

## Register Today

*State Convention, Feb. 6-8, will feature Lincoln research farms, workshops, contests and more*

Photos courtesy of Lincoln University Cooperative Extension and Research Media Center



We'll have a research farm tour, learning opportunities, fun, and don't forget the food! The Missouri Young Farmer's/Young Farm Wives State Convention is scheduled for February 6-8. We want to kick it off on the right note, so Friday afternoon we plan to tour Lincoln University's Research Farms.

Also look for a good slate of workshops for learning and sharing. Please don't forget to check out the information in this newsletter on our toy and photo shows. My personal favorite category I think will be the farmer's mess ups on display at the photo show. Don't forget to

dig your sandbox up to share some of your childhood treasures. Let's round it all off with other farmers and friends, to laugh and learn from each other.

More details on workshops and shows are included throughout this newsletter. *-Jordan Yoder*



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# The President's Pen

My, oh my how the time does fly. It seems like only yesterday I was hoping and praying for a good crop. Maybe I lacked a little bit of faith in my prayers being answered. But boy have they ever been. As I write this, we are currently 2/3 done harvesting corn (shelling, picking; whatever you prefer). We started on our first soybean fields this past week around the 8th of October. Well, please don't tell the grain buyers and the traders this, but, it happens to be good. Some might say too good considering the price declines. You probably know the old saying though, "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth." Luckily I haven't heard anyone complaining about crops being too good (maybe too good in other states) which means this giant crop doesn't need to hide its extra-long teeth behind the lips.

In all seriousness, a crop this size is already having implications that we can feel. The prices at the elevator aren't looking too enticing right now compared to a year ago. Let's not forget the lag in input prices relative to commodity prices. I am reading and hearing much talk of comparing the near future to the 80s. I was born in the 80s. I didn't have to do much surviving as I was a little too young to really know what was going on. There is a real possibility we could see a farm recession coming. So how do we avoid becoming one of those who didn't survive the teens?

That is where organizations like Young Farmers and local groups of peers come in. We first have to admit that we don't know it all, and there is always a possibility we might fail as farmers. Once you get that out of the way you are ready to learn from others who might have insight or experience you don't. Link together with people in Young Farmers and those who have had to limp through farm recessions to help prepare you for what may come. If it doesn't come, you'll be all the better for bullet proofing your farm. We might even find new ways to use old ideas that we thought were passé. This happens all the time in the world. Just look at fashion. Today's fashions are often a combination of previous eras of clothing with a slight twist. I mean come on farmers, who really thought cover crops were a new idea? (Okay, I did.)

Look for every opportunity to share your real, honest experiences with other farmers and young people looking to start. Most importantly don't be too proud to admit maybe the farmer across the fence knows something you might find useful. We're all in this together, keeping agriculture strong.



Jordan Yoder,  
MYF/YFW President

## Meet us at Sunday Vespers

What is the foundation of your life? Is it family? Is it work? Is it friends? Some would say the real foundation of life is faith, and that it guides everything we do and how we do it. Remember to take some time to gather with others on Sunday morning of the convention to recognize the truth revealed to us by God that guides our lives.

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# Young Farmer Convention will offer education and more



The 2015 Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives Convention will include several educational workshops and tours. Here are a few highlights:

## **Prime Meridian and Precision Agriculture**

Prime Meridian works with agri-retailers and their grower customers in order to deliver a better ROI when it comes to precision data. That includes collecting planting and yield data to build a precision foundation - the “Little Data” that’s necessary to make “Big Data” work. This workshop will include information on helping retailers deliver precision services more efficiently and delivering new cutting edge services like variable-rate irrigation technologies and UAV imagery,

## **Farm Benchmarking**

Bruce Fowler will discuss having a good farm accounting system and using Finpack to know where you are at. He’ll also cover FBMA analysis or the data from FINBIN to see how you compare to similar farms in Missouri, or in any other part of the country.

## **Legislative Updates**

Farm Bureau’s State and Local Government Affairs Department will lead a workshop about new issues and happenings in the Missouri House of Representatives and the Senate.

## **High Tunnels**

James Quinn was a greenhouse grower for nine years in Michigan before moving to Missouri in 1996. In Missouri Jim worked with a Columbia greenhouse operator for several years and then with a grant funded pest control project around the state with greenhouses.

