FB News, the official publication of the American Farm Bureau Federation, will cease printing a paper copy in May, and will then switch to an online-only edition. You can have each edition delivered straight to your email inbox by going to the AFBF website, www.fb.org, and entering your email address in the space provided at the top right of the home page, under “FB News”.

If you have questions, please email Joan Harman at joanh@wvfarm.org or call 800-398-4630, ext. 306.

Articles for NewsBytes must be submitted by the 15th of the month prior to publication. Time-sensitive announcements must be submitted no less than 8 weeks prior to the date of the event. Electronic submissions, including photos, are preferred. Send to joanh@wvfarm.org.

WVFB Office Has A New Mailing Address

Nope, we haven’t moved our office! Because of changes mandated by E-911 emergency services, West Virginia Farm Bureau’s office has been assigned a new mailing address (along with nearly everyone else in Upshur County). For future correspondence, please use 62 Farm Bureau Road, Buckhannon, WV. 26201, as the new mailing address.

If you forget, don’t worry! We have a year to implement the address change.
## Table of Contents

- **6** Block Your Home’s Drafts
- **8** Oil and Gas 101: The Marcellus Shale
- **15** Mobile Ag Lab Update
- **16** Bohrer Wins
- **19** Food Check-Out Stocks Pantries
- **22** It’s All in the Genes
- **26** Rise and Dine

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**On the cover**

*Crocus*

*Eric Thomason*
Spring is in the air. When I think of springtime, my mind immediately conjures up such words as “renewal,” “optimism,” “new day”… Coincidently, these same words come to mind when I think about the younger generation of farming.

Whenever critics have expressed their doubts about the future of agriculture, I’ve paid them no attention. Traveling around the countryside I’ve seen our current crop of young farmers and ranchers who are excited, energized and optimistic about their industry. I can tell you personally that agriculture’s future is in good hands.

If there is any disruption from the sequester, it will occur because the President, through his discretionary authority, can make examples of individual government functions. But his claims that even janitors and security guards at the Capitol will receive pay cuts are just not true.

The President himself suggested the sequester in late 2011, as part of a deal with Congress to raise the debt limit. To his surprise, Congress enacted the sequester legislation, and he signed it into law. Now, he blames others as though he had nothing to do with it.

I applaud Congress for at least taking this small step in the right direction and slowing government spending. However, much more needs to be done to return us to some sense of fiscal sanity. I hope Congress will have the courage to continue on this course. We cannot have government that continues to mortgage our children’s’ future. The sequester was meant to force action, and it has.

So, when it comes to farming, spring is definitely in the air.

Nature’s First Green

Just last month, Farm Bureau held its annual Young Farmers & Ranchers meeting, where more than 750 young agriculturalists from across the nation gathered. These young farmers are taking proactive leadership roles within their farms, communities and the overall farming industry. They definitely have their fingers on the pulse of agriculture.

No longer are all young farmers just carrying on the family business. I am meeting more and more
Don Michael, WVFB Director of Governmental Affairs

Taking Care of Business

At this writing, ten days into the sixty-day session, 1117 bills have been introduced – 375 in the Senate and 742 in the House. With the Senate it has been business as usual. The House, on the other hand, has featured an atmosphere that has been colorful, to say the least . . . at times “charged!”

As expected, education is garnering major attention during the 81st Legislature. The assault on our right to bear arms has also taken center stage and prompted several pieces of legislation to protect our constitutional rights. The House, by a 97-0 vote, has already advanced legislation (HB 2471) to protect a citizen’s Second Amendment rights during a declared state of emergency. The legislation is designed to prevent West Virginians from experiencing a violation of their constitutional rights like those in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. On the agriculture front several bills are moving in committee and we are very encouraged at this stage. During National FFA Week, February 16-23, Senator Ronald Miller (Greenbrier County) showcased youth in agriculture on the Senate floor. He recited the FFA Creed and emphasized the need to support young people preparing for careers in our vital agriculture industry. As an observer in the balcony, it was heartwarming to watch the reaction of those who have donned the blue and gold jackets. A past FFA Week theme says it all – “You might outgrow the jacket, but you will never outgrow the experience.” Thanks to Senator Miller, as well as Senator Bob Beach (Monongalia), who had a hand in the program.

