Visiting the Embassy of Saudi Arabia at Fly-In

By Laura Maffei, California Women for Ag

The Embassy of Saudi Arabia has been gracious enough to host us during our 2015 Fly-In.

The visit, set for June 8, will consist of a 20-minute audio-visual presentation on the history and development of Saudi Arabia, followed by a question-and-answer session. After that, they will put on a small fashion show of the traditional Saudi Arabian clothing.

A little background on Saudi Arabia that I found interesting:

In 1999, Saudi Arabia announced the formation of the Supreme Economic Council (SEC). The SEC evaluates economic, industrial, agricultural and labor policies as to their effectiveness.

In 2003, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia put together an initiative entitled “Charter to Reform the Arab Position.” The goal was to encourage reform and participation by all in the political process toward democracy. Since that time, they have held summit meetings encouraging and promoting political and social reforms and democracy, as well as reinforcing women’s rights. Their first municipal elections were held in that same year.

In 2003, Saudi Arabia and the United States signed an agreement to strengthen commercial and investment relations. As a result, the United States-Saudi Council for Trade and Investment was established to meet at least once a year to enable representatives of both countries to review the signing of additional agreements on trade, protection of intellectual property rights, investment, vocational training and environmental issues.

In December 2005, Saudi Arabia officially became the 140th member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). As a part of becoming a WTO member, the Kingdom has signed 36 certified, bilateral market access agreements with other WTO members, including most recently, the United States.

Saudi Arabia ranks the 19th largest exporter and the 20th largest importer of goods in the world. In 2007, trade between Saudi Arabia and the United States was estimated at almost $40 billion. Saudi Arabia is the world’s largest oil exporter and has the largest oil reserves and largest spare production capacity.

Saudi Arabia’s agricultural development over the last three decades has been astonishing. Today the Saudis export wheat, dates, dairy products, eggs, fish, poultry, fruits, vegetables and flowers to markets around the world. Dates, at one time, were a staple in their diet and were their primary crop. This changed in the 1970s, when the government launched an extensive program to promote modern farming technology encouraging education and research, including those relating to exportation facilities.

They built a network of dams, which has allowed them to transform the desert into fertile farmland. By 1985, they were exporting products they had previously imported. They have some of the most modern and largest dairy farms; milk production per cow is one of the highest in the world.

One of the new areas in which the private sector is investing with government support is aquaculture. The shrimp from these farms is exported mainly to the United States and Japan. The country is also a major exporter of fruits and vegetables to its neighbors. Several factories in Saudi Arabia are dedicated entirely to the production of dates for foreign aid. They donate tons of dates each year to relieve famine and food shortages, mainly through the World Food Program of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The Kingdom is second to the United States in contributions to the program.

In 2007, Saudi Arabia was elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

In 2008, the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology partnered with the University of California-Berkeley and Stanford University to develop an academic curriculum...
Planting Our Future: 40th Anniversary Challenge

By Doris Mold, First Vice President

In celebration of our 40th anniversary, we are encouraging all affiliates to get involved with the celebration through a friendly competition by taking us up on our 40th anniversary challenge. Affiliates are encouraged to help “plant our future” for AAW by developing a new program/activity or modify an existing program/activity to somehow incorporate the 40th anniversary of AAW.

The 40th anniversary must be recognized during the event/activity and the logo and/or theme must be used somewhere in the promotional materials for the program/activity to be eligible for awards. Programs/activities should take place sometime between January 1 and October 1, 2015 (they may be continuing projects and do not need be completed by October 1, but they should be under way).

Projects will be judged on impact, quality, creativity, ability to incorporate the 40th anniversary of AAW and raise awareness of AAW, among other things. Affiliates may enter in more than one category. Participating affiliates will be recognized at convention, in the Voice, online in our various social media outlets, and in our 40th anniversary booklet.

We will accept competition entries among our affiliates for the “best” programs/activities in the following areas:

- Advocacy
  - General Public/Consumers
  - Elected/Appointed Public Officials
- Education
  - Ag in the Classroom
  - Member Education
- Career Development
- Leadership Development
- Networking
- Philanthropy
- Best New Program
- Others not specified

Members of All Ages Encouraged to Apply for American Agri-Women Scholarships

By Ardath DeWall, AAW Foundation Scholarship Chair

Daughters of American Agriculture Scholarships for further education provides two $1,000 scholarships to a farm, ranch and agribusiness woman or her daughter in two categories: the Jean Ibendahl Scholarship to high school graduates age 18–23 and the Sister Thomas More Bertels Scholarship to women age 24 years old or older.

