

AGRICULTURE

FARM LIFE

Listening to the beans



Mark Popham Jr. checks on the beans as they are unloaded after harvest.



Halleigh Popham takes a ride in the combine with her parents.



Photo submitted by Kate and Mark Popham Jr. Mark Popham Jr., Dink Logsdon, and Aaron Popham check the beans for moisture during harvest.

Kate and Mark Popham Jr.
Messenger Staff

Combines, grain carts, and gravity wagons are currently making their way through the soybean fields of Meade County as harvest season gets underway. After another full weekend of family combine rides, crock pot meals surrounded by farm equipment, and toddler baths discolored by soybean dust, we found ourselves feeling extremely thankful the beans told us they were ready to harvest in time for a beautiful weekend where the whole family could join in without taking time off from their day jobs. It does not always work out that way; some years, the beans tell us they are ready to be harvested in the middle of the week, and everyone requests their time off to trade a few days of work for well, more work, only in a soybean field. The week's to-do list is not set by convenience or availability, but rather by the beans themselves.

Great soybean farmers know the beans call all the shots – they just must listen. Listening to soybeans is an art form. To those who can understand their language, the beans share all the information a farmer needs to decide when harvest should begin. To those who do not speak “Soybean,” watching a farmer translate the messages offered by the beans can look like someone translating a foreign language. How do they know, without touching a single bean, that they are too wet to harvest, or should have been harvested sooner? All it takes is some good listening skills. Soybeans, like most field crops, must be dry when harvested. A combine is used to cut each beanstalk, and then the stalks bottleneck through the throat of the combine to be rolled around, where the bean pods break away from the beans. The pods then exit the combine back onto the field, while the individual beans are carried to the grain hopper,

where they will later be transferred to a gravity wagon or grain truck for further transport once the combine is full. All of this works only if the beans are dry and stay dry. Beans that contain moisture are not ready to be harvested yet. Farmers may walk into a field and pick beans pods to roll around in their hands, like what a combine would do. Bean pods that easily crack and fall away from the beans tell the farmer they are dry enough to harvest. The farmer may then put one of the shelled beans in their mouth, biting down to determine if moisture is present inside the bean itself. Beans that give with a squish inform the farmer that they need more time to dry out, while those that crack let the farmer know they are dry enough to be harvested. Once in the combine, the beans continue to tell the farmer about their harvest. While being harvested, farmers hope the beans are dry

enough to let their pods fall away, but not so dry that they crack during the shelling process. A field of jumping beans that hit the windshield of the combine while being harvested tell the farmer they waited too long – the beans are too dry, and yields will be lower as more crack and bounce away from the combine before they can make their way to the hopper. Lastly, while combines have impressive headlights, made even more impressive in the absolute dark of a secluded bean field, the beans have a bedtime, and tell the farmer when the workday is done. When dew settles on the soybeans, that moisture makes the dry bean stalks more pliable, preventing the combine from successfully cutting and moving the stalks. A farmer who tries to ignore the beans at bedtime will quickly find themselves with a clogged combine, in the pitch black of the night, wishing they had just listened to the beans.

Soybeans are not completely ornery in the face of a farmer's deadlines, though. On nights when rain is imminent and farmers are in a hurry to get the fields harvested; the beans almost seem to listen to them. Dew does not settle on the beans before a rain like it does during periods of clear weather, allowing the harvest to continue late into the night. Our family, like many farm families, pushed to get our fields as close to

being finished as possible before the weekend ended, and the beans gave us a much-needed late night with little dew. We ended up eating dinner at 10:30pm with tired spouses and overtired kids, but whereas other families might end up in the same situation as the result of a lack of listening to exhausted kids and requests to go home, we happily ended up there as the result of careful listening...to the beans.

