The mission of the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation is to engage youth, educators, and the general public to promote an understanding of the vital importance of agriculture in the lives of all Nebraskans.

Support the Future of Agriculture
Together, we can engage all Nebraskans with an accurate view of agriculture and its significance to the success of our great state.

Learn more or make a gift at www.nefbfoundation.org.

Jesse Bower, Sutton Public Schools, and Amy Tolmlinson, Sandy Creek Public Schools, received the 2017 Agricultural Education Teacher and FFA Advisor of the Year Award at the Nebraska FFA State Convention. The award is accompanied by a $1,000 contribution to each teacher’s FFA chapter.

Meet the Foundation Team
From left: Becky Koester - Program Associate, Courtney Schaardt - Director of Outreach Education, Meghan Schafer - Executive Director, Jane Heany - Senior Director of Development.

“Supporting the future of agriculture through education is important to us.”
—John and Sharon Martin

John Martin and son Charles show grandson Jedidiah the corn on their farm in Buffalo County.
A Passion for Teaching. It’s been said that exceptional teachers love sharing knowledge. They feel a desire to share ideas, communicate concepts, and inspire conversations, watching as their students soak up the information and make the connection to learning.

John and Sharon Martin married 53 years ago and started their lives together as educators. John taught plant science at then Kearney State College. Sharon was a substitute teacher for 40 years and loved seeing children’s eyes light up when they learned something new.

While Sharon was teaching in the classroom, she realized the disconnect between the children she was teaching and the knowledge of where their food came from. “Even in rural Nebraska, some of these kids didn’t know that their food could have come from the farm just down the road,” Martin said. “That’s why we believe in and support the Agriculture in the Classroom Program.”

Nebraska Agriculture in the Classroom is a program that helps students and teachers develop an awareness and understanding that agriculture is the source of food, clothing, shelter, and other essentials of life. The program provides resources and training to K-12 teachers across Nebraska about ways to integrate agriculture into existing curriculum. The resources use a hands-on approach to learning and support Nebraska Educational Content Standards in language arts, math, science, and social studies.

A History of Growing and Giving. The Martins, along with John’s brother, Lynn, took over the family farm in 1974. They grow corn and soybeans and raise background cattle near Pleasanton. They have two sons, John C. and Charles. Both help with the farm and are the fourth generation to turn the soil in Buffalo County.

The Martins give back to their community in many ways. They volunteer for the Red Cross, serve on the United Methodist Foundation Board, and are involved in the Pleasanton Lions Club. Both John and Sharon are active in the Buffalo County Farm Bureau.

An Investment in the Future. The Martins are passionate about education and agriculture, so when they wanted to expand their philanthropy, they knew the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation would be a great fit. “Both John and I are interested in scholarship work,” Sharon said. “I am touched by people who want to learn. I want to help them reach their goals, and that is why we donated to the Foundation,” she continued. “We believe in the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation’s vision to develop strong agricultural leaders to ensure a bright future for agriculture in Nebraska.”

Greater Horizon Scholarship Winner

Brandon Nichols grew up in Bridgeport, NE on a first-generation family farm where they raise corn, cattle, and have a custom feed yard. Nichols received the Greater Horizon Scholarship at the Nebraska Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference in January.

“I’m very thankful for being selected to have received this scholarship,” Nichols said. “It is because of this scholarship and others that I have been able to reach my goal of being able to pay for my college education on my own and returning to the family farm,” he continued.

Nichols is studying Agricultural Economics with a minor in Entrepreneurship at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He plans on using his degree and integrating his education into the farm.

I would like to thank all of the people that have supported the scholarships that the Foundation provides. It is because of scholarship programs like this that I, and many other students, have the opportunity to pursue a higher education.

A Gift of Learning

From left: John Martin, sons John Clayton and Charles Martin and John’s brother Lynn Martin.

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