After starting with University of Missouri in 2003, he worked with the state vegetable specialist’s research program, which included high tunnels. Since then he has contributed to a number of publications on high tunnels, including the NRCS grower manual, MU’s High Tunnel Tomato Production Guide, and MU’s High Tunnel Guide (developed for high school educators). Jim has presented numerous times about high tunnels and has continued staying connected with high tunnel usage through grant projects, trainings, site visits and surveys.

## **Do’s and Don’ts of Medium and Heavy Duty Trucks**

This mechanic taught seminar will be covering a wide variety of items that the average farmer overlooks when it comes to grain trucks and semis. Topics will include what to look for when buying a new truck; DPFs, Urea, EGR and other emissions reducers; Fuel, oil and coolant additives and regular maintenance. Led by Dwight Massey (teacher of medium and heavy truck technology for almost 20 years at State Technical College of Missouri) and Ross Becker (a 12 year Diesel Tech at Meyers Truck Service in Mexico, Mo.) They will also be available to answer questions about your current or future trucks.

## **Lincoln University Farms**

This year’s convention will also include a tour of Lincoln University’s George Washington Carver Farm and Alan T. Busby Research Farm. The Busby Farm researches and demonstrates organic, integrated and sustainable farming. It features 280 acres of diverse landscape.

## **Farm Bill Update**

ARC, LOL, PLC, BFF, SCO, ROFL, CRP, and LRP. Perhaps your response to this is IDK. If you have a hard time telling the difference between texting language and Farm Bill programs, attending this seminar might be a good idea. Debby Schwarz from Diversified Crop Insurance Services is going to focus mainly on crop programs to show what is in store for farmers and give steps to be able to make decisions to choose what programs will be right for you.

*Register on page 5.*

## 2015 MYF/YFW Convention Registration and Planning

Join us at the 2015 Missouri Young Farmer/Young Farm Wives Convention on Feb. 6-8 in Columbia. In addition to the traditional workshops, a half-day tour will be hosted at the Lincoln University Research Farms. Look for information in this newsletter about tours and workshops.

### Friday

On Friday, Members will meet at the hotel parking lot and buses for the mini-tour - time to be announced.

### Saturday

Saturday registration will be available from 9 am to 6 pm in the Conference Center Foyer. As in past years, Saturday events will include the toy show, the FFA speech contest finals, the delegate meeting, a social meet up and several special seminars and workshops. Saturday will also bring the state office reunion reception. The opening session and Saturday banquet begins at 7 pm.

### Sunday

Sunday will begin with Vespers at 7:30 am followed by brunch and the general session.

### Hotel Reservations: Courtyard by Marriott in Columbia

Reserve your hotel by **January 21st** for special rates. The room block will be released after that time and a room may not be available. The rate is \$92 for any size room. Below are three ways to register:

1. Register online at [www.marriott.com/coucy](http://www.marriott.com/coucy) In the space for the group code, enter one of the three

\*For a king with sofa sleeper, type: **YGFYGF**

\*For a double queen, type: **YGFYGF**

2. You may also call 1-800-MARRIOTT and give the above group codes

3. Or, you may call the local hotel and make the reservation directly at (573) 443-8000. Tell them you are with the Missouri Young Farmers block.

\*If the code does not work, that means the room type you requested is sold out, or it is after the cut-off date.

### 2015 MYF/YFW CONVENTION REGISTRATION

February 6-8, 2015 at Courtyard by Marriott, Columbia, MO

Mail Registration to: Lisa Evans, Agricultural Education, DESE, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102

Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please circle all events you are attending:

Friday Mini Tour?      Yes    No

Saturday Workshops?    Yes    No

Sunday Delegate Meeting?    Yes    No

#### Friday through Sunday Registration Paid by Feb. 1:

Adults - \$40 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 6-12) - \$20 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 5 & under) - no cost x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$0

#### Friday through Sunday Registration Paid after Feb. 1:

Adults - \$55 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 6-12) - \$27.50 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 5 & under) - no cost x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$0

#### Friday/Saturday Registration Paid by Feb. 1:

Adults - \$30 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 6-12) - \$15 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 5 & under) - no cost x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$0

#### Saturday Registration Paid after Feb. 1:

Adults - \$30 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 6-12) - \$15 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Kids (ages 5 & under) - no cost x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$0

Sat. evening banquet only: \$20 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Sat. evening child's plate: \$10 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Enter the 2015 MYF/YFW Photo Contest

Join the 2015 MYF/YFW Photo Contest! The purpose of the Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives photo contest is to showcase amateur photography of rural and agricultural Missouri. Below are the contest rules and instructions.

