



# COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

To serve all our members with meaningful and beneficial programs that reflect our agricultural heritage

## Mark Your Calendar



### January

24<sup>th</sup> Zoom Book Club **PG 12**

### February

7<sup>th</sup> / 21<sup>st</sup> Zoom Book Club **PG 12**

15<sup>th</sup> Foundation Scholarship Application Deadline **PG 1**

23<sup>rd</sup> Risk Management of Commodities Webinar **PG 12**

28<sup>th</sup> Community Garden Grant Application Deadline **PG 11**

### March

3<sup>rd</sup> Food Checkout Day Donations Accepted **PG 12**

7<sup>th</sup> Zoom Book Club **PG 12**

11<sup>th</sup> / 12<sup>th</sup> Beginning Beekeeping Course **PG 12**

15<sup>th</sup> Credit System & Improving Credit Score Workshop **PG 12**

For participation details on these programs and activities, check out the related information in this publication, go to [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org), or contact the office at 708-354-3276. You can register for most programs by using the member service center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).

## Question of the Month



The Cook County Farm Bureau is set to begin another Zoom book club activity this winter. What is the book that will be used?

Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276, fax your answer to 708-579-6056, or email to [fbcooperator@gmail.com](mailto:fbcooperator@gmail.com) to enter the drawing for a \$25 gas card.

(Please include name, FB number, and phone number)

### November Winner: Pamela Boza

**Question:** Who was elected to the CCFB Board of Directors during the 102nd CCFB annual meeting?

**Answer:** Greg Stack



## CCFB YOUNG LEADERS GIVING BACK

Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leaders selected preparing dinner for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House near Advocate as their service project for 2022. Pictured left to right (back row): Daniel Kucharzak, Maelee Heinsohn, and (front row) Bob Rohrer, Jonny Poole, Tom Poole, and Bona Heinsohn. Individuals ages 18-35 with an interest in agriculture are encouraged to join the Young Leaders.

## 2023 Foundation Scholarship Apps Now Being Accepted

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has opened the 25th Annual "Farm and Food" Agricultural Scholarship Program. The Foundation offers college students who are pursuing an ag-related career the opportunity to start or continue their higher education with a scholarship. Last year, the Foundation provided six scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 each.

The Board will name the top applicant as the Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship recipient.

### The Foundation Board has set the following criteria for the scholarship program:

- Applications must be completed and submitted to the CCFB Foundation by February 15, 2023. Late applications will not be considered. Applications can be submitted electronically.
- All applicants (Applying for the "Farm and Food" Ag Scholarship program only) must be members or dependents of members in good standing with the Cook County Farm Bureau for at least one year.

- All applicants must be high school graduates accepted for enrollment by, or currently enrolled at, an accredited college, university, or community college.
- All applicants must be pursuing a field of study in agriculture, agri-business, or an agricultural related major with a focus on an ag-related career (food, fuel, or fiber).

*Scholarships continues on Page 2*

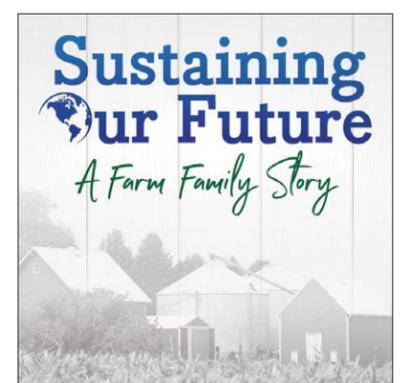
## "Sustaining Our Future: A Family Farm Story" Debuts

Farm Bureau is proud to highlight the work our members are doing to improve soil health and water quality through a documentary titled "Sustaining Our Future: A Family Farm Story," which debuted in December at the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Annual Meeting attendees were granted a sneak peak of the hourlong documentary, which follows the Ganschow family of Bureau County to illustrate how three generations of farmers approach sustainability. Their efforts are representative of the farmer spirit and collaboration required to

achieve the goals of the Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, which involves the work of countless Farm Bureau members implementing solutions on their farms.

Illinois farmers have a proven track record when it comes to caring for our natural resources. Whether implementing new solutions to utilize fertilizer efficiently, installing conservation practices, or engaging in meaningful discussions with university researchers and industry partners, farmer efforts continue to drive innovative solutions that improve their farms while protecting the environment.



### WATCH ONLINE:

"Sustaining Our Future: A Family Farm Story" is available at [youtube.com/ILFarmBureauIFB](https://www.youtube.com/ILFarmBureauIFB).