We can all rest assured that lawmakers will take care of business regarding state finances. Governor Tomblin set the stage when he presented a balanced budget “with no new taxes.” It is shameful that Congress can’t perform in similar fashion. It amazes me that so many “seemingly intelligent” people don’t think we have a spending problem and could care less about balancing the budget . . . talk about ignorance! I’m thankful that common sense prevails in “Almost Heaven, West Virginia,” where our public servants are fiscally responsible, overwhelmingly pro-Second Amendment, and let prayer guide each session of business.

The Rural Caucus is off and running strong, with a standing-room-only crowd at its first meeting. Thanks to Caucus Chair, Delegate Bill Hartman, and the other 42 House members who made this first meeting a priority. Look for details to come.

In closing, Farm Bureau thanks the West Virginia Department of Education for providing the opportunity to be a stakeholder participant at the recent “Team Ag Ed Summit” at Cedar Lakes. The two-day meeting created an excellent forum for idea exchange in charting a course of action to strengthen Agricultural Education in West Virginia. Agriculture Commissioner Walt Helmick updated stakeholders on Department initiatives and acknowledged his continued support for Agricultural Education/FFA. Commissioner Helmick has been a longtime supporter of the program and holds the Honorary State FFA Degree. Andy Pense, Coordinator in the Office of Child Nutrition with the WV Department of Education, shared insights into an exciting partnership with Agricultural Education on the “Farm to School” initiative spreading across our state. I will focus on details in my April column. Until then, take care FRIENDS, God bless and KEEP SMILING.
Block Your Home’s Drafts

No matter what season it is, a drafty house can be uncomfortable—and expensive. Air leaks can keep your heating and cooling system from doing its best work. That waste of energy could boost your energy bills by as much as 10%.

You can do away with drafts without a major renovation. It’s a matter of finding the source of air leaks and blocking them. Common culprits include door and window frames, ducts, dryer vents, crawl spaces, attic hatches and foundations.

Once you’ve found the source of the problem, you can implement a solution.

Leaks or holes in attic, basement or crawlspace: Try caulk, weather stripping or spray foam. For bigger leaks, insulation may make the most significant difference, but it’s also more expensive.

Dryer vents: Buy a clothes-dryer vent seal, which keeps outside air out by opening only when the dryer is in use.

Ducts: If you have a forced-air heating and cooling system, use duct sealant to block leaks in exposed ducts. Also, try insulating ducts in areas that get hot in summer or cold in winter, such as attics or garages.

Windows: There are many types of windows, and just as many solutions. Caulking where the glass meets the frame is one problem-solver. Using strips of self-adhesive rubber weather sealing on the inside of the window can be easier and less messy than traditional caulk. For the winter, you can buy a window insulation kit to create a “shrink-wrap” seal. For year-round energy saving, you may also use insulated curtains or cellular shades. They cost more than standard window coverings, but they prevent cold air from entering your home.

Doors: Caulking and weather stripping to ensure a tight fit can make a big difference. In the winter, try using draft snakes under doors. You can buy a draft snake or make your own by sewing a tube of fabric and filling it with dried rice.

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Over the last two years, the Marcellus Shale has become the top energy story in the eastern United States. The Marcellus Shale, named after an outcropping near Marcellus, New York, is located throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. It has been classified as the second largest discovery of natural gas in the world, with scientists estimating the Marcellus Shale contains as much as 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.

In north central West Virginia, the Marcellus Shale has been located at depths between 6,500 and 7,500 feet. While permits have been issued for Marcellus wells throughout West Virginia, the primary drilling efforts have been in the north central counties of Marshall, Wetzel, Preston, Barbour, Upshur, Harrison, Doddridge and Marion. As more counties are explored, the thickness and depth of the Marcellus Shale will undoubtedly vary.