These two scholarships are available to women pursuing a degree or credits in ag leadership, communications, rural sociology, medicine or any other courses directly related to agriculture. Applications for each scholarship are due June 1. Applicants must include three letters of recommendation.

Helen Whitmore Memorial Scholarship is for any AAW member to attend the annual AAW Convention held November 5–7, 2015. The applicants may be any age, but cannot have attended a previous convention. This year the scholarship is for $500, and we will award up to three scholarships at the discretion of the committee. Applications are due by August 15.

Make sure to include all parts of the application when you submit it. Not including all portions will disqualify your application. Please go to the AAW website, americanagriwomen.org, to download applications.

If you have questions, please contact Ardath DeWall at 815-864-2561 or shannondoah@frontiernet.net.

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My earliest engagement in agriculture was at age 1 and a half, playing in a hayfield as it was being converted into a commercial vineyard. My parents aspired to diversify our farm in anticipation of a third generation, a task which was becoming ever more challenging in the face of urban sprawl and in view of neighborhoods that had once been orchards. Choosing a crop became as much a matter of the value it would bring to our community as it was a matter of learning about production technology and best management practices. Agriculture, present and future, is dependent upon perpetual advancements, succeeding generations and understanding and support of others. Agriculture sustains perpetual development. Advancements in technology and practice enhance sustainability that will secure human food and fiber needs while maintaining environmental quality. While protecting diverse ecosystems, sustainability addresses land, water and natural resource management while ensuring food security. Farm operations will remain economically viable because sustainability rests in building and using what we have now while securing a better future. Agriculture sustains future generations. By 2050 we will exceed 9.6 billion people globally. While unfathomable, the responsibility to feed this estimated population resides with farmers, who produce the food the current 7.2 billion people on the planet consume. Farmers will have to produce 70 percent more food in the future. Additionally, food production in developing countries must be doubled in coming years to ensure that every person has an adequate intake of calories to survive. This challenge is daunting! As development for housing continues, so does the loss of precious land used for agriculture. The implementation of biotechnology will enable farmers to combat this issue by increasing crop yields while reducing environmental impact and chemical input. Agriculture sustains connections. Daily opportunities to grow and learn stand firm on a heritage of perseverance and resilience. Sound relationships are created that bridge the consumer and the producer, connections that span decades and are supported by ideals of trust and responsibility for others. Misconceptions about agriculture are addressed with these positive interactions, overcoming a major challenge that faces agriculture today. Our industry is undergirded and protected by a dynamic support system of service providers, manufacturers, marketers and consumers, among others. Agriculturists support each other in hard and happy times, ending even the most trying days with a sense of optimism. It is critical for agriculturists, like myself, to be vocal and transparent in our efforts to provide for others and do so in a way that resonates with the general public. With most of the population removed from agriculture, telling our story is critical to enhancing and exponentially growing production in a way that is sustainable for both human and natural resources.

Works Cited
New ‘Planting Our Future’ Affiliate Best Practices Webinars

This new webinar series offers information and tips from successful AAW affiliate programs and elsewhere that you may use to grow your own affiliate. Noon CST/1 p.m. EST.

August 19: Oregon Women for Agriculture Keeps Rollin’ Along with Oregon Women for Agriculture members. Oregon Women for Agriculture has an outstanding array of agricultural advocacy projects that they have developed over the years, including an innovative “moving” project. They will share some of their recent projects and how they get it all done.

September 16: Women Changing the Face of Agriculture with Penny Lauritzen and Pat Yeagle, Illinois Agri-Women. Illinois Agri-Women organizes the Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference as an investment in the future of agriculture. This outreach project gives all women the opportunity to explore different career paths offered in the agriculture sector. Our goal is to help attendees receive accurate information firsthand from actual women agriculture professionals. You will find out about how this pioneering program started and has evolved over its successful tenure.

