

Chad Selman of Skiatook was named the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award winner Nov. 10 at the 76th-annual OKFB Annual Meeting in Norman, Oklahoma. Selman won the award for his dedication to improving and growing his farm, which consists of pecan orchards and cattle in Tulsa County. Selman, along with his wife Katrina, also harvest pecans for other farmers and landowners in the area, and he sorts and stores pecans for the wholesale market. Together, the couple are raising a family the farm where Chad Selman grew up, continuing the family's legacy of agriculture and rural life. The Selmans' passion as young farmers have spurred them to modernize the family's pecan farm, including the use of computer-controlled sorting machines. "Most of the sorting is done by air, and there's also some technology that we use called an eye machine, and it uses color to differentiate between the good and the bad," Chad Selman said. "Any of the pecans still in the hulls or the husks it will kick out, and it will leave the good ones there." Chad Selman also serves as an alternate on the American Pecan Council, which oversees the national pecan marketing order, which seeks to improve the pecan industry through promotion, research and other programs. "With this marketing order, I see a really bright future for the pecan industry," Chad Selman said. "I went on a tour with the marketing firm that we are using for the American Pecan Council. After I got done with that tour, I couldn't have been more excited it's probably the most excited I've ever been for our industry." Chad Selman said the growing Chinese market for pecan meats is a bright spot for his pecan business, which harvests 90 percent native pecans. He said the variety provides the characteristics the Chinese confectionary market is seeking. The young Tulsa County farmer also build his cow herd from the ground up "starting with 12 cows and growing to more than 100 head today. "I needed something different to do besides pecans," he said. "A little bit of diversification is always good." Chad Selman uses the grass that grows in the

pecan orchards for pasture and hay to feed his herd. He is focused on improving his cattle by keeping his own heifers and selling the animals that don't meet his standards. The growing northeastern Oklahoma farm is the achievement of Chad Selman's lifelong dream. "Ever since I can remember, I knew what I wanted to do," Chad Selman said. "I followed that path, and I came back to work on the farm. Ever since I was four or five years old through when I was going to college, I knew I was going to go back and work on the farm." Chad Selman has been involved in a number of capacities for Farm Bureau, serving on the Tulsa County Farm Bureau board of directors where he currently serves as vice president, in addition to his service to the state OKFB YF&R committee. He also serves as president of the Tulsa and Rogers County Farm Service Agency Board and is the vice president of the Oklahoma Pecan Growers Association. As the Achievement Award winner, Selman received a John Deere XUV 560 courtesy of the OKFB YF&R state committee and an expense-paid trip to Nashville, Tennessee, for the 2017 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting. Selman will compete on a national level for the AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Achievement Award during the AFBF Annual Meeting. The Oklahoma Farm Bureau Annual Meeting is the organization's largest gathering of farmers and ranchers every year. At the three-day convention, members vote on grassroots policy, elect leaders and award outstanding individuals. OKFB has a presence in all 77 Oklahoma counties and serves as the voice of agriculture and the rural way of life. To learn more, visit www.okfarmbureau.org. Follow me on Twitter @SkiatookJournal. E-mail lindsey.renuard@skiatookjournal.com

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