As with traditional oil and gas arrangements, the owners of the gas interests receive royalty payments, based on the quantity of gas produced. Different wells produce at different levels, but new Marcellus Shale wells commonly have higher production levels.
Owners also may receive bonuses for signing gas leases. Unlike a royalty payment, which depends upon production, the lease bonus occurs whether or not any gas is produced. It is generally based on a per-acre price.

Shale "plays" (geographic areas targeted for exploration) have traditionally not been developed because they failed to produce natural gas in volumes sufficient to make the wells economically viable. This was primarily because of the low permeability found in most shale. Because of the low permeability, shale – including the Marcellus Shale – has been classified as an "unconventional" natural gas reserve. However, recent improvements in drilling and hydraulic fracturing (fracing) techniques have allowed producers to begin developing natural gas from unconventional reserves. As a result of the improved techniques and recent shale discoveries, scientists now predict that over half of our nation’s natural gas supply will be produced from unconventional reserves by 2018.

Hydraulic fracturing is the process used to free the natural gas trapped in the shale. During this process, fluids (primarily water) are injected into the shale formation at high pressure to break up (fracture) the shale, and sand is pumped into the voids to keep the fractures open. This process facilitates the flow of natural gas out of the formation, and improves the production from the wells.

Directional drilling is another new technique that has allowed producers to free the natural gas trapped in the shale. Directional drilling is a process where the well is drilled vertically, to a depth just above the target formation, and then the well is turned and drilled horizontally for some distance. This process exposes a much larger portion of the target formation, which allows the producer, through fracing, to increase the production of the well.

As you might imagine, these improvements in technology do not come cheap. The costs of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing have dramatically increased the cost of drilling wells in West Virginia. A conventional shallow well, drilled and completed to a depth of 5,000 feet in West Virginia today, would cost approximately $300,000. A typical vertical Marcellus well, drilled and completed to a depth of 6,500 to 7,500 feet, will cost between $800,000 and $1.5 million.

A typical horizontal Marcellus well is drilled vertically to a depth of approximately 5,800 feet and then turned and drilled directionally for another 3,000 to 4,000 feet, making the total length of the well almost 10,000 feet. Depending upon the length of the well and the cost to obtain the water, a typical horizontal Marcellus well will cost between $3.5 million and $5 million.

Recent shale plays in the United States have had a huge economic impact on the regional economies where each is located. The Haynesville Shale is credited with adding $10.6 billion to Louisiana’s gross sales in 2009. The Barnett Shale is credited with generating 111,000 new jobs in Texas. The Fayetteville Shale has created $18 billion of new development activities in Arkansas. In 2009, the Marcellus Shale development added 7,600 jobs, paid $298 million in wages and increased gross revenue by $1.2 billion for West Virginia. Experts predict that by 2015, the Marcellus Shale development will create over 19,000 new jobs, pay over $800 million in new wages, and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue for West Virginia.

Those who own large Marcellus Shale gas interests have the potential to become extremely wealthy, almost overnight. As exciting as that is, those owners will have new challenges to face, like dealing with big income tax liabilities. Wills, trusts, and other financial planning techniques can significantly help protect a family’s increased income. Please stay tuned for our next article, in the May edition of Farm Bureau News, where we will discuss these options for the gas owners.

Robert S. Kiss is a partner in the Charleston office of Bowles Rice LLP, a regional law firm with offices in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Virginia. He is a member of the firm’s Tax Team. Mr. Kiss was a member of the West Virginia Legislature from 1989-2006 and served as the Speaker of the House from 1997-2006 and House Finance Chairman from 1993-1996. For more information, please contact Mr. Kiss at (304) 347-1100.
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Young Farmer and Rancher Update

Susan Wilkins, YF&R Vice-chair

As a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee, I had the privilege of attending the YF&R Leadership Conference in Phoenix, Arizona in mid-February. I love to travel and especially enjoy the farm tours that are part of this conference. Arizona is an extremely unique state and this conference was no exception when it came to the amount of knowledge I gained about how folks farm in a different part of the country. I learned about summer monsoons, dust storms, and why people put plastic cups on the very tips of the cacti in their yard when it’s cold outside. (The cups capture just enough warmth to protect the growing tips of the cacti from freezing. The desert can get a little chilly at night.)