## Who We Are

Cook County Farm Bureau is made up of many members including farmers, landowners, foodies, greenhouse operators, specialty growers, food consumers and customers of the Farm Bureau's affiliated companies (Country Financial, Conserv FS, IAA Credit Union, etc).

We bring together many members with diverse backgrounds and food interests in an effort to support the success of local farmers and to keep agriculture present and strong in Cook County.

This Co-Operator publication for members is designed to share more about how Cook County Farm Bureau is working for local farmers and agriculture and to help our members know

more about farming, food, fiber and fuel that comes from farming.

As an added value, we are able to provide great membership deals, savings, discounts, benefits, programming and activities that reflect our agricultural heritage and modern expectations.

Please enjoy reading and thank you for your support of area agriculture and your membership!

# Scholarships

Continued from Page 1

- Scholarships will be awarded following application evaluation for exceptional academic ability, financial need, demonstrated interest in agriculture, evidence of self-help, and character.



Agricultural Mechanics

In addition to the "Farm and Food" Foundation Scholarship, there are two other scholarship opportunities:

**CONSERV FS Scholarship** – This scholarship does not require a CCFB membership, however the applicant must be an FFA member in a Cook County high school FFA program or be attending a Cook County high school that offers ag-related classes and the applicant must be taking classes within the curriculum. *Value: \$1,000*



Animal Sciences

**Stuenkel Family Scholarship** – A CCFB membership is required, however, there is no waiting period. Applicants can be a previous recipient of a CCFB Foundation scholarship. Applicants must be a high school graduate or be graduating in 2023. This scholarship has been designed for members pursuing higher education with a focus on an ag-related career in the areas of technology, education, leadership development, and/or mental health. *Value: TBD*



Plant Sciences

**What is an Agricultural Career?**

Farming, of course, but there is so much more! Jobs in agriculture include plant sciences, animal sciences, agricultural mechanics, agricultural business, environmental services, food science, and natural resources.

For more information or to complete an application online, please visit [www.cookcfb.org/foundation](http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation) or contact the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation by phone at (708) 354-3276.

# HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN DECEMBER

- Engaged with Cook County legislators and staff to advocate for the expansion of urban farming opportunities within Cook County.
- Connected members with local member businesses to purchase Christmas trees, wreaths, poinsettias and more, locally.
- Assisted members in renewing their Cook County Farm Bureau membership.
- Informed Members of the Foundation's Scholarship program where college students can apply for a scholarship if pursuing an ag-related career.



## Gratitude Journal

Each month, there are people that go out of their way to lend a hand to help with our cause in many ways, both big and small. We appreciate it greatly!

**The Cook County Farm Bureau thanks...**

- Tom and Jonny Poole and Daniel Kucharzak for preparing dinner for families staying at the Ronald McDonald House near Advocate as part of the Young Leaders Committee 2022 service project.
- The member who reached out about the rail strike action request. We truly appreciate you taking time to discuss the issue and to share your knowledge with us!
- Member Charles "Chip" Hulne for taking the old pop machine off our hands and hauling it away.
- Karen Biernacki, Jim Bloomstrand, Ruth Zeldenrust, and Janet McCabe for their work with voting members to recruit and retain as a part of the Master Member Club in 2022.
- Volunteer of the Year, Greg Stack, and all of our outstanding volunteers for selflessly providing time, knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm to Cook County Farm Bureau programming in 2022. Your efforts not only served members but also resulted in a number of awards from the Illinois Farm Bureau including the Pinnacle Award!
- Board, team, and volunteer members who participated in action requests throughout the year!
- The University of Illinois Master Gardener South Suburban Unit, Extension Horticulture Coordinator, Margaret Westmeyer Burns, Extension Horticulture Educator, Nancy Kreith, and all the Master Gardner volunteers who fielded emails, calls, inquiries, questions, and soil test interpretations received through the Farm Bureau MG Help Desk in 2022! Thank you for your expertise, time, and efforts in serving our members and surrounding Cook County community inquiries.
- Eva Manzke, Illinois Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year, and Greg Stack, Illinois Ag in the Classroom Volunteer of the Year, for representing Cook County Farm Bureau so very well during the recent Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.
- The many voting and associate members who have renewed their membership for 2023!**

## Co-Operator

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# Downwind “Family History”

by **BOB ROHRER, CCFB MANAGER**



There is something special about having a legacy with farm history and connections. When I meet someone, invariably, the person tells me about their grandparents or uncle or cousins that farmed at one time.

The conversation usually connects with the individual's childhood and his or her memories gained through visits and moments on that farm. I am so glad that farm experiences are a special connection we all commonly seem to share.