Categories: **Landscapes People Rural Workday Animals Bad Day on the Farm (NEW)**

### Entry Criteria:

1. The Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives photo contest is open to all members who are amateur photographers (one who receives less than half of their disposable income from photography).
2. All photos must be taken by the entrant.
3. Entrants may submit multiple photos per category.
4. Entrants may enter all four categories if desired.
5. A complete entry form must accompany each photo. Do not staple or paper clip; the form taped to the back of the image is fine.
6. Photos must be taken within the last two years.
7. Color and black and white photos are eligible.
- \*8. If identifiable persons are included in a photo, a release must accompany the entry.
9. Youth entries must include the signature of a parent or guardian on the entry form.
10. All photos must be submitted digitally, as well as in print at the state convention. Photos must be 8x10 and displayed in a frame when submitted.
11. All entries submitted become the property of Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives, giving MYF/YFW permission to use them in publications, promotions, calendars or displays, with proper credit given to the photographer.

To Enter: You must deliver your photo to the State Convention held in Columbia.

### Judging:

1. Judges will be member of the Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives Executive committee.
2. Judges may move a photo to a new category if it is more suitable.
3. A photo can be disqualified if it does not meet all the requirements.

Deadline: Entries must be delivered by Feb. 6, 2015. No late entries.

Winning Notifications: Winners will be announced at the Missouri Young Farmer and Young Farm Wives Annual Convention, February 8, 2015, in Columbia.

Contest Contact: Jennifer Thogmartin (417) 437-5823 thogmartinjennifer@neoshor5.org

*\*Note: Photo release(s) may be required (see above). The release(s) should state: "I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby acknowledge that the individuals in the photos understand the sponsoring organization claim the rights to all photos, including the rights to publish, upload on the internet, or televise, for use in promoting a positive message for agriculture and that their name, likeness, or image may be used. I agree to release and hold harmless the sponsoring organization from and against any claim, expense or liability arising from or related to submission, participation in the contest, and appearance on the program and/or acceptance of any prize," followed by a signature and the date.*

### Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives 2015 Photo Contest Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Select Photo Category: \_\_\_ Landscapes \_\_\_ People \_\_\_ Rural Workday \_\_\_ Animals \_\_\_ Bad Day on the Farm

Entry Fee: \$5 per photo for the "Bad Day on the Farm" category. Winners chosen by popular vote of attendees. 50% payback. All other categories will be judged with certificates awarded.

Description of your photo with date, location, persons, season, etc:

Deadline: Entries must be received/delivered by Feb.6, 2015. No late entries

# Harvest time fun?

By Derek Lowrey

Harvest time is one of the most rewarding times of the year. You get to see how your hard work during the year paid off. Also, it's a time to make different management decisions, get mad at the sprayer guy for missing spots, or make fun of the planter operator for his crooked rows. It is also one of the most stressful times. We had one particularly stressful week I would like to share.

Our family operation includes my Dad, Mom, and younger sister, younger brother, and my wife and me. We farm around the Trenton area in the north central part of the state. It had been a great year for crops, and we had received plenty of rain. It looked like there would be yields we hadn't seen in a long time, if ever. Even though most crops in our area were put in timely, they were maturing very late. Additionally, we were getting a lot of rain and cool weather that we didn't really need (or want).

Our operation does a lot of farming on shares and also quite a bit of custom work. By the second week of October, harvest was still slow since beans were too tough to run. The bean itself was dry, but the stem was about like running sticks through the combine. We then had our custom guys and share crop guys calling us getting nervous. We had always run a 7720 and a 9600 John Deere combines. We decided as late as it was getting that we had better find another combine. So the search was on and the start of a really long week began.

On a Wednesday, we drove two hours to look at a couple of combines that sounded intriguing. We

wound up buying a low houred, well taken care of John Deere 9610. The dealer guaranteed they could have it to use by Tuesday of the next week. On Friday, we were able to go back to shelling corn on the hill. It was muddy enough that we had to loan the auger wagon on the grass strips along the edge of the field, then go to trucks. We found this out after my little sister, who runs the auger wagon for us, got stuck.