A Thanksgiving wish from one little shelter pup

Submitted by:
Melanie Crane

This Thanksgiving, as many of us look forward to warm kitchens, full tables, and the comfort of belonging, one little pup at Meade County Animal Shelter has a simpler holiday wish: a quiet corner in a home, a soft blanket, and someone to love. At just eight months old, Delilah has already learned to listen closely to the world around her. Maybe that's why her oversized, expressive ears perk up at even the softest footstep outside her kennel. She is waiting for someone, anyone, to stop and notice her. Delilah arrived at Meade County Animal Control on Sept. 9 as a wiggly, bright-eyed puppy full of hope. Nearly three months later, she has become the shelter's longest resident. For a dog who has barely begun her life, nearly half of it has been spent behind shelter walls. Her spirit remains as sweet as ever though. She gets along great with other dogs and even cats!

Delilah walks beautifully on a leash, knows sit and stay, and takes treats like a little lady. She is petite (35lbs), easygoing, low-maintenance, and even happy to go out in the rain. And those ears... if they do not make you smile, nothing will. But as winter approaches, the shelter needs grow urgently. Meade County Animal Shelter is over capacity, and chilly weather only increases the strain. To ease the pressure, they are pleading with the community to consider fostering, even temporarily. Fostering can last a weekend, a week, or however long for someone is able to help. There is no commitment to adopt, and the shelter provides everything... food, crate, leash, collar, and covers all medical expenses needed. All the fosters give us space, warmth, and kindness. For dogs like Delilah, a foster home is more than just a break from the shelter; it is a transformation. It teaches them what a couch feels like, what a quiet



Photo by Melanie Crane

Meet Delilah: a pint-size bundle of excitement with ears that do not miss a thing.

night sounds like, and what love tastes like. And for the person who opens their home? They often discover that giving is its own blessing: a wagging tail in the morning, a soft head resting on their lap, a feeling of purpose that fills the heart in unexpected ways. As the chilly weather settles in and the holidays approach, the shelter hopes someone will see Delilah, or one of the many deserving

dogs waiting alongside her, as a chance to bring a bit of joy and gratitude into their own life. This Thanksgiving, perhaps the sweetest gift of all, is waiting behind a kennel door, ears up, heart open, hoping her chance will finally come. Meade County Animal Shelter 526 Hillcrest Drive, Brandenburg, KY 40108 Phone: 270-422-2064 Hours: Monday-Friday, 12-4 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

DTW 4th Grader kills Doe in Nelson County



Submitted photo

Lilyana Glass, a 4th Grader at David T Wilson, bagged her first deer, a doe, while out hunting in Nelson County with her father. Ana, age 9-years old, is the daughter of Jeremy Glass and Rebecca Glass.

Livestock Report
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11-19-2025
United Producers Livestock Market, Harned, KY

Total Headage 953		
SLAUGHTER CATTLE		
	Low	High
Comm & Utility Cows:	\$130.00	\$158.00
Canner/Cutter Cows:	\$92.00	\$132.00
High Yielding Slaughter Bulls:	\$138.00	\$185.50
Yearling Steers:		
(600 - 700 lbs)	\$290.00	\$330.00
(700 - 800 lbs)	\$280.00	\$322.00
(800 - 900 lbs)	\$294.00	\$294.00
Yearling Heifers:		
(600 - 700 lbs)	\$270.00	\$310.00
(700 - 800 lbs)	\$265.00	\$285.00
Steer Calves:		
(300 - 400 lbs)	\$320.00	\$405.00
(400 - 500 lbs)	\$350.00	\$420.00
(500 - 600 lbs)	\$325.00	\$382.00
Heifer Calves:		
(300 - 400 lbs)	\$350.00	\$405.00
(400 - 500 lbs)	\$340.00	\$392.00
(500 - 600 lbs)	\$310.00	\$370.00
Feeder Bulls:		
(250 - 300 lbs)	\$300.00	\$675.00
(300 - 400 lbs)	\$320.00	\$400.00
(400 - 500 lbs)	\$325.00	\$422.00
(500 - 600 lbs)	\$300.00	\$357.00
(600 - 700 lbs)	\$275.00	\$310.00
(700 - 800 lbs)	\$260.00	\$287.00

What are you missing?
Check your Classifieds!

The Messenger KY
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