Over Thanksgiving, my Dad, the Farmer, shared a farm legacy story. Dad told me that my brother was recently contacted by a friend with a question. That friend purchased an antique tractor, an Oliver 770, and found the name “Rohrer” in the tractor owner's manual. The friend asked my brother if “the Oliver 770 was owned by one of his Rohrer relations?”. After some quick research (through Dad), my brother was excited to learn the tractor was originally owned by our great grandfather, Elden Rohrer.

Great-grandpa Rohrer had sold the Oliver 770 tractor at a farm auction upon my great-grandfather's retirement from farming in the mid-70s. I can remember seeing (and climbing on) that Oliver 770 tractor parked in the corn crib on great grandpa's farm. I can also remember that auction day almost 50 years ago with hayracks loaded with smaller farm items that were auctioned off upon by great-grandparents retirement.

This tractor legacy story caused me to reflect on my scattered memories of my great-grandfather, Elden Rohrer (and my great-grandmother Alta). Their farm affected my life greatly. However, I only have vague memories of it. Great-grandfather's farm was where I lost my left arm in a grain auger accident at age 3...obviously affecting and impacting the rest of my life. It may have been that Oliver 770 tractor that was driving the pto (power take off) for the auger that day?

My accident was certainly not a family first. In fact, my great-grandfather lost his index finger off of his right hand prior to World War I. I regret not knowing the circumstances.



**My Dad, the Farmer, checks out the Oliver 770 originally owned by his grandfather, my great grandfather.**

I do know that my great-grandparents were born in the late 1800s and were part of the generation that lived the experience of farming transition in our country from “horse” power agriculture to horsepower agriculture. They saw so many revolutionary changes during their lifetime. Way too late now, I think it would be great to sit down and hear those transition stories first-hand from my great-grandparents.

My memories of their farm are well removed from the horses. They lived on and rented a farm (when I was young) next to strip mine operation ... I'm not sure how that farm never fell to the coal mining land destruction. They lived in an old farmhouse that came with the rented farm. Oddly, I think it had running water but no toilet as I vividly remember the home's outhouse. That outhouse was a “two holer” and a thick catalog was a special feature in it. The “two-holer” potential scenarios generate questions in my mind.

I am struck by the sentimental tug to my heart I experienced through the connection discovery of this Oliver 770 tractor. Many times, all we need to keep “family history” alive is an object, a symbol, that connection. In this case, a tractor. Maybe because it makes the family history real. I guess it just comes with that sense of pride that I came from farm background with deep farm roots. That piece of history helps prove it!

Through quick action, my brother set up a “visit” so that Dad, the Farmer, could look at the Oliver 770 as a piece of family history. My brother is working hard to achieve “favorite son” status with Dad and he may have done it!

My brother has told me he has offered on several occasions in recent weeks to purchase the tractor from the current owner. I found myself saying to him “hey, I'm in on that!”. Why did I say that...What am I going to do with a tractor and where would I put it?

The plan: I could gift it to the Farmer and regain favorite son status!

## USDA Creating a Farm Service Agency in Cook County

The USDA is creating 11 urban Farm Service Agency offices (pilot programs) in the United States with a focus on serving urban agriculture and the underserved populace. One of those FSA offices is slated to be located in Cook County.

We are encouraging Cook County urban farmers and producers to sign up to become FSA customers. As a reminder, completing the form number 8040 – 27 to become FSA customers provides the individual with the ability to...

- Take advantage of the farm safety net programming offered by the USDA
- Vote for a candidate within their Local Administrative Area to serve on the Urban Agriculture FSA committee (3 total), seek nomination
- Become elected to the Urban Agriculture FSA committee.
- If a producer is already a FSA customer, that individual can elect to change their service office to the Cook County urban agriculture FSA office.

There are several nominated candidates to serve on the Urban Agriculture FSA committee in each of the three districts to be elected in their Local Administrative Area. The deadline for nominations to run for this position was December 2. The election ballots will be sent January 3 to eligible urban farmers and producers to vote on a candidate within their Local Administrative Area with a January 31 deadline to cast the ballot. Included with the ballot will be a bio of the individual(s) seeking the position.

The elected three-person Urban Agriculture FSA committee will begin responsibilities on March 1. The committee members serve three-year terms but since this is a new committee, the committee members will determine which individuals are serving a one, two and so that there can be a regular rotation election each year.

The three-person Urban Agriculture FSA committee will be responsible for hiring the Cook County Executive Director to run the office as well as a program technician. The Cook County office is scheduled to be a four-person office with the previous two individuals and 2 individuals from NRCS.

The location of the office has not yet been identified but the USDA lease company criteria includes the office to be located in Cook County near public transportation and major highways.