October 21: Planting Our Future with Doris Mold, cofounder of the Women’s Agricultural Leadership Conference. Seventeen years of Women’s Agricultural Leadership — conference, mentoring and networking programs — and still growing! Find out about the genesis of this successful program and how it has expanded opportunities for women in Minnesota and beyond. The atmosphere at the conference is absolutely electric. Find out why, along with lessons that have been learned along the way.

U.S. Government Affairs Webinars

A new series dedicated to helping members broaden their understanding of the issues and policies impacting agriculture on the federal level. Noon CST/1 p.m. EST. Please register online at americanagriwomen.org.

May 21: Making the Case for Agriculture in the Current Ag Policy Landscape with policy advisers from OFW Law. Founded in 1979, OFW Law is a bipartisan Washington, D.C., firm that specializes in agriculture and FDA issues, including agriculture law. It is a full-service firm that represents clients before Congress and the executive branch of government, counsels clients on regulatory compliance, and litigates when necessary. OFW Law strives to anticipate and understand the relevant legislative and regulatory initiatives that face our agriculture clients. The experience of OFW attorneys and policy advisers, who have backgrounds in government and industry, coupled with proactive, responsive and effective service, has helped OFW Law build a reputation for depth and subject matter expertise. OFW’s government relations practice includes former USDA Secretary John Block and former ranking member on the House Agriculture Committee Charlie Stenholm, as well as individuals who served as senior Senate and House committee staff of both parties, agency heads, and other experienced legislative professionals.
History Project: 40 Years and Counting!

By Karen Yost, Past President

If you have not yet downloaded and read the first 20 years’ history (1974–1994) of American Agri-Women from the website, called “A Proud History, A Precious Legacy,” we encourage you to do so. (There are also a few bound copies floating around that you may be lucky enough to find.)

The book includes valuable information about AAW, including that our first leader was called a “coordinator.”

Sharon Steffens was very much a president, but in the early years of organization, many parameters were still to be established. Also, the book highlights that First Lady Roselyn Carter accepted an honorary AAW membership in 1978 and introduces you to Sister Thomas More Bertels and Helen Finney of “her” Alaska Women in Timber. The passion and energy Helen channeled to us during those early conventions was contagious ... and educational!

It was a sad day for us when AWIT came to the AAW convention for the last time because timber, which had once been Alaska’s major industry, was gone. We farmers learned from the timber women, and their presence enriched us all. Forests are a renewable resource!

The first volume of American Agri-Women’s “A Proud History, A Precious Legacy” covered the first 20 years: the affiliates, the meetings and honors, and the personal and heartfelt information that is vital to understanding who we are and what we want to continue to be. It is an amazing read.

And so, in celebration of our 40th anniversary, it is once again time to record 20 years of growth of this amazing organization. We need to record our accomplishments and trials, give recognition to leaders and new affiliations, and make mention of travels and gatherings. Our legacy is important.

For the second volume of “A Proud History,” the History Committee is collecting articles, photos and memorabilia from affiliate members now. We need to recognize new affiliations, proclaim the loyalties exhibited to agriculture in the last 20 years and tell our stories to preserve this precious legacy. We encourage input from you. In approximately 150 pages, we hope to capture the essence of AAW influence and growth in an attractive book that will be available on the shelves at the 2015 AAW convention in Maine. Articles (electronic files appreciated) are due by June 1. Please direct any questions to Alice Dettwyler at 503-559-4859 or email dasfarm@onlinew.com.

AAW Leadership Academy

Presenting our third year of outstanding leadership webinars.

Noon CST/1 p.m. EST on the second Friday of the month.

May 8: Selfies, Social Consciousness and Inclusion: What Matters to Millennials and How to Motivate Them with Kristi Bishop, prospective students coordinator, Oklahoma State University College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. In addition to being the largest age group in American history, Millennials also compose one of the country’s most studied generations. The evidence provides a wealth of information about what motivates this age group, along with how to best engage and involve them in your efforts. A Millennial herself, Kristi has a professional role that requires her to work with a demographic that many view as entitled, lazy and self absorbed. Join the discussion to gain insight into how Millennials can be our most effective leaders and how to channel their energy into productivity!

