Island Farm Bureau Newsletter



## 2023 RIFB Annual Meeting Wrapup

*Celebrating 70 Years of Farm Bureau in Rhode Island!*

Volume 25, Issue 1

Winter 2024

Over 120 members and guests were in attendance at the Crystal Lake Golf Club in Mapleville as we celebrated 70 years of Farm Bureau in Rhode Island. Our keynote speaker was AFBF President, Vincent “Zippy” Duvall, who spoke to the crowd during dinner.

The morning kicked off with the **Risk Management for Your Ag Operation: How to Save on Insurance and Cover Your Assets** workshop featuring RI State Veterinarian, Scott Marshall, DVM; attorney and RIFB member, Mark Tourgee; and American National-Farm Family agents Ashley Johnson and Michele Rosa. The information provided, and the ensuing Q & A session inspired us to set up another Risk Management evening workshop in February.

### Board of Directors

Henry B. Wright III, President  
 Kevin Breene, Vice President  
 Susanna Camacho, Treasurer  
 Tim Gallagher, Secretary  
 Ann Marie Bouthillette  
 Maggie Cole,  
 Young Ag Chair  
 Brenda Frederickson  
 Peter Gavitt  
 Donald Hopkins  
 Rob LaPlume  
 Edwin “Scooter” LaPrise  
 Chandler Neale  
 Jim Pagliarini  
 Joe Polseno  
 Rob Swanson

Heidi Quinn,  
 Executive Director



Executive Chef Andy Teixeira of Newport Vineyards (left) returned as our featured chef to make a light lunch for about 40 guests. The Napa Cabbage Pork Rolls featured Blackbird Farms pork and Napa cabbage grown in Newport Vineyards garden. The workshop was sponsored by Blackbird Farm.

After lunch, AFBF Economist Danny Munch provided updates on issues including dairy markets, transportation & infrastructure, disaster assistance, aquaculture, endangered and invasive species, public lands, and specialty crop markets. A native of East Lyme, Connecticut, Danny was an active 4-H member and heavily involved with

Northeast agriculture. He graduated from UConn in 2018 with a double major in Livestock Management & Policy and Resource Economics. Danny’s ties to our region made him an ideal speaker at our Annual Meeting.

### Inside this issue:

2023 Annual Meeting Wrap-up	1-3
Scavenger Hunt—Join us in 2024!	7
Risk Management-Workshop— Sign up!	8
President’s Corner	10
The Zipline	11

## 2023 RIFB Annual Meeting Wrap-Up, cont.

During the RIFB Business Meeting, Robert LaPlume of Fry Pond Farm in West Greenwich, and Jim Pagliarini of Central Nurseries in Johnston were elected to the board. Six incumbent board members were also re-elected to the board. After the social hour, guests enjoyed a buffet dinner during which President Duvall spoke to the group. Zippy Duvall has served as president of the American Farm Bureau Federation since 2016. He is a third-generation farmer from Georgia. He and his son operate a beef cow herd, raise broiler chickens, and grow their own hay, all while continuing to restore the farmland that has been in the family for more than 90 years

After dinner, the following awards were presented:

**Ken Ayars** was awarded our highest honor, the **2023 Golden Tractor Award**. This award is bestowed each year upon deserving individuals who have personally upheld and campaigned for the preservation of farming in our great state and sustaining agriculture for future generations. In his nearly 40 years with RI DEM, and as the Chief of the Rhode Island Division of Agriculture for over 25 of those years, Ken's dedication to our state's farmers and agriculture has helped to show our state's citizens and legislators the value and importance of agriculture in Rhode Island. Without such strong support from Ken and RI DEM, many people would be unaware of the role of agriculture in our small state, and continuing the farming tradition would be even more difficult. For Ken's many years of dedication, and support of RI farms and agriculture, RIFB awarded Ken Ayars our Golden Tractor Award.

**Wayne Salisbury** was presented with the RIFB **Lifetime Achievement Award**. This award reflects Wayne's many years of dedicated service to agriculture in Rhode Island as a farmer, State Senator, educator, and mentor to so many young people with an interest in agriculture.