Additional information and a link to the list of the Q and A information provided by the FSA can be accessed at <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/cook-county-fsa-resources>.

**Please call the Cook County Farm Bureau at (708) 354-3276 with questions or for assistance.**



## Recipe of the Month

### Fresh Basil Cocktails

by Ray's Quality Greenhouse, Donna Nykaza-Jones

#### GIN BASIL SMASH:

- 2 oz Gin
- 1 oz fresh lemon juice
- 2/3 oz simple syrup
- Fresh basil leaves, about 10 (3 if large)
- Basil sprig for garnish

*Muddle basil leaves with lemon juice and simple syrup. Add ice, gin and shake. Strain into glass that has ice in it, garnish with basil sprig.*

#### PINEAPPLE BASIL COCKTAIL:

- 3 basil leaves
- ½ lime, juiced
- ¼ c pineapple juice
- 1.5 oz Gin, ice and club soda

*Muddle basil, lime, add pineapple juice, gin, ice and soda water...Cheers!*

View or Download all 2022 Recipes online at: <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/recipes>

**We need your recipes for  
the soon to be...2023!**

Do you have any recipes that feature fresh, local ingredients to share? Consider submitting to be a part of the CCFB 2023 Recipe Booklet by March 15th.

Email: [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org) OR  
Mail: CCFB/Recipes 6438 Joliet Rd Countryside, IL 60525.

# CCFB impacts 2022 Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

We are coming off of a very successful year. At the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in December, Cook County Farm Bureau was recognized in a number of ways...

- Summit teacher, Eva Manzke, received Illinois Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year honors.
- Greg Stack was recognized by the Illinois Ag in the Classroom as a Volunteer of the Year.
- Will County Farm Bureau presented to Cook County Farm Bureau a Chief Illiniwek wall hanging to commemorate and memorialize the service of Tim Stuenkel.
- Cook County Farm Bureau volunteers met with Cook County legislators.
- Cook County Farm Bureau submitted substantial Policy Resolutions that were adopted by the IFB delegates and will be used across the state to strengthen rural-urban partnerships with individuals and groups.
- A podcast featuring Eva and Katrina was recorded for Illinois Farm Bureau Partners.
- The Cook County Farm Bureau Commodities/Marketing Team received an Activity of Excellence award for Farm Crawl for the Public.
- Cook County Farm Bureau received the Pinnacle Award for the large County Farm Bureau group, the highest County Farm Bureau award recognizing complete and well-rounded organizational excellence including goals/ objectives, planning, implementation and results.

Cook County Farm Bureau is well respected across the state. This is because of the energy, commitment and leadership provided by a tremendous group of volunteers on the Cook County Farm Bureau board and teams as well as the skilled staff of the organization.



**CCFB Delegates:** (L to R) Janet McCabe, Dan Biernacki and Gerry Kopping represented Cook County Farm Bureau as delegates during the Illinois Farm Bureau policy debate and approval process. A number of Cook County Farm Bureau generated policy resolutions were approved during the policy process on the delegate floor. See **Page 9** for an article regarding those Cook County Farm Bureau generated policies.



**Pinnacle Award:** Cook County Farm Bureau Pres., Janet McCabe, accepted on behalf of the Cook County Farm Bureau the Pinnacle Award from Illinois Farm Bureau Pres. Richard Guebert Jr.. The Pinnacle Award is the highest – level award given to the most outstanding County Farm Bureau in each membership group recognizing overall program excellence, planning, and implementation as they relate to the county Farm Bureau’s goals and priorities.



**Volunteer Award:** Cook County Farm Bureau Board member, Greg Stack, was recognized on stage at the Illinois Farm Bureau annual meeting as an Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Volunteer of the Year for his work he did for the Ag Literacy Team programming this past year.



**Teacher of the Year Award:** Eva Manzke received recognition from Illinois Farm Bureau Pres., Richard Guebert, Jr., as the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year for her efforts to teach agriculture concepts in her classrooms and afterschool program in Summit. She will represent Illinois for the national teacher of the year competition.

## 5 Questions for Janet McCabe, CCFB President

**What is your favorite responsibility within the Cook County Farm Bureau?**

Presiding over the board meetings and being able to hear about all the wonderful things all the teams are doing to enrich our members. My other favorite responsibility is going to meetings at IL Farm Bureau and being able to bring that information back to our county to help our members stay informed.

**What is one of your strongest memories?** A memory stamped into my mind is the day I was riding on the tractor raking hay and Jim Gutzmer, then president, called me to ask if I would be interested in running for a board of director’s position. I was stunned and honored and it is still one of my “red letter” days.