June 12: Conflict Management with Dr. Donita Whitney-Bammerlin, academic program coordinator, Edgerly Outstanding Instructor Fellowship, Department of Management, Kansas State University. Conflict is an inevitable part of life. Take part in this webinar to learn about effective conflict management strategies.

October 9: AAW Succession Planning with Doris Mold, president, Sunrise Agricultural Associates, LLC. If 70 percent of farmland will change hands in the next 20 years, what does that in turn mean for the leadership of many of our ag organizations? We are encouraged to make succession plans for businesses, but who is working to ensure that our ag organizations have a plan for a secure and vibrant future? Are we sourcing emerging leaders or do we frantically search for someone when elections roll around? Are we intentionally planning for the future of our organizations? We will discuss all of this and more while putting participants on the path of succession planning for their organizations.

November 13: Team Building with Juanita Reed Boniface, owner, JRB and Associates and Boeckenhauer Cattle. Juanita has logged thousands of hours as an educator and has an impressive toolbox to share. In this team-building webinar, she will lead us through understanding and identification of basic principles of teamwork, and the characteristics of the “ideal” team.

WEBINARS, continued from page 4

HARVESTING OUR PAST
AMERICAN AGRI-WOMEN
PLANTING OUR FUTURE
AAW Opposes the Implementation of Agenda 21

**POSITION:** American Agri-Women strongly urges Congress to protect the sovereignty of the United States against global governance and the anti-private-property implementations of Agenda 21.

**BACKGROUND:** The term “Sustainable Development” was first introduced to the world in a 1987 report (Our Common Future) produced by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, authored by Gro Harlem Brundtland, vice president of the World Socialist Party.

The term was first offered as official UN policy in 1992, in a document called UN Sustainable Development Agenda 21 issued at the UN’s Earth Summit and today simply referred to as Agenda 21. According to its authors, Agenda 21’s goal is to integrate economic, social and environmental policies in order to achieve reduced consumption, social equity, and the preservation and restoration of biodiversity.

Sustainable development proponents insist that every societal decision must be based on environmental impact, focusing on global land use, global education, and global population control and reduction which conflict with the United States Constitution and our foundation of private property rights.

**RATIONALE:** Agenda 21 is being implemented at the local level through ICLEI — Local Governments for Sustainability (formally, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives). ICLEI provides a framework for “local” community plans to implement international plans such as Smart Growth, Wildlands Projects, Resilient Cities, Regional Visioning Projects, STAR Sustainable Communities, Green Jobs, Green Building Codes, Alternative Energy, regional planning, conservation easements, reduced development rights, sustainable farming, comprehensive planning, growth management, and consensus — all of which are governed by UN International Law via Agenda 21 and directly affect the use and value of Americans’ private property.

Sustainable Development, using formats such as ICLEI, is quietly emerging as government policy in every town, county, and state in the nation masquerading as progressive policy while in reality implementing international law and restrictions on our sovereign nation.

Agenda 21 policies also seek to eliminate property uses that from the international view are considered unsustainable, such as industry, single-family homes, paved road systems, production agriculture including grazing of livestock, plowing of soil and confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs), building fences, logging activities, dams and reservoirs, power line construction, and economic systems that fail to set proper value on the environment according to the international standards set forth by Agenda 21.

The effect of Agenda 21 on American agriculture is of significant concern due to the onerous regulatory reform that is being imposed on farmers and ranchers across the nation, making it more and more difficult to comply and stay in operation. Accordingly, they give up and sell their farms and land, at the expense of fewer farms, fewer farmers, higher food prices, and a growing concern of a domestic food shortage, not to mention the loss of land ownership. Operating under these regulatory conditions imposed by Agenda 21 puts the security of our nation’s food supply at risk, as well as our right to private property and the sovereignty of our nation.

**CONCLUSION:** American Agri-Women strongly urges Congress to protect the sovereignty of the United States of America and our foundational concept of private property.

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**Directory Reorganized**

At Mid-Year 2014, a group of women — Marcie Williams, Bobbi Olivier, Jenny Stelmach and Karolyn Zurn — were asked to organize the Government Affairs and Vital Issues section of the Directory and Positions booklet so they would complement each other. This section is now listed in categories instead of alphabetical order.

I would like to thank my committee for their hard work on this project.

Karolyn Zurn, chair, AAW Government Affairs and Vital Issues