For a farm girl from West Virginia, the method (or madness) of farming and ranching in the West is pretty amazing. Even though the southern part of Arizona is primarily desert, with irrigation it is good for year-round crop growth. In fact, Arizona ranks 2nd nationally in the production of cantaloupe, honeydew melons, head and leaf lettuce, spinach, broccoli, cauliflower, and lemons. The area around Yuma is known as the winter lettuce capitol of the entire world. If you are eating a salad in the wintertime, it is 99% likely that it is made with lettuce from Yuma.

We toured a very impressive 10,000 acre vegetable farm. Naturally, in an area that only receives 7 inches of rain per year and is known for its perpetual sunshine, the Farm Bureau had to visit on a day that had just seen a ½ inch of rain fall. Because the ground is so dry and hard, the rain couldn’t permeate. I had no idea that ½ inch of water could be responsible for so much mud!

Only about 19% of the land in Arizona is privately owned. The majority of farmers and ranchers lease their land from the state or federal governments. One farm that we visited noted that they had been around since 1892. Naturally, I assumed that their farmland had been in the family since then. But instead, it turned out that they owned no land besides their house lot. Everything they farmed was leased and I learned that in Arizona, this is the norm.

Depending on what climatology system you use, there are between five and thirteen climate zones between the North and South Poles. On my last day in the state, I saw six different climate zones in the span of less than four hours when I traveled to the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon is located about 230 miles from Phoenix. We climbed six thousand feet within the first hour, passing through sandy desert dotted with cacti, to the chaparral filled with shrubs and brush, into the snow covered mountains with junipers and ponderosa pines, and finally to the “giant hole in the ground”. Locals would laugh when I mentioned how excited I was about seeing this natural wonder of the world; but it was truly a magnificent sight. God does amazing work! Our group’s tour guide mentioned that it was extremely special (and unusual) to be able to see the Grand Canyon with snow. In fact, due to a massive snow storm just the day before, the road into the Grand Canyon had been closed to traffic!

The best part of the entire trip – just like always – is returning home, back to the mountains where spring will soon be upon us. On our farm, we’ll soon be overrun with newborn lambs and calves. And seeing those baby calves frolicking in the new green grass is more of a wonder and more awe-inspiring for me than even the Grand Canyon.
first generation farmers who have transitioned into agriculture because they see a real future in it.

For example, on the flight back from the YF&R conference, I had the chance to meet such a first-generation farmer who produces hay. He gave up his non-agriculture career for farming, not only because it offers him the type of lifestyle in which he wants to raise his kids, but because of the many business opportunities it holds.

Bloom Where You are Planted

And those farmers and ranchers who are carrying on their family’s farm are becoming more creative in their business approach, using social media to market their goods and finding niches where they can stand out. They are designing business plans based on consumer demand and adapting to the ever-changing world around them.

Former Health and Education Secretary John Gardner once said, “All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants.” At Farm Bureau we strive toward this goal both literally and figuratively.

Through Farm Bureau’s YF&R and Partners in Agricultural Leadership programs, young farmers are learning valuable lessons of leadership, consumer engagement, grassroots advocacy and savvy business techniques.

Whether they are first generation or fifth generation farmers, we are preparing them for a demanding, yet exciting future in agriculture – a future that holds much promise. We are planting the seeds, now let’s watch them grow.
Is “Ag On the Move” just for students? Apparently not, as evidenced by the more than 200 parents and students who attended the Family Fun Open House Celebration at Watson Elementary in Marion County on January 14. Despite a rainy, snowy evening they patiently stood in line to view and learn about the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab, discovering that adults can have an awesome time learning interesting facts about agriculture through commodity-related teaching boards and stations. Their positive comments afterwards confirmed it. What a great opportunity and experience for all!