On Saturday, we moved to a different farm, where I immediately got the combine stuck in a wet hole. Thankfully, we were able to put it out quickly. We then moved up on a hill where it was drier. My truck driver shows up not realizing the truck was already half loaded, and went to move it closer to the combine I was running.

He tried driving up a hill and spun out. He then tried to back around and cut it up the hill to a flat spot. Well, the bottom side spun out and sunk way down. I watched in horror from the combine, just knowing he was going to lay over our only good 10-wheeler. Thankfully, it stayed upright and we got it pulled out. Sunday, we switched both combines to beans and actually had a good day.

Late Monday afternoon, I was done on a farm and was waiting for my flagger to move me. I called the dealer to make sure the 9610 was still going to make it. I was assured it was sitting on the trailer and would

be here by noon. Well, as we were moving the 9600 down the road, the hydrostat went out. It dumped all the oil out and left me stranded on a fairly busy highway. By this time, it was almost dark, and we just pulled it off the side of the road. We were not too horrified knowing our new one would be here in the morning.

*I watched in horror  
from the combine, just  
knowing he was going  
to lay over our only  
good 10-wheeler.*

Morning came and we were at the 9600 trying to plumb the steering lines into the back of the tractor to pull it back to the shop when my phone rang. It was the trucker who said he had just hit a bridge with our new combine. He said he just ruined a tire and a rim.

We know you don't hit a bridge going 60 miles per hour and only ruin a rim and tire, so we didn't know what to expect. By this point, we were trying to decide if we needed to run out and find another combine, or what. Amazingly, when it showed up, the only damage was the tire and the rim.

They brought out a tire and we were back to combining. By Saturday, we had the 9600 running and things will hopefully continue to go better. Hopefully, everyone else has had better luck than us this harvest season.

I especially hope nobody has to hear that their new combine just hit a bridge. If anyone else has had any horror stories about harvest, be sure to tell them at state convention. It makes us all feel a little better knowing we aren't the only ones who have bad experiences.

# Preview: Summer Tour 2015

The Mexico Young Farmers will be hosting the 2015 State Tour, so mark your calendars for July 30th to August 1st.

Established in the mid 1800s as a shipping off point for soldiers headed to the Mexican American War, the City of Mexico is now an Ag based community. In the past It has been known as the “Saddle Horse Capitol of the World,” a birthplace of famous saddle horses including Rex McDonald. Later it became the “Firebrick Capitol of the World,” which is evidenced in the abandoned brick plants scattered throughout the County. Now the County seal boasts that it’s the “Biofuel Capitol of Missouri,” home to the Mid America Biodiesel Plant and the POET Ethanol Plant in nearby Laddonia.

The roughly 450,000 acres of farm ground in Audrain County is a mix of row crops and livestock, the majority of which is corn, soybeans, cattle and hogs. However, it is not uncommon to find crops of milo and wheat and smaller operations of chickens, goats and sheep.

The 2015 Missouri Young Farmers’ Tour will include the Sydenstricker Genetics Angus Farm, Danuser Factory (famous for their post hole diggers and other small farm implements), Stanton Brother’s Farms (one of the country’s largest producers of free range eggs), the Missouri Plant Science Center and much more.

Visit [moyoungfarmer.org](http://moyoungfarmer.org) for more information.

## Enter the Convention Toy Show



Dig out your favorite farm toys from those days in the dirt, or from the display case in the office. The annual farm toy exhibits will take place at the 2015 MYF/YFW State Convention in February.

### Farm Toy Classes:

#### *Run Whatcha-Brung:*

This is an open class—anything from bought to homemade or modified, any make, any model, any size.

#### *Original 1/64 Scale:*

This class is toys out of boxes, no modification, any make or model.

#### *Original 1/32 Scale:*

This class is toys out of boxes, no modification, any make or model.

#### *Original 1/16 Scale:*

This class is toys out of boxes, no modification, any make or model.

#### *Sandbox Special:*

This class will be toys that were used hard by the cutest lil’ farmers, any make, any model, any size.

## Join your district Young Farmer meeting

### Northwest District

Jan. 10, 2015, 7 pm, at Litton Center in Chillicothe

### Northeast District

Jan. 12, 2015, 6:30 pm, at North Shelby High School gym; meal will cost \$11.00. RSVP by January 5th at [jennym@nshelby.k12.mo.us](mailto:jennym@nshelby.k12.mo.us) or call (660) 216-8518.