**Senator Louis DiPalma** received the **2023 Navigator Award**. This award is given each year to deserving individuals or entities that are fearless in protecting the rights of Rhode Islanders and preserving agriculture in our state. In 2023, Senator DiPalma submitted a Senate Resolution to appropriate \$5 million for Farmland Preservation. While the resolution was Held for Further Study, a 2024 budget appropriation of \$2.5 million from general revenues for farmland preservation will provide a critical infusion for agricultural land preservation in Rhode Island.



(left) AFBF President Vincent "Zippy" Duvall, RIFB Executive Director Heidi Quinn, and RIFB President Henry B. Wright III.



(right) RIDEM Chief of Agriculture and Forestry, Ken Ayars is presented the 2023 Golden Tractor Award by President Henry B. Wright III

Following the awards, our raffle winners were announced.

**2023 Local Farm Products Raffle** winners of RIFB Farm Gift Certificates were: 1st Prize \$500 – Alexis L., 2nd Prize \$300 – Richard I., 3rd Prize \$200 – Andrew C.

Our **Penny Social Raffle** had donated items and gift cards from: Grainger, Dave’s Marketplace, Seven Cedars Farm, Briarberry Farm, EMMA Acres, Stamp Farm, Pacht Brook Farm, Old Sawmill Farm, Charlie’s Sugarhouse, Wright’s Dairy Farm, Mapleville Farm, RI Wood Operators, Jerimoth Hill Forestry, Monroe Tractor, Abbie Whitford, and RI Farm Bureau.

The **Grainger winners** were: Door Prize of Milwaukee Drill— Al B., Igloo 7 Quart Cooler– Sandie M., Snow Brush– Steve B., Flashlight– Steve B., Mag-Tip Screwdriver Set— Kevin B., Stanley Tape Measure—Olivia M., Aluminum Snow Shovel— Jim P., Leatherman Multi-Tool— Olivia M., 5 ft Ladder— Brenda F., Yellow Lantern— Glenn P.



## Young Ag Professionals

If you are anything like me, 4-H and FFA have consumed your life thus far. Now you’ve graduated and will be finishing your last summer as a 4-Her this year, and you have no idea what to do to stay involved in Rhode Island’s agricultural community. Thankfully, we have Young Ag Professionals as part of our Rhode Island Farm Bureau organization.

Young Ag Professionals, or YAP for short, is geared towards young men and women ages 18-35 who are involved within in the agricultural community in some way. The goal of the YAP program is to surface, grow, and develop young Farm Bureau members and provide them with opportunities and experience to strengthen their leadership. If this sounds like something you’d like to be involved in feel free to reach out to Maggie (LaPrise) Cole to see how to become an active member.

We are looking forward to our professional development series that is open to all members regardless of age. Planning for this year’s Summer BBQ Fundraiser will begin after the holidays. Stay tuned for updates!

Contact [maggielaprise@gmail.com](mailto:maggielaprise@gmail.com) for more information.



Fusion was held in Jacksonville, FL in March 2023. YF&R, Women’s Leadership, and Promotion and Education Committee members gathered from all over the US and Puerto Rico for workshops and networking.



———— THE GREAT STATE OF RHODE ISLAND ————



## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE STATE OF YOUR HORSE FARM INSURANCE

When you dedicate your life and well-being to the well-being of horses, you need more than just a policy – you need an ally. A one-size-fits-all insurance policy isn't for you. You deserve a customized coverage plan and American National gets it. An American National equine professionals insurance policy can provide you with a flexible package that allows you to tailor a policy to match your individual needs, with coverage options that include liability coverage, property coverage, and optional enhancements that cover things like valuable paper records, golf carts and vehicles, show judge liability and more. For more information, and to connect with a local American National agent near you visit [an.insure/rifb](http://an.insure/rifb) or call 800-899-6519.



American National is a group of companies writing a broad array of insurance products and services. Products and services may not be available in all states. Terms, conditions and eligibility requirements will apply. Life insurance and annuity products may be underwritten by American National Insurance Company, Galveston, Texas. Property and casualty products and services may be underwritten by Farm Family Casualty Insurance Company, Glenmont, New York.