We would like to thank the folks, including our own county Farm Bureaus, who continue to sponsor and donate money to elementary schools to help make these visits a reality. This visit to Watson Elementary would not have been possible without funding from the school PTO, Title I Marion County Schools, and a $1000 donation from the Monongalia Conservation District and Don and Glendora Headley. Mr. Headley has been a district supervisor with the conservation district for many years, and a Farm Bureau member for thirty years.

We also want to thank the following $1000 donors for their support this past year for the Mobile Lab: Marshall County Farm Bureau; Cabell County Farm Bureau; Lewis County Farm Bureau; Wood County Farm Bureau and Denzil and Rita Huff. Each $1000 donation to the program is recognized on a walnut plaque which is proudly displayed in the lab. Many thanks also to Brittany Carnes and EQT Production for their donation of $2000 in November of 2012, and also to Phillis Hinterer and Dominion Transmission for their donation of $3600. And we don’t want to forget the generosity of those who attended our Annual Meeting in November, where we received $700 in donations.

We certainly want to express our appreciation to our other agriculture and natural resources teaching partners, individuals and the West Virginia Board of Education for allowing us the opportunity to collaborate, teach and share the agricultural story throughout the state.

If you are interested in making a donation or booking a visit from the Mobile Ag Ed Science Lab at a school in your area of the state, please contact the West Virginia Farm Bureau at 1-800-398-4630 or Helen Hardman at 304-472-8020 x311 or Mark Riggleman at 304-472-8020 x313. The new 2013-14 school schedule is filling up quickly!
Bohrer Takes Home the Bacon at WVFB Speech Competition

Katie Bohrer, a junior at Musselman High School, took the top prize in the 2012 WVFB Youth Speech Contest in November. Bohrer spoke on agricultural child labor laws and their effects on West Virginia agriculture.

Bohrer’s love for agriculture was instilled by her grandparents, Carolyn and Ed Bohrer. It is said that Katie was helping to bottle feed orphaned lambs before she could even walk. She began riding and showing horses at the age of six on her parent’s farm, and went on to raise and show sheep, competing in the Berkeley County Youth Fair and the Maryland Sheep and Wool Show. She has been an active member of FFA and 4-H, where she currently serves as her club’s president. Congratulations, Katie!

Legislators Discuss Anticipated Focus of the 2013 Legislative Session

A number of legislators joined WVFB President Charles Wilfong and WV Forestry Association Executive Director Dick Waybright at the annual Farm Bureau - Forestry Association Legislative Dinner in January, at the Wood County 4-H Camp.

Front row, left to right: Senator Donna Boley; WVFB President Charles Wilfong; WVFA Executive Director Dick Waybright; Brooke Fletcher, field representative for Congressman David McKinley. Back row, left to right: Delegate Bill Anderson; Delegate Steve Westfall; Senator Mitch Carmichael; Delegate “Woody” Ireland and Delegate Tom Azinger.
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Food Check-Out Week 2013 A Roaring Success

Donations and volunteers were both plentiful for the 2013 observance of Food Check-Out Week, February 17-23. Huntington, Charleston and Morgantown events all saw an increase in donations from last year. Final numbers are not yet in, but Women’s Leadership Committee Chair JoEllen Blair expects totals to be well above last year’s record donations.

Staff at all three Ronald McDonald Houses were happy to see their pantries well-stocked once again through this annual event.
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It's All In the Genes

This multi-generational operation knows that teamwork makes the difference

Alison Echols
Today, the average American is three generations removed from the farm. For many families in rural America this may be hard to fathom, as agriculture has been a part of their heritage for many generations. The Sam Tuckwiller family is no different. For them, farming is in the genes. This family is proud of their heritage, and it is this passion that drives them to be optimistic about the future of their agriculture endeavors.

