



Rocky Mountain Farmers Union

7900 E. Union Ave., Suite 200 • Denver CO 80237
303.752.5800 • 1.800.373.7638 • rmfu.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2020

RMFU's 2020 Convention Going Virtual

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union's 2020 Convention will look different this year, yet the event will continue with the tradition of offering great educational workshops, candidate elections, and policy adoption.

“Based on careful consideration by the RMFU Board of Directors this year's convention will be virtual but no less meaningful,” says RMFU President Dr. Dale McCall. “The primary factor the board considered was the protection of the health and well-being of all of our farm family members.”

“It's well worth noting that we will have several great on-line educational sessions in the days prior to the convention. I invite anyone interested to register for these events which will look at opportunities for income from carbon markets, maintaining a pool of essential employees in the food chain, and how market concentration is shifting ag income to large agribusiness corporations and away from family farmers and ranchers,” McCall added.

The convention will be held on-line via Zoom with delegates, board members and officers utilizing tried and tested technology. The convention will begin at 5:00 PM Friday, November 20, with the business responsibilities of the general farm organization. Dr. McCall will address the participants, and delegates will consider bylaws changes and accept nominations of delegates to the National Farmers Union convention set for Feb. 28-March 2, 2021. After the conclusion of the day's business, the RMFU Foundation will hold its 11th Annual Harvest Moon Gala benefitting its education programs.

On Saturday, November 21, candidates for the RMFU Board of Directors and for NFU delegates will address members. Vice President Chad Franke of Weld County is running unopposed for re-election. In District V, Director Ken Anderson of the San Luis Valley is being challenged by Emily Brown, also of the San Luis Valley. District VI, Director Jan Kochis of Elbert/Lincoln is being challenged by Meg Caley of Mile High Farmers.

The main purpose of every Farmers Union convention is the adoption of policy priorities and Special Orders of Business for the upcoming year. Unique to this on-line format, the policy

discussion will take place in a shortened format, and delegates will vote the red line policy and Special Orders of Business up or down with no changes coming from the floor.

Delegates will have the opportunity to vote either by mail-in ballot or by “Election Buddy,” a safe and secure electronic voting system. These options will be available to delegates when they register on the RMFU website or when they call the office to register with Michele Parker in the RMFU Office. Delegate packets will go out to all registered and verified delegates on Friday, November 6.

“We are confident our event will be successful in bringing farmers and ranchers together to learn, to listen, and to have a voice in finding solutions moving forward. It has been a difficult time for producers, but addressing those concerns together is important as we approach a new legislative session in each of our states and a new Congress on the federal level,” McCall adds.

Of the three on-line workshops, the first will be held at 4:00 PM Tuesday, November 10. *The Carbon Market Information Expo* will explore soil health, carbon sequestration, and ecosystem services. A handful of companies are working hard to develop models for marketing and monetizing these ecological services for farmers and ranchers. Three of the leading companies - NORI, Indigo Ag., and The Ecosystem Services Market Consortium (ESMC), will join this virtual panel about the present and future of carbon and ecosystem markets.

The second virtual workshop will be held at 4:00 PM Thursday, November 12. *Essential Resources for Essential Workers* will look at an overlooked yet critical link in the food supply chain. Project Protect Food System Workers was organized to ensure that this group of always-essential workers is adequately protected from COVID-19 and appropriately compensated for their labor and for the risks they assume in service to the common good.

The third virtual workshop is set for 4:00 PM Tuesday, November 17. *The Squeeze Chute: Examining Market Concentration in our Fragile Food Systems* will be led by Mary Hendrickson, Associate Professor of Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri. As part of the College of Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources, Hendrickson documents corporate concentration in the conventional food system, paying particular attention to its consequences on communities and ecologies especially as farm income is shifting away from family farmers and ranchers to large agribusinesses.

Registration is open at <https://www.rmfu.org/what-we-do/upcoming-events/2020rmfu-convention-registration/> through November 5, 2020.