



Nebraska Farmers Union

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NeFU Participates in Productive and Positive National Farmers Union Fly-In

Lincoln, NE. Four Nebraska Farmers Union (NeFU) members were among the 250 Farmers Union members from around the nation who participated in the 2022 National Farmers Union (NFU) Fall Fly-In last week in Washington, D.C. The NeFU group had individual meetings with the Nebraska Congressional Delegation.

This was the first in person Fly-In since 2019. As a result of the COVID-19 safety protocols that limited the number of people who could be in a meeting at the Capitol, NeFU limited the number of participants to four this year: NeFU Vice President Vern Jantzen of Plymouth; Farmers Union Midwest Agency (FUMA) General Manager Jeff Downing of Elkhorn; FUMA agent Ryan Scheetz of Blair; and NeFU President John Hansen of Lincoln.

In addition to a lengthy and constructive Q & A session Monday morning with USDA Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, participants heard from two high ranking USDA panels.

The first panel, which focused on Marketing and Regulatory Programs included: Mae Wu, Deputy Under Secretary, USDA Marketing and Regulatory Programs, Katie Zenk, Chief of Staff, Marketing and Regulatory Programs, and Andy Green, Senior Advisor, Fair and Competitive Markets, Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

The second Panel, which focused on Farm Production and Conservation mission area included: Robert Bonnie, USDA Under Secretary for Farm Production and Conservation, Terry Cosby, Chief, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Scott Marlow, Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs, Farm Service Agency. Both panels fielded questions from Fly-In participants.

In addition to the usual Congressional meetings and USDA briefings, Fly-In participants met with over a dozen federal agencies and had direct discussions with, Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan, Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Kanter, and Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chair Rostin Behnam, among other leaders.

NeFU Vice President Vern Jantzen participated in the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) meeting with Chair Rostin Behnam. "It was a very productive meeting," Jantzen said. "They asked us questions about agricultural markets, and marketing practices. Hopefully, our meetings will open the door to more constructive meetings and more CFTC efforts to ensure a more level playing field."

NeFU President John Hansen, a veteran of over 30 years of NFU Fly-Ins was extremely pleased with this year's additional agency meetings. "While it is critically important to discuss legislative issues with our Congressional members, it is also critical we discuss regulatory issues with the agencies that impact agriculture," Hansen said. "President Biden's historic Executive Order on Competition is being taken seriously. NFU's "Fairness for Farmers" campaign is having a very positive impact," Hansen added. "We especially appreciate the leadership Sen. Deb Fischer is providing with her Cattle Price Discovery and Transparency Act, S.4030. Hopefully, all five members of Nebraska's Congressional delegation will strongly support her efforts to support Nebraska's largest single agricultural sector, cattle production."

Fighting for Nebraska's family farmers and ranchers since 1913.