20-050-334585.V1.6.2020

## Safety First: Make Sure your Horses, People and Property are Safe

When it comes to owning horses, it's important to make sure you've taken the right steps to reduce the risk of injury to not only the horses, but also people and property. Some hazards – like frayed electrical wire – can easily be eliminated, while others are inherent and must be controlled with reasonable measures based on today's knowledge and technology. As a horse owner or someone who has responsibility for horses, you should be familiar with the unique risks and exposures associated with them.

### Consider the following in managing your risk:

- The horse(s) you own or for which you are responsible (care, custody, control)
- The people who will be near the horse – employees, customers, others
- The location of the horse – where the interaction takes place
- The types of interaction between the horse and people
- Tack
- Facility
- Liability and waivers
- Negligence
- Written safety program

### The Horse

If you own, lease or board horses, you are responsible for knowing their propensities. If you board a horse with others or lease a horse to others, you have an obligation to inform them of known propensities. Propensity is a tendency to engage in a specific behavior, such as biting or kicking. Propensity is specific to a horse, not a breed. Some states define a dangerous horse by “one free kick.” After determining propensities, you must then act on them to warn, instruct and protect people who will be in contact with the horse. Dangerous propensity is defined by state law and is the most severe risk because you are held strictly liable. It also requires the highest standard of care. This is close to the wild animal standard.

### The People

Know your obligations (duties) to people you place with or near a horse.

- **Employees** – Develop a written training plan.
- **Contract Instructors** – Assess their skills, require certification and require written lesson plans.
- **Trainers, Groomers, Farriers, Veterinarians and Other Professionals** - Regularly review propensities and controls, plus their input, for your care and control plan.
- **Students** – Instruct from written lesson plans.

### Riders

Develop a written rider assessment method to be reviewed and signed by the rider. Include: approaching, handling, leading and turnout, tying, bridling, saddling, mounting and dismounting,

### Liability and Waivers of Liability

Equine Liability Acts (ELA) or Equine Activity Statutes (EAS) – Forty-four states have laws that limit equine owners' liability for inherent risks if they warn according to the law. One example is a horse being startled unintentionally from an external stimulus. Know the law to gain the protection.

Waivers of liability are contracts to limit your liability. The standards of enforceability are set by each state. Two sides to every contract are: plaintiff attorneys who declare any contract is breakable (unenforceable) and defense attorneys who declare the contract is unbreakable. Select an attorney who knows your operations and state equine law.

Regarding waivers for minors, one lawyer author points out that, unless your state has ruled to the contrary: 1) a child's signature is not enforceable, 2) parents signing a release can release their right to sue, not the child's, and 3) if only one parent signs the release, that signature is not binding on the other parent. **For more information about ensuring that you have addressed your exposure to equine-related risks, visit the Certified Horsemanship Association website, <https://cha.horse/>.**

# TAX PLANNING BUILT TO SAVE YOU MONEY.

---



**Our ag tax specialists deliver money-saving strategies.**

The taxes you owe don't have to be a surprise – at least not with a defined tax strategy from Farm Credit East. Our ag tax specialists can work with you to develop a tax strategy that minimizes the taxes you pay. Contact the tax specialists at Farm Credit East for a plan that works for you.

[farmcrediteast.com](http://farmcrediteast.com) | 800.327.6785

- Loans & Leases
- Financial Record-Keeping
- Payroll Services
- Profitability Consulting
- Tax Preparation & Planning
- Appraisals
- Estate Planning
- Beginning Farmer Programs
- Crop Insurance



# The 2024 Rhode Island Farm Scavenger Hunt is in the Works!

After a bumpy start taking on the RI Farm Scavenger Hunt, we are ready to roll for 2024! With our production fully local now, the Scavenger Hunts will be in place at all participating farms for the traditional May 1 start.

Are you a farm that would like to participate? We have a handful of spots available and would love to have you on the list!

- \$165 per farm to participate. (We provide fliers, brochure holder, stickers, hole punch.)
- Each farm is required to honor up to 10 coupons for \$5 each for prizes. Grand Prize is on us.
- RI Farm Bureau Affiliation not required (but welcomed!)

Questions? Want to join this increasingly popular event?  
Call Heidi at RI Farm Bureau 401-385-3339 or email [rifarm@rifb.org](mailto:rifarm@rifb.org).



