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Oregon farmer graduates from elite national leadership program

April 24, 2019 – Angi Bailey, a second-generation nursery tree farmer and member of Multnomah County Farm Bureau, graduated from the American Farm Bureau Federation’s (AFBF) prestigious Partners in Ag Leadership (PAL) program at a ceremony in Milwaukee, Wisc., on March 17.

Only 10 farmers and ranchers are chosen nationally for this elite two-year program. Bailey was the first Farm Bureau member from Oregon selected to participate, graduating from the ninth class of PAL.

PAL provides advanced training to Farm Bureau grassroots leaders, with the goal of developing powerful spokespeople for agriculture who can help farm and ranch families through advocacy in the public and political arenas.

“We hear in Farm Bureau that most people are about four generations removed from the farm or ranch today. I learned through PAL that it’s important to think about what that really means, how so many people have absolutely no idea what we do on the farm and why we do it. The best thing farmers and ranchers can do to build greater trust and understanding is to be willing to have those conversations,” said Bailey.

The two years in PAL took Bailey from New York to Washington, D.C., London to St. Louis with lots of real-world homework along the way.

Her assignments included giving media interviews, meeting with lawmakers, creating videos (see Angi’s videos at OregonFB.org/pal), talking with urban consumers about agriculture, and public speaking, such as presenting a workshop about effective grassroots engagement at the 2019 AFBF National Convention in New Orleans.

“Looking back over the past two years, I’ve learned so much. My confidence has grown significantly and so has my willingness to step out and engage in different ways for Oregonians who work in agriculture, forestry, and natural resources,” said Bailey.

There were four class modules over the two-year PAL program. The class first took place in
New York City, where curriculum focused on farmer/consumer relations. The second module was based in Washington, D.C., and gave participants a deep look at U.S. farm policy and how to advocate on issues with lawmakers. The trip to the United Kingdom was the third module; it gave PAL participants a global perspective on agriculture issues, like trade and immigration, particularly in the context of Brexit. The last module took place in St. Louis last summer and focused on stakeholder engagement and how to develop collaborative solutions to complex problems facing farmers and ranchers.

“It was very inspiring to see the work and commitment Angi put into PAL over the past two years,” said Oregon Farm Bureau President Sharon Waterman. “We’re very proud of her and look forward to her ongoing leadership within Farm Bureau and her effective advocacy for Oregon’s agricultural community.”

Watch videos Angi produced, including one about how her farm grows Japanese maples, along with more photos from her experience at OregonFB.org/pal.

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* Note to Editors: “Farm Bureau” is a registered trademark; please capitalize in all cases.

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is a grassroots, nonpartisan, nonprofit, general farm organization representing the interests of farming and ranching families in the public and policymaking arenas. First established in Oregon at the county level in 1919 and the state level in 1932, Farm Bureau is organized in all 36 counties.

Oregon Farm Bureau President Sharon Waterman is an OFB Hall of Fame honoree and operates a Century Ranch raising sheep, cattle, and timber in Bandon. She is OFB’s 16th president.