

# NUTS & BOLTS

**NFRBMEA** INC.

National Farm & Ranch Business Management Education Association, Inc.

Bringing knowledge that works to farm and ranch families

Volume 40 Number 1

## President's Message:

By Brent Roiger, 2026-27 NFRBMEA President

August 2026

Are we there yet?

As we enter the "dog-days" of summer, I'm struck by that feeling of taking a long drive with the kids and them constantly asking.... are we there yet? This sentiment is sad and a bit scary. For me, it feels like the summer is just flying by.

However, there are portions of the fall that just can't get here fast enough. Specifically, this thing we call an election. Good grief! How many times can I see/hear the same commercial over and over? I don't know about you, but I am not voting for anyone based on a commercial either for or against (and there are plenty that are against). Don't get me started on online information either. Those algorithms only show you what you want to see. Kind of makes you want to unplug for the next 3 ½ months.

Things have been busier than normal it seems this summer. Some personal (son's wedding), mostly professional. The NFRBMEA/NAFBAS Summer Conference in Louisville was very good. There were some very good speakers and the highlight for many of us was the Q&A with two USDA Under-Secretaries of Agriculture. One of our Distinguished Service Award recipients, Bruce Fowler (Missouri) had the connection to bring them in.

The attendance from our side of the fence was down from last year slightly. I think NAFBAS was down a bit as well, but their overall attendance still was significant compared to ours. Summers are difficult and that type of travel is

not easy. That said, I sure do hope we can get a significant turnout in 2027 when it is in Bloomington, MN. Yes, that doesn't make it easier for our members outside of Minnesota but please make every effort as this will be the last combined conference with NAFBAS for the foreseeable future and possibly forever. I'm really

hoping to show them a significant turnout by our membership.



We've been working on speaker and tour ideas for the upcoming conference and things are slowly falling into place.

We may be exploring the idea of a "day-pass" to allow you to attend for a specific day at a reduced cost. If you have a specific topic you would like to hear about at next years conference, please reach out to either myself or Past-President Deron Erickson.

Additionally, NFRBMEA awarded a second Distinguished Service Award this year to Dr. David Kohl; Professor Emeritus Agricultural and Applied Economics, Virginia Tech University. Honestly, now that I typed that out, I'm thinking "do I really think that anyone reading this newsletter doesn't know who he is?" Insert face palm emoji here!

Deron, along with our President Elect Jason Fewell (North Dakota), presented Dr. Kohl with

*("President's Message" continued on page 4)*

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## Member Spotlight—Bruce Fowler

By Kelly McAdam, NFRBMEA Communications Director

Bruce Fowler has been an NFRBMEA member for over 25 years, and is the recipient of this year's Distinguished Service Award, presented at the NFBM Conference in Louisville in June. Bruce has served as the Adult Education Specialist and Farm Business Management Analysis Specialist at the University of Missouri since 2013. Prior to his time at the university, Bruce taught high school agriculture education at Mark Twain High School in Center, Missouri and Hannibal AVTS and Putnam County High School in Unionville, Missouri.

Bruce got his first experiences teaching farm business management to adults during his days as a student teacher. His experiences further expanded when the agriculture education department at Mark Twain High School grew from one teacher to two in the fall of 1994. As part of this expansion, the school began an Adult Education in Agriculture program, which included young farmer classes, adult farmer classes, and participation in the Missouri FBMA program.

In 2013 Bruce had the opportunity to retire from high school teaching and become a part of the Ag Education and Leadership program at the University of Missouri. Here, his major responsibilities have been to provide leadership for the FBMA program, compile the annual FBMA Summary and provide professional development for Missouri FBMA Instructors.

Bruce credits past FBMA Specialists Jim Riley and Norman Rohrbach as having been extremely influential in his growth in Farm Management Education. Jim was particularly influential as Bruce was beginning the FBMA program at Mark Twain High School, and Norman was especially

helpful as he and his colleagues worked to refine and improve the farm analysis provided by FINPACK.



Pictured left to right: NFRBMEA 2025-26 President Deron Erickson, Bruce Fowler 2026 Distinguished Service Recipient (right)

Outside of work, Bruce and his wife celebrate their 41st wedding anniversary this summer. They have raised their family on the farm he grew up on, which has been in his family since 1848! He operates a small row-crop and livestock farm, raising corn, soybeans, hay, cattle and hogs. Bruce and his wife enjoy spending time with their two grown children and four grandchildren. They are members of the First Baptist Church of Vandalia, MO, and

Bruce is president of Ralls County Farm Bureau.

For those just starting their careers in farm business management education, Bruce advises that you get to know your farmers. In addition to their business, get to know their family. Remember that you are an advisor and the farmer is the decision maker. He also advises remembering to take time for your family. Be very intentional in scheduling family time and time away from work. Finally, don't be afraid to fire a farmer. Some relationships just don't work out—it is important to realize that and be willing to move on.