## We're there to keep you doing your job.

As a three-generation family-run business, I know first hand what it takes to keep a business going. When my father started Monroe Tractor in 1951, his philosophy was "if you take care of the customer, the business will grow" or as he often said, "where courtesy dwells, service excels." His words are still the foundation of how we do business today.

Every Monroe associate understands that when we help a customer with their equipment, we're also helping them do their jobs, earn a living and raise a family.

We are committed to providing the right product selection, quality service and support, and understanding the real needs of our customers to ensure that you're always up and running.

We are proud to be a part of the RI Farm Bureau and excited to bring the CASE brand back to New England and recently, CASE IH. Reach out to Mike Reagan with any of your equipment needs!

Best,

*Janet Felosky*  
Janet Felosky, CEO



Mike Reagan – RI Equipment Sales

401-332-8062

## Workshop

### Risk Management for Your Ag Operation: How to Save on Insurance and Cover Your Assets

**When:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Where:** RIFB Office, 16 Nooseneck Hill Road (Suite B), West Greenwich, RI

**Cost:** Free for RIFB members, \$10 non-members.

(Join at the meeting using our event discount, get a free RIFB T-shirt & attend for free!)

**Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for a light meal. Workshop starts at 6:30 sharp.**

**Registration required: Space is limited. Please call the office to register at 401-385-3339.**

Join us for this helpful workshop featuring RI State Veterinarian, Scott Marshall, DVM; attorney and RIFB member, Mark Tourgee; American National-Farm Family agents Ashley Johnson and Michele Rosa, and others to help identify risk in Ag operations. Learn how to recognize areas of risk on your farm, how to mitigate these risks, and the insurance tools to protect you and your assets.



**Ashley Johnson**  
Agent- Licensed in CT, MA & RI

780 Victory Highway, Unit 1  
West Greenwich, RI 02817

401.397.1050

[Ashley.Johnson@american-national.com](mailto:Ashley.Johnson@american-national.com)

**Your ad could be here for just \$75/issue!**



Contact Heidi at the RIFB Office to learn more about advertising opportunities in the quarterly newsletter. **401-385-3339**



### Reminder for RI Farms from RI Produce Safety Team

All farms within Rhode Island that grow, harvest, pack, and/or hold produce intended for commerce or sale must register their business annually at <https://producefarmregistration.ri.gov/Registration/> between **January 1st and February 28th\***.

When registering your farm, please be sure to have your business information available including **gross produce and food sales** and the **commodities grown/harvested/packed/held** on farm. If you have completed a registration in previous years, that information will be saved on your profiles for you to update each year.

\*\*If you believe that you are eligible for an **Exemption/Exclusion** from the Produce Safety Rule, you may apply for an exemption or exclusion **after** having your yearly registration approved. All exemption/exclusion applications **must be submitted** with supporting documents utilizing our template.

For a guide on whether you meet the requirements for an exemption/exclusion, please see our Exemption/Exemption Fact Sheet.



\*This requirement is outlined in State of Rhode Island Rules and Regulations (250-RICR-40-00-2)



## The #1 Reason People Don't Join Farm Bureau?

**No one asked.**

**Not a member of RIFB?**

**Know someone who  
should be a member?**

Full-time farmers, part-time and hobby farmers, landowners, gardeners, foodies and anyone who enjoys local food and farms in Rhode Island— you can join RI Farm Bureau and help us to support the future of agriculture in RI and beyond. We have a number of membership levels— find one that suits YOU!

You can stop by the office to join or renew, or join or renew online at [RIFB.org](http://RIFB.org).

## Does it Work? Asking Someone to Join Farm Bureau?

**Yes. Yes it does.**

**We hit goal in 2023  
because somebody asked.**

We are proud to announce that for the 2023 Membership year, RI Farm Bureau has achieved Membership Goal, increasing our membership over the 2022 total. In honor of this achievement, President Henry Wright was presented a Commemorative Membership Growth Pin at the December AFBF Resolutions Meeting in DC.