### Southwest District

Jan. 9, 6:30 pm, dinner at Neosho Vo-Ag Building  
The Young Farmers Dinner will be held at the Neosho Vo-Ag Building

### Central District

Jan. 6, 6 pm, check in at Santa Fe High School, 108 N. Chiefs Dr., Alma, Mo., 64001; includes meal, committee reports and guest speaker, Janet Adkison, Washington, D.C. News Bureau Chief for RFD-TV

### South Central District

TBD

### Southeast District

TBD

# FCS Financial Supports Young Farmers



*Photo left: FCS Financial's Vicki Lemons (right) and Mandy Peters (left) of Lebanon lend a hand to the L-Life Food Above: Sidney Marek of Salisbury receives funding to assist with her FFA project through FCS Financial's Youth in Ag funding program. FCS Financial's Brent Collier presents the check.*

FCS Financial is a decades-long supporter of Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives. The organization has a special focus on young farm families.

“FCS Financial is Missouri’s largest ag lender and we are committed to the growth and success of agriculture and rural Missouri,” according to FCS Financial officials. “We value our relationships with the Young Farmers and Young Farm Wives because they are not only today’s producers but also the next generation of rural community and ag industry leaders. As a member owned and governed cooperative, FCS Financial looks to this group for its future leadership.”

As part of a commitment to agriculture in Missouri, FCS Financial offers special financing programs for young, beginning and small farmers. In 2015 the organization is offering an enhanced comprehensive Beginning

Farmer program titled FCS Financial Connect. This program offers credit guidelines specifically tailored for the young, beginning farmer.

The program also includes new communication channels, representation to the cooperative advisory board and a very detailed knowledge-sharing curriculum to help young and beginning farmers grow their perspective to better manage their operations. In addition, federal and state loan guarantee programs are available as part of our special financing program. Lending specialists can explain all the benefits of this new program.

The organization also provides crop and livestock insurance to protect member-owner investments. Insurance specialists can help you with risk management needs.

Value-added benefits are also important to member-owners of FCS Financial. “We provide

many including free educational opportunities, scholarships, Shaping Rural Missouri grants, a funding program for FFA or 4-H projects, sponsorships, donations and community service throughout the year. Recently, we funded the Ag Management, Economics and Sales curriculum for Missouri high schools to replace their prior curriculum from 1988. The new curriculum was launched and is being taught this school year.”

FCS Financial, established nearly 100 years ago, is a cooperative where member-owners receive a variety of benefits that aren’t found at most other lending institutions. Members are eligible for patronage at the conclusion of each business year. When FCS Financial is successful, patronage allows them to share that success with member owners. “Since 2006, we have returned more than \$37 million in patronage to our member-owners. FCS Financial is more than just a financial institution; we are a part of rural Missouri and are dedicated to working for you.”



## Armed to Farm

*A U.S. veteran returns with worldwide agricultural experience*

Cody Waters of Fulton is armed to farm. He is one of 300,000 veterans expected to return to Missouri in the next decade, according to University of Missouri Extension state health and safety specialist Karen Funkenbusch. She works with the growing number of veterans who want to return because of the quality of life in rural Missouri.

Conventional and organic farming present new opportunities for returning veterans. “The vision of farming is changing. We’re experiencing new types of farmers,” Funkenbusch says.

Waters enlisted at a young age, served, graduated college, and now farms, holds a full-time job, has a young family and serves as a captain in the Army National Guard.

He began farming at 14 in Vienna, Illinois. Throughout high school he had 20 sows and rented 100 acres of cropland.

He enlisted, with his parent’s consent, at 17. Both of his parents were Vietnam veterans and the family has a rich history of military service.

At 18, he reported for basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was Sept. 11, 2001, and he was admiring his newly issued military identification tag when the base went into lockdown mode. Someone uttered, “Boys, we’re going to war.”

Waters spent 14 years as a com-

bat engineer in the Army National Guard, with multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He was mobilized to Baghdad from 2003 to 2004. Between tours he was in Army ROTC and earned a civil engineering degree from Mizou with the help of the GI Bill. “The GI Bill was a lifesaver,” he says, noting that he does not have the obstacle of student debt that many beginning farmers may face.

