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## **Women in Ag Survey Underscores Need for Leadership Skills**

**WASHINGTON, D.C., May 7, 2015** – Communicating effectively, establishing and achieving goals, and strategic planning ranked highest on a list of important leadership skills for women in agriculture to master, according to a new Farm Bureau survey. Nearly 2,000 women completed the informal online survey, which was conducted to determine the goals, aspirations, achievements and needs of women in American agriculture today.

“The survey results point to a need for a deeper dive into what leadership traits women in agriculture are interested in learning about in order to achieve their goals,” said Sherry Saylor, an Arizona row crop farmer and chair of the AFB Women’s Leadership Committee.

Another topline finding of the survey is that most of the women surveyed are comfortable advocating about agriculture, and most believe they have the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful. Social media is the preferred avenue of advocating about agriculture among the women surveyed.

“Farm and ranch women continue to be seen as credible sources of information on the production of food, fiber and renewable fuels,” Saylor said. “Working to develop connections with consumers and being transparent when responding to questions about how food is produced benefits all of us in agriculture,” she said.

Nearly three-quarters of those surveyed own or share ownership of a farm or ranch. One-third of women surveyed have not yet started a business but indicated they would like to do so in the future. Respondents cited obtaining financial support, business plan development, and prioritizing/finding time to accomplish tasks as their most common business challenges.

The AFB Women’s Leadership Committee sponsored the survey. All women who are farmers, ranchers, farm/ranch employees, employed in agricultural businesses, pursuing ag-related higher education or supportive of agriculture in other ways were invited to participate; Farm Bureau membership was not a requirement. Responses were received from women in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

### **The American Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Program**

The [American Farm Bureau Women’s Leadership Program](#) provides women with the training and education they need to become powerful advocates for today’s agriculture. Two key programs spearheaded by the program are the annual Women’s Communications Boot Camp and the year-round Our Food Link program.