**Proud History**

Sam Tuckwiller, along with sons Byron and Ben, operate Triple T Angus. The trio’s cow-calf operation is located just off of beautiful Route 60, not too far from the hustle and bustle of downtown, Lewisburg, West Virginia. According to Ben, “The Tuckwiller’s have been farming for probably five generations,” as the family has resided in the Greenbrier Valley since the 1700s. Rooted in rich tradition, it is no wonder Sam, a son of a farmer, and part of a prominent farming family, decided to remain in agriculture.

Ben and Byron caught the farming fever at an early age, growing up helping and watching their father and uncle John. After high school, the sons headed to college to pursue agriculture degrees, and returned to the Greenbrier Valley in the late 1980’s to begin Triple T Angus. They began with a few head of cattle and quickly grew to maintain about 60 cows of their own. Byron worked exclusively for Triple T, while Ben worked with Sam and John until the division of the Tuckwiller Brothers operation. In 1996, Sam and John decided to divide landholdings and cattle, and thus was the inception of the Sam, Ben, and Byron operating exclusively as Triple T Angus.

As the operation has evolved over the years, this team has worked hard to maintain a clear mind and understanding of their business goals and commitments. They strive to be progressive, which is evident as each one of them can explain their use of technology along with common sense to benefit their operation in Southeast West Virginia.

**Farming Today**

The demands of managing both land and cattle have led the three man crew to take on various roles within the operation. Byron balances the breeding program, records, and secretarial work, while Ben utilizes his versatility and expertise to serve as the head mechanic, and advisor on crops and feed rations. Sam, 78, considers himself the chief errands runner these days, but even though he may profess to play a lesser role in the day to day tasks, it is easy to see that he still enjoys all aspects of farming. Even with their own specialties, there is no hesitation to join together to complete a task.

Today, the Tuckwillers maintain a herd inventory of approximately 275 head of purebred Angus and commercial cattle. Each year, about 20 yearling Angus bulls are sold private treaty. Additionally, replacement females are sold to producers in the surrounding area. The Tuckwillers strive to develop a strong relationship with their customers, and strive for the ability to back up their cattle. Ben explained that they work with their customers to make sure they are satisfied with their purchase, and often purchase some of the offspring back from these buyers. This allows them to see how the calves perform.

**Eye on the Future**

The Tuckwillers have not turned their back to the challenges facing agriculture. Economic feasibility is of paramount concern. Sam says, “Feed, fuel, and fence,” are just a few of the inputs that are putting a strain on profit margins. Byron sites that constant reevaluation of farming endeavors is pertinent for future sustainability. Sam is also quick to point out that the global economy is a major player in the beef industry as there is continuing demand for the export of protein to areas of the world with increasing standards of living. Globally, there is also the factor of competition from other countries producing and exporting beef. United States cattle inventories at record lows, and recent price vulnerability, are frequent topics of conversations for the trio as they work together to consider options for their operation in this time of uncertainty.

The Tuckwiller family finds involvement in
organizations on the regional, state, and national level is critical for staying informed on agricultural topics coming down the pike. The clan uses their broad-based knowledge of all facts of the industry by serving in a variety of leadership roles. They are quick to agree that they see involvement in such organizations as Farm Bureau as resource to receive additional education, but also as a valuable avenue to share their opinions on topics that may shape the future of agriculture. “It is a dynamic business we are in, and we have to continually educate ourselves,” Bryon stressed. It is imperative to them to be involved, as they feel that farmers are often too passive when it comes to making their voices heard and stepping up to help for a common good. A distinguished West Virginia University alumni and 2008 inductee into the West Virginia Agriculture and Forestry Hall of Fame, Sam is no stranger to spending time away from the farm to serve in a variety of leadership roles. He represented the West Virginia Beef Industry Council as a director on the National Livestock and Meat Board, chaired the West Virginia Farm Bureau Beef Cattle Committee, and served on the American Farm Bureau’s Beef Advisory Committee. A member for 50 plus years, he has served the membership of the Greenbrier County Farm Bureau in a variety of leadership positions. Byron and Ben have followed the lead of their father. Ben has been extremely involved with the Greenbrier County Farm Bureau and currently serves as the organization’s president. Byron serves on the Greenbrier Cattlemen’s Board, and also serves the state of West Virginia as a delegate for the American Angus Association.