In 2011 and 2012 he was deployed to Afghanistan to serve in the Missouri National Guard’s Agribusiness Development Team. He found that farmers are the same regardless of geography. “They always want

to know a better way to do things,” he says. Waters’ group built infrastructure and trained extension agents in Nangarhar Province.

Most Afghan farmers have just a half-acre of land and no electricity, he says. Good ground costs \$20,000 per acre and the land must be irrigated to produce crops.

He met his future wife, Nicole, in 2002 when she was in high school and he was home on leave.

*Photo: From left, Nicole, Tommy, Cole and Cody Waters balance farm chores, work, school and military life with church and community. Cody is a veteran with multiple tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. He continues to serve as a captain in the National Guard.*

She now holds a doctorate from MU and wants to be an osteopathic physician.

They have navigated his tours of duty and earned degrees while raising two children, Tommy, 9, and Cole, 3. Their mothers, veterans, co-workers, neighbors and parishioners at St. Peter’s Catholic Church in Fulton provide a strong support system, Nicole says.

They purchased 55 acres of farm ground along Stinson Creek in Callaway County in 2009 with the help of loans from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and USDA’s Beginning Farmers program. They also rent about 250 acres of additional cropland. Waters continues to farm 75 acres on his home place in Illinois.

He buys inexpensive equipment and relies on his mechanical ability to repair equipment. “If you’re going to be a farmer, you better be a mechanic. It ain’t pretty,” he says as he points to some equipment. “But it’s paid for.”

He also buys “land that other people don’t want” and tries to improve it with innovative approaches.

Waters is a project manager in facilities management design construction for the State of Missouri.

He serves as a captain in the 1140th Engineer Battalion of the Missouri Army National Guard.

Eventually, Waters hopes to farm full-time and spend more time with his family. “With God, all things are possible,” he says.

For more information about programs for returning veterans who want to farm, contact Funkenbusch at (573) 884-1268.

*He found that farmers are the same regardless of geography.*



## Visit the 54th Annual Western Farm Show in Kansas City

The next Western Farm Show is Feb. 20-22, 2015, at the American Royal Complex in Kansas City. The show features hundreds of exhibitors with the latest farm and ranch equipment and technologies, as well as our Family Living Center and Health and Safety Roundup area – all under one roof – in “The Heart of Ag.”

## Crop Management Conference

The Crop Management Conference in Columbia, Dec. 17-18, starts the University of Missouri winter meetings. Farmers and their crop advisers will find 33 sessions on research and practical advice. Topics include cover crops, nutrients, pests, and soil and water. The crops include grain, oilseed and forages.

The latest extension and research are included from the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. Speakers also come from other land-grant universities.

“Big data” is the topic for keynote speaker Scott Shearer. He calls it “A Grower’s Most Elusive Farm Asset.” He’s from Ohio State University.

The conference packs in topics that will be heard later in meetings across the state. “This is the starting place,” says conference leader Kevin Bradley, MU associate professor of plant science.

This year Bradley adds professional development. That includes “Social Media Mistakes You Can Avoid.”

Returnees come to hear the basics, he adds. Most popular are updates from MU Extension on new crop pests found last season. Controls are explained. Also, specialists give alerts on potential problems next year. An urgent topic will be caring for stored grains. The big crop in 2014 adds importance to this.