**How do you spend your time outside of Farm Bureau business?** One of the things I like to do when I’m not doing farm bureau business is to spend time with our granddaughter, Rylee. She truly makes being a grandparent very, very special.



Janet and Rylee

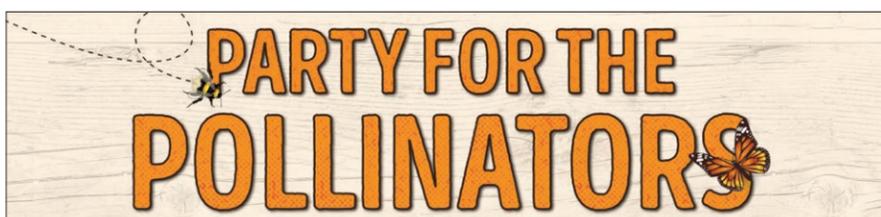
**What did you want to be growing up?** I have wanted to be a nurse from the time I saw the opening credits of M\*A\*S\*H when I was 13 and gratefully, I am still fulfilling that dream today. I have been working as a critical care nurse for over 40 years.

**What is the most interesting question you get asked?** The most interesting and, unfortunately too often asked, question I get is, “There is a farm bureau in Cook County?” Of course, I love to answer, “Why, yes there is! Ag in Cook County is so varied and so numerous, with equine, row crops, horticulture and vegetables, hydroponics, and urban farming. It’s a great place to be a farmer in Illinois!”



**“Honoring the life and legacy of Timothy H. Stuenkel, a constant friend and supporter of agriculture and the Farm Bureau”**

Cook and Will County Farm Bureau members gather to honor Cook County Farm Bureau board member Tim Stuenkel. Stuenkel passed away unexpectedly in the spring of 2022 but not before donating a metal cutout of this alma mater’s mascot, Chief Illiniwek to the Foundation. Will County Farm Bureau President Steve Warrick purchased the Chief, had it inscribed, and presented it to Cook County Farm Bureau as a tribute to Stuenkel’s legacy and impact on the Farm Bureau and agricultural industry.



Cook County Farm Bureau® will be recognized by the American Farm Bureau Federation® for the ‘Party for the Pollinators’ programming during summer 2022. The ‘Party for the Pollinators’ program connected farmers and urban consumers in conversations about farmers’ efforts to preserve and increase pollinator habitat. Photos from the convention will be available in the February Co-Operator.

# Master Member Club and Volunteer of the Year

Karen Biernacki, Jim Bloomstrand, Ruth Zeldenrust and Janet McCabe re-inducted into the Cook County Farm Bureau Master Member Club for 2022. Biernacki achieved top point status by signing up 4 voting and 1 associate members.

Membership into the Club is accomplished by earning points by recruiting and reinstating voting and associate members during the year. Each received a gift card, and their names will be added to a wall display in the Cook County Farm Bureau boardroom.



Manager Bob Rohrer presented a gift to Karen Biernacki as Recruiter of the Year.



Greg Stack was presented the Volunteer of the Year by President Janet McCabe as a result of his participation and leadership provided through the Ag Literacy Team. Specifically mentioned in the nominator's application was efforts Greg made with the Party for the Pollinators, Ag days for third-graders, and Farm Shadow experiences for high school students. The nominator indicated that Greg's presentation skills and knowledge/experience with horticulture were a "big hit" with students and teachers alike. Further, every year, teachers returned to Cook County Farm Bureau events largely because of Greg Stack.

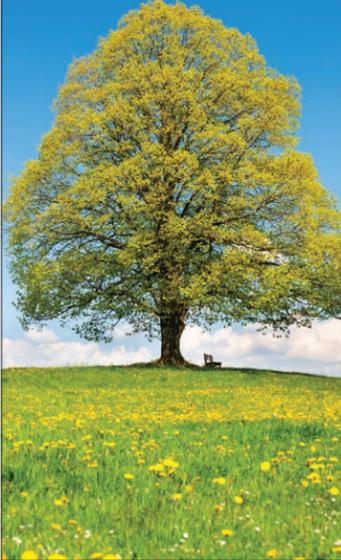


## APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP TODAY!

The CCFB Foundation offers college students who are pursuing an ag-related career the opportunity to start or continue their higher education with a scholarship. The scholarship application deadline date is February 15th.

**Scan the QR code to complete an application.**

## CCFB TREE WORKSHOP



The Cook County Farm Bureau hosted a free two-hour PDCH workshop for educators on Nov. 15. The workshop, "Branching Out into Tree Science," taught teachers about trees, leaves, tree rings and dