

June 6, 2022



American Agri-Women Call on Officials to Unleash U.S. Energy Potential

American Agri-Women (AAW) President Heather Hampton+Knodle called on U.S. officials to unleash U.S. energy capacity early this week.

Hampton+Knodle said, “There is nothing inclusive or equitable about our current energy trajectory. We need to do things that make sense and will cost less cents in the long run. If you reduce energy costs, you reduce food costs and the cost of all other transported goods both directly and indirectly – fuel for trucking and rail to deliver food. Electricity for supporting cleaning, processing, packaging and storing in refrigerated and freezer units.”

She outlined specific actions that policy makers and regulators should take including honoring renewable fuel targets, convening independent scientific advisory committees to review emission requirements and conduct current cost-benefit analysis, not accepting brown outs or black outs as acceptable policy by adjusting the projection and forecast measures as well as assessing penalties when outages occur and reparations to commercial customers with lost products, allowing continued development of petroleum, and streamlining mining permits for rare earth materials required by 21st century technology.

AAW advocates for an “all of the above” energy policy that includes hydroelectric, natural gas-fired power plants, clean coal technology, renewables of solar and wind deployed with minimal land use impacts, responsible nuclear, renewable fuels, as well as petroleum development and refining.

Hampton+Knodle added, “These high fuel costs hit rural areas even harder because people often drive farther for work, healthcare, groceries and other services. Yet, these are the same people our country and much of the world rely on to produce food, fiber and renewable fuels.”

She delivered the opening remarks during the organization’s “Rebirth, Renew, Refuel: Balancing Our Natural Resources” Symposium held at the U.S. Department of Agriculture on Monday, June 6th.

Featured speakers at the event included Paul Winters with Clean Fuels Alliance America; Kathy Reding Begren with National Corn Growers Association; and Hillary Leach with John Deere.

Moderator Jeff Nalley with Agri-Pulse led the discussion across topics related to the U.S. being a global leader in energy production; economic growth through investment and manufacturing; and the opportunities and challenges of building the U.S. energy future.

For 27 years, the AAW has coordinated a Symposium in conjunction with its annual Fly-In to Washington, D.C. Women from farms, ranches and agribusiness pay their own way to participate in the Fly-In. Past Symposium topics have delved into issues ranging from sustainable development, immigration reform, trade, taxes, water resources, property rights and public land management policies, food supply and nutrition.

AAW members followed the Symposium with a conversation with the American Petroleum Institute and shared their opposition to a carbon tax.

AAW is the nation's largest coalition of women in farming, ranching and agribusiness with members in 42 states. For more information, contact communications@americanagriwomen.org or visit the organization's website at www.americanagriwomen.org.

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MEET

Heather Hampton+Knodle

AMERICAN AGRI-WOMEN

President, Farm Bill Task Force

FROM Illinois

HEATHER'S BACKGROUND

Heather Hampton+Knodle grew up working on her family's farm near Windsor, Illinois and continues to farm with her husband Brian and their four children in Montgomery County where they grow corn, soybeans, winter wheat and black Angus cattle. Their use of technology informs their efforts to apply regenerative practices across their farm and capture data to participate in eco-exchanges such as carbon credit markets.

Heather earned her bachelors in agriculture news/editorial with emphasis in geography and economics and the equivalent of a minor in Russian language and area studies from the Univ. of Illinois, including an academic year at the University of Nottingham, England and exchange with St. Petersburg Agricultural Institute in Russia. Her masters work in post-socialist privatization was at University of Illinois Springfield as she launched her communication consulting business that quickly evolved into association management.

Heather has served as Executive Director for the Upper Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri Rivers Association and statewide organizations in Illinois as well as the volunteer President of Illinois Agri-Women. She was the founding chairman of the public-private Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation and the \$250 million, 11-county bond authority Central Illinois Economic Development Authority. In her time as an elected official on the Montgomery County Board, she helped leverage \$6000 in coal royalty funds into a more than \$15 million privately-funded fiberoptic to the premises buildout.

She has been appointed by four governors to serve on the Illinois Governor's Rural Affairs Council and was recently reappointed by the Federal Communications Commission to serve on the Precision Agriculture Task Force where she chaired the Accelerating Broadband Deployment on Unserved Agricultural Lands Working Group from Dec. 2019 to Oct. 2021. Heather also serves as Farm Journal Foundation's Lead Farmer for Illinois to advocate for agricultural research investments and training for smallholder farmers in developing countries.

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MEET

Gayle Baker

AMERICAN AGRI-WOMEN

Water Quality Chair

FROM Illinois

GAYLE'S BACKGROUND

Gayle Baker received her Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering from Iowa State University in 2010. Her career started with Illinois USDA-NRCS as a Field Engineer designing soil and water conservation practices, reviewing agricultural waste nutrient plans, and assisting field office staff with design and training needs. In 2014, Gayle switched gears to focus on animal waste planning and design with Maurer-Stutz, Inc in Peoria, IL. As a design engineer, Gayle is responsible for project management for planning, design, and construction projects related to livestock housing and manure storage, water control structures, and soil and water conservation. In addition, she assists with state permitting, EPA regulations, and is a Technical Service Provider (TSP) for NRCS. Gayle is professional engineer licensed in 7 states: IL, IA, MO, MN, TX, NE, and DE.

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