## Winter Missouri Ag Events

**Dec. 3: Passion for Pigs Seminar & Trade Show, Columbia**

**Dec. 7-9: Missouri Farm Bureau 100th Annual Meeting, Tan-Tar-A, Lake Ozark**

**Dec. 17-18: Mo-Ag Winter Convention/MU Crop Management Conference, Columbia**

**Dec. 18: Missouri Governor’s Conference on Agriculture, Tan-Tar-A, Lake Ozark**

**Jan. 2-4, 2015: Missouri Cattlemens Association Convention, Tan-Tar-A, Lake Ozark**

**Jan. 8-10: Great Plains Growers Conference, St. Joseph**

**Jan. 22-24: Heart of America Dairy Expo, Springfield**

**Jan. 23-24: Missouri Farmers Market Association Annual Conference, Springfield**

**Feb. 6-8: MYF/YFW State Convention, Columbia**

**Feb. 10: Missouri Pork Expo, Columbia**

**Feb. 20-22: Western Farm Show, Kansas City**

**\*Calendar modified from Missouri Department of Agriculture Calendar**

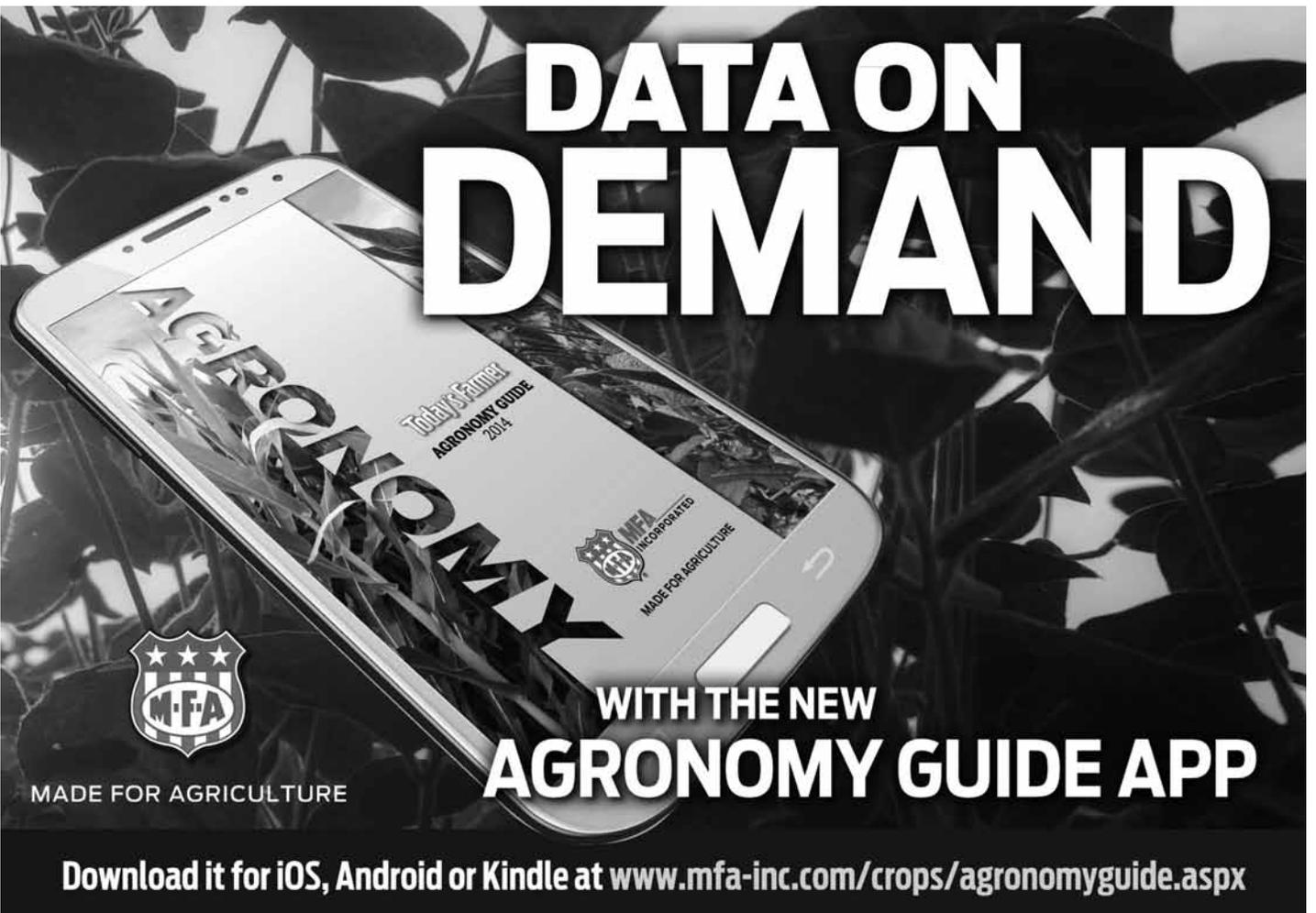
Other topics: nitrogen management, beneficial insects in crops and forages, when to spray fungicides for best return, biomass energy, efficient waters use, and more. Details are at <http://plantsci.missouri.edu/cmc/>. Those enrolled get a bonus at no extra cost. “We have access to the MO-AG Winter Convention, also held at the Holiday Inn Executive Center at the same time. MO-AG offers a big trade show,” Bradley says.

The Crop Conference name badge gives access, Bradley says.

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