NFRBMEA would like to honor and thank Bruce on his many achievements, and for sharing his story here with his colleagues across our membership!



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## Opportunities for Professional Development

By Jason Fewell, NFRBMEA President-Elect

The heat of summer is upon us and the dog days of summer are especially scorching this year! Summer goes by entirely too fast. In many ways it feels like it should be a time to “recharge” from the seasonality and busyness of fall, winter, and spring in the farm business management instruction industry, but it is also a time to take in some professional development. Many opportunities exist for professional development in the summer. In addition to the national conference, I like attending field days to learn more about the production side of the business.

I have found that getting outside to look and learn about crops, rangeland, and animals is a great way to stay on top of what farmers and ranchers are learning and dealing with every day. Attending field days is also a great way to meet prospective students for your program and make new people aware of what we do. You might also meet some of your students at the field day, and I think they enjoy seeing that you

are interested in something other than numbers and are learning something new. This also creates opportunities for conversation.

When attending field days, I like to pick something new or different to learn about. Regenerative agriculture is becoming more and more popular. Learning more about it from practitioners of regenerative ag is a great way to learn, ask questions, and (hopefully) be able to talk to producers about it as questions arise or new producers come into your program.

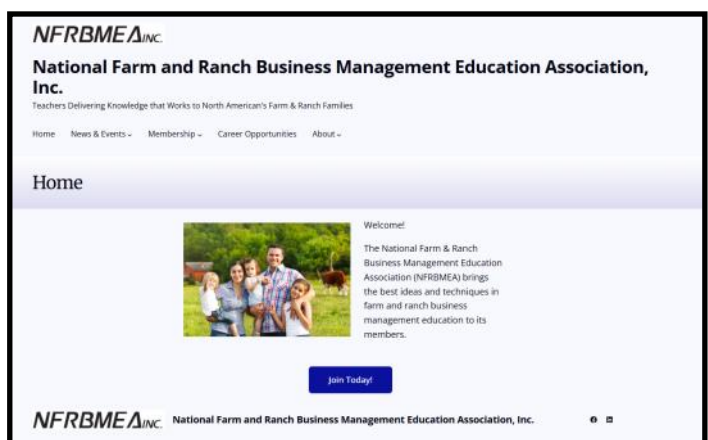
Take advantage of professional development opportunities every time you can. This fall, sign up for the monthly Power Up webinars to get prepared for the analysis season. Learning something in more detail then helps us transfer knowledge to producers in a more concise and clear way to help them succeed.

## Website Refresh—we have a new look!

The NFRBMEA website has been given a new look, as we have made a switch in our website builder service. All our great content will still be here! Some content is still in the process of migrating over to our new platform and should be complete by the end of this summer.

Our web address remains the unchanged at [www.nfrbmea.org](http://www.nfrbmea.org).

*-Kelly McAdam, Communications Director*



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## President's Message

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the award at the Bell Bank AgViews Live Symposium in Fargo, ND a couple of weeks ago. I then followed up the next day in Mankato, MN at the same Symposium and said a few words to that crowd.



Pictured left to right: Dr. David Kohl, Brent Roiger, and Lynn Paulson of Bell Bank

I truly believe Dr. Kohl was surprised and a bit overwhelmed to be presented with the award. He gushed about it and almost went

overboard in his presentation at the Symposium mentioning Farm Business Management Education over and over! He is one heck of a supporter of FBM and we were happy to present him with the award.

From the viewpoint of our students, I've been getting a sense that they are holding their breath for harvest. Weather seems to be a bigger factor

again this year. Last year was almost too good to be true in many parts of Minnesota, as well as other parts of the country; leading to the record crop yields and carryover. This conflict with Iran has affected things oddly as well with the price of corn seemingly "unlinking itself" from the price of oil. Meanwhile the price of soybeans is surprisingly good, all things considered, nearing almost \$13/bu.

Will we get enough rain to finish out this crop as well? Will there be another heat wave to stress what is currently out there? How bad will things be in the other states that are really struggling with drought? I wish I had the answers, but all we can do is be there for our students and give them the support, guidance, and knowledge we are known for.

It's important we take care of ourselves as well so we can give that support to our students when they need it. Stay in contact with your fellow instructors. Use each other as a support system. This fall could be a difficult time for our farm families. Let's prepare now for when we do get there to make it as positive a result as possible for all involved.

## A Glimpse of NFBM Conference 2026

photos courtesy Denise Reeser and Tina LaBrun



NFRBMEA members tour Churchill Downs



Denise Reeser introduces Conference Sponsors



Beyond the Balance Sheet with Monica McConkey

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**NFBM Conference, June 7-10, 2027  
Bloomington, Minnesota**

**<https://www.nfbm-conference.org/>**

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