A combination of high land prices in the immediate area surrounding the farm and lack of available land has prohibited much expansion. With that limitation, Triple T has focused more on maximizing quality of herd. One way they are
doing this is through retained ownership of cattle entering the feedlot. By retaining ownership of cattle beyond the pasture gates, Triple T is able to receive valuable information on how cattle perform in the feedlot and on the rail. The farm is in their thirteenth year of sending calves to Gregory Feedlot in Iowa. The performance and carcass information generated influences their bull selection decisions. Their constant quest for genetic improvement focuses around bull selection as they view this as their fastest and most economical way to make changes within the herd. Their focus has yielded positive outcomes as they consistently produce calves that excel in carcass merit.

Even though Triple T Angus has heavily utilized retained ownership as a source of information in addition to income, continued high feed costs and market vulnerability may force the family to consider other selection and marketing options. They are prepared to make those decisions as they have explored selling more cattle as yearlings off the farm or using feed resources to feed calves longer. The adoption of newer technology like DNA testing may prove to be an important component of selection process, especially if Triple T retains ownership of fewer cattle in the future. The Tuckwillers have incorporated DNA testing to monitor genetic progress especially as it pertains to beef quality characteristics. Even though integration of this information is still in its infancy at Triple T, they have been pleased with the results thus far on three bulls sampled. The speed at which the DNA sample can be collected, processed, and results returned to the producer is a perk, especially when you compare this to raising a calf to slaughter to retrieve carcass information. This is viewed as another tool to make selection decisions, but the Tuckwillers will not abandon collection of phenotypic performance measurements.

Other challenges the trio remains conscious of are changes in technology, an example being add-on equipment that could prove especially beneficial when it comes to the agronomic aspect of the operation. These technologies can be quite pricey and difficult for small farmers to pencil. Additionally, they have not neglected environmental concerns that have presented themselves in recent times. Ben expressed concerns over potential future legislation and the implications of determining rules, penalties, and jurisdiction of new rulings coming down the pike.

“It is a way of life I enjoy,” Sam says. There is no doubt that he is proud to continue the farming tradition with his two sons and their families. The Tuckwiller family is optimistic about the future of Triple T Angus. Sam is quick to point out they are ultimately marketing their grass resources through beef cattle, and he feels this is important to remember this as the family continues to look for ways to remain profitable in the beef industry.
**Rise & Dine**

**FAMILY FEATURES**

Whether you’re celebrating a special occasion or just want to make breakfast more special, gather friends and family around the table to make some new memories together. These recipes are full of flavor and, best of all, easy to make, so you have more time to spend enjoying a delicious meal with the people you love.

- **Olé Tortilla Cups** — Zesty bites made with Johnsonville Hot & Spicy Breakfast Sausage Links can be prepped ahead of time and baked when you’re ready.

- **Cornbread with Spicy Sausage and Red Peppers** — A colorful side that pairs great with a tasty skillet dish.

- **Breakfast Sausage Skillet with Sautéed Tomatoes and Basil** — Have all the ingredients prepped and ready to go to make cooking this restaurant-style breakfast skillet really easy.

- **Crustless Mini Quiches** — Make these bite-sized beauties ahead of time and serve at room temperature.

For more delicious reasons to rise and dine, visit www.johnsonville.com.

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**Cornbread with Spicy Sausage and Red Peppers**

Servings: 8  
Prep Time: 25 minutes  
Bake Time: 20 minutes

- 1 12-ounce package Johnsonville Hot & Spicy or Original Recipe Breakfast Sausage  
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal  
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour  
- 2 tablespoons sugar  
- 1 tablespoon baking powder  
- 1/2 teaspoon salt  
- 2 eggs  
- 1 cup milk  
- 1/4 cup butter, melted  
- 3/4 cup chopped red bell pepper  
- 1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 425°F.  
Remove sausage links from casings. (Slice casing with knife and peel to remove.)  
In skillet, cook and crumble sausage until no longer pink; drain and set aside.  
In bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.  
In another bowl, combine eggs, milk and butter; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened.  
Fold in sausage, red bell pepper and cheese.  
Pour into a greased 8-inch square baking pan. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

**Crustless Mini Quiches**

Yield: 7 servings (3 quiches each)  
Prep Time: 10 minutes  
Cook Time: 10 minutes

- Nonstick oven spray  
- 1 sleeve whole wheat crackers, crushed  
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese  
- 1 package Johnsonville Original Recipe Breakfast Sausage  
- 1 package frozen broccoli florets, thawed, drained  
- 1 cup frozen corn  
- 8 ounces reduced fat cheddar cheese  
- 32 ounces liquid egg whites  
- Kosher salt and fresh pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 350°F.  
Generously spray 21 mini muffin cups with cooking spray. Set aside.  
In small bowl, mix crushed crackers and Parmesan. Distribute evenly between muffin cups.  
Cook sausage according to package instructions. Cut into 1/2-inch pieces. Evenly distribute sausage into muffin cups. Chop broccoli into small pieces. Microwave for 1 minute on high; drain well. Spoon broccoli evenly into muffin cups. Top evenly with corn and cheddar cheese.  
Pour egg whites over each of the muffin cups. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until mini quiches are set. Let rest for 2 minutes prior to unmolding.
Breakfast Sausage Skillet with Sautéed Tomatoes and Basil
Servings: 3 to 4
Prep Time: 10 minutes
Cook Time: 25 minutes

2 medium red skinned potatoes, (about 3/4 pound) cut into thin wedges
1 small onion, sliced
1 teaspoon rosemary, dried or fresh
2 tablespoons olive oil

1 12-ounce package Johnsonville Original Recipe Breakfast Sausage, divided
1/2 pint grape tomatoes, (about 1 cup)
1/3 cup shredded Gouda cheese
2 to 4 large eggs, poached, fried or scrambled
1/4 cup slivered fresh basil leaves

Salt and pepper to taste

In bowl, combine potato wedges, onion slices, rosemary and olive oil. Toss together.
In large skillet over medium heat, add potato mixture and cook for 5 minutes. Add half the sausages to pan and continue cooking another 10 to 12 minutes, turning occasionally to evenly brown ingredients.
Add tomatoes, stir to combine and heat through allowing the tomatoes to brown slightly and burst, about 3 minutes.
Remove from heat and sprinkle with shredded Gouda cheese, and top with eggs and a sprinkling of fresh basil.

Olé Tortilla Cups
Servings: 12
Prep Time: 30 minutes
Bake Time: 18 minutes

1 12-ounce package Johnsonville Hot & Spicy or Original Recipe Breakfast Sausage
9 flour tortillas (6 inches), at room temperature (thicker, home-style tortillas work best)
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Mexican blend cheese
6 eggs
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
1/4 cup chopped cilantro
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Salsa

Preheat oven to 350°F.
Cook sausage according to package directions; cut into small pieces and set aside.
Coat muffin pan and both sides of tortillas with cooking spray. Cut tortillas into quarters. Arrange three tortilla pieces in each muffin cup, overlapping to fit. Press tortillas gently and firmly into muffin pan. (Tortillas should stick up higher than muffin cup sides.) Arrange half of the cheese in tortilla-lined muffin cups. Top with sausage and the remaining cheese.
In a bowl, combine the eggs, milk, bell pepper, cilantro, salt and pepper. Carefully pour into cups. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes or until eggs are set. Serve with salsa if desired.
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