It is the first time we have received the honor since 2018, and we would like to thank **every member** that asked someone to join Farm Bureau. **We truly could not have done it without you!**

## **BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP**

Don't forget your membership benefits! You can easily save the cost of your dues by taking advantage of these discounts. Go to [rifb.org](http://rifb.org) for more info on:

**American National Insurance**

**Avis**

**Budget**

**Case IH**

**Caterpillar**

**Choice Hotels**

**Dungarees.com**

**Ford**

**Grainger**

**John Deere**

**Propane Plus**

**Wyndham Hotels**

Your **Access Card** offers discounts at over **300,000** companies throughout the United States, including:

**Disney World Tickets**

**Cruise Lines**

## **Need to apply for or renew your pesticide license?**

All pesticide exams are available online at this time except private applicator exams. Private Pesticide License exams are given in person by the Rhode Island Department of Agriculture. Exams are given by registration only and under RIDOH guidelines. Please contact Harold Puckett or Kimberly Lavoie to schedule a private license exam. Commercial licensing exams are available online. The study material for the core exam is available for download on the [RI DEM Pesticide Safety and IPM Training](#) page. The category manuals are available for purchase online through the Cornell bookstore. For more information please contact [Harold.Puckett@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Harold.Puckett@dem.ri.gov) or [Kimberly.Lavoie@dem.ri.gov](mailto:Kimberly.Lavoie@dem.ri.gov).

If you do not have Internet access, you may contact: Harold Puckett at DEM Ag 401-537-4284, Howard Cook at DEM Ag 401-537-4271, or Kimberly Lavoie at DEM Ag 401-537-4280.

---

## President's Corner

As farmers and consumers, we need to be aware of what's happening globally in the world of ag, to be aware of what's going on in the global marketplaces. While concern for climate change seems a top concern, of greater concern is Mexico growing an increasing number of tomatoes and flooding our U.S. market. We spend so much money to adapt to climate change but ignore other things.

Who you **grew** for, who you are **growing** for, and who you **will grow** for is not just a local issue, but a global concern as well. Locally, it shows the importance of having a high-quality product at a reasonable price. The benefit of raising the price of your product in a limited market is outweighed by losing loyal clientele due to those higher prices. Consistency and affordability in pricing will help maintain those loyal customers. If your price is too high, buyers will simply look for another source of your product—globally or locally. You should also plan to develop a market for your imperfect product because some years the only profit you may get from a crop is through your ability to move the less-than-perfect produce. Globally, knowing your market is understanding if your import market is gaining or losing. If your market has changed, who will you market to next? Where will those customers/countries buy from if not you? Where are the new customers coming from?



Many local growers are modifying their planting schedules to avoid a glut of product in the height of the season, and to be able to provide more continuous product throughout the season. Adjusting varieties of corn with different maturity dates, and utilizing succession planting allows these growers to have continued product throughout an extended season. One of the best ways to keep your customers is to have the products they want when they want them. Do not be afraid of supplementing with products from another local farm. People have faith in you to keep having a top-quality product, whether you grow or source that product.

Smithfield Foods just announced it will end contracts with 26 hog farms in Utah, in the face of an industry oversupply. This comes on the heels of the closure of 35 Missouri hog farms earlier this year also due to market saturation. China consumes nearly 700 million pigs each year, representing around 60 to 70 percent of the country's meat consumption. It also accounts for roughly half of the global pig population. China is opening new, state-of-the-art hog facilities that are more technologically advanced. Just one 26-story facility has the capacity to raise 1.2 million pigs annually. Each floor operates as a single farm, with 24 floors dedicated to breeding and raising the pigs. This single operation feeds a total of one million pounds of feed per day. Soybean growers are happy because the market for soybeans to China is growing. China transitioned to growing corn rather than soybeans, so the US and Brazilian markets can take advantage of their need for soybeans.

You should always be aware of external geopolitical sources. Beef is profitable right now, but there is a fight to suspend the final rule published by APHIS in November, allowing beef from Paraguay to enter the US after a longstanding ban. Paraguay has historically struggled to contain outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease. Our current administration is loosening restrictions because US cattle producers can't produce enough "grind" (low-quality lean meat) to meet demand, and therefore must import some. At an estimated 3,250 to 6,500 tons, this will be only .05 percent of U.S. fresh beef imports. However, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) opposes the imports because of Paraguay's history of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and because it says USDA used outdated information to justify Paraguay's access to the U.S. market. FMD is a severe and highly contagious viral disease. The FMD virus causes illness in cows, pigs, sheep, goats, deer, and other animals with divided hooves.

Here in New England, there is a lack of processing plants to process local meat, milk, and vegetables. Rhode Island Farm Bureau is working at the National level to try to bring local processing for any of these commodities to the Northeast.

*Henry B. Wright III, President RIFB*

---

## The Zipline: Got Real Milk?

### The Need for Accuracy in the Dairy Case



By Zippy Duvall, President, American Farm Bureau Federation

The dairy aisles can be a bit of a puzzle these days due to the misleading labeling of plant and nut-based beverages as “milk.” Don’t mistake me here, everyone should have the options they are looking for, but they also need to know exactly what they are getting. According to the Food and Drug Administration, that’s not happening with dairy. Roughly one in four Americans have felt misled when reaching for a non-dairy option because the term “milk” led them to believe they were actually getting milk.

Dairy alternatives have surged in popularity recently, offering consumers a wide range of choices such as soy, oat, almond, rice and coconut. But since these products use dairy terms, like milk and cream, there has been a growing concern regarding the clarity of these labels and adherence to the standards of identity established by the FDA.

The FDA’s standard of identity serves as a defining framework for products within the marketplace to ensure consumers get what they are paying for. For example, “jams” must contain a minimum amount of fruit, and the terms “cheese alternative” or “cheese substitute,” must be used for products that don’t meet a minimum standard for cheese. However, despite the existence of a standard for milk, enforcement by the FDA has notably been absent and allowed various plant and nut-based products to use terms like “milk” without repercussions.

This leniency has caused confusion for consumers and raised questions about fair branding practices. The American consumer has come to know and trust the health benefits of real, dairy milk, but this mislabeling has hijacked the term and trust in quality and nutritional value that goes along with it.

Farm Bureau proudly advocates for the interests of all farmers and ranchers, including dairy farmers, almond growers, soybean farmers, coconut growers and oat farmers. We value choice in the marketplace and along with that ensuring consumers are given accurate information about the food products they choose.

Earlier this year, the FDA came out with draft guidance on dairy terms, and while it acknowledges nutritional differences in non-dairy products, it gave these alternatives permission to keep using dairy terminology. FDA also left it to the companies producing non-dairy alternatives to choose whether to include clarifying nutritional statements on their labels, an ineffective approach to providing shoppers with information important to differentiating the products they consume.

This current guidance for milk substitutes risks setting a precedent that could lead to other trusted food names being misused and misunderstood for alternative products. Consumers deserve accurate labels at the grocery store so that they can make informed choices that meet their needs. That’s why Farm Bureau is calling on FDA to amend the draft guidance and prohibit the use of terms such as “milk” on products that don’t meet the outlined standard of identity.

Our grassroots leaders, along with state and national staff, have been actively engaged in advocating for more accurate labeling practices, providing comments on the guidance, and submitting solutions adopted by other countries. For instance, in Canada and the EU, “almond milk” is labeled as “almond beverage,” providing a clear distinction.

There is also potential to get this solved within the farm bill by passing legislation such as the Dairy Pride Act, which would prohibit any alternatives from using dairy terminology on their products.

At Farm Bureau, we will always support consumers’ access to a variety of options, including non-dairy, but this issue surrounding labeling has brought to light just how important transparency and product standards are. We must continue to advocate for clarity and give consumers the freedom to make informed choices in the dairy aisle.



## RI Farm Bureau

---

16 B Nooseneck Hill Rd  
West Greenwich, RI 02817

Phone: 401-385-3339  
Fax: 401-385-3394  
E-mail: [rifarm@rifb.org](mailto:rifarm@rifb.org)  
Web: [www.rifb.org](http://www.rifb.org)



*Thank a farmer 3 times a day!*

## CALLING ALL FFA AND 4-H MEMBERS!



### JOIN RI FARM BUREAU FOR FREE

Just a reminder that all 4-H and FFA Members can join RI Farm Bureau for free, and receive all the benefits our other members receive including discounts at thousands of businesses nationwide.

Our 4-H and FFA Members are the future of agriculture and we encourage you to join, either online at [RIFB.org](http://RIFB.org), or by calling the office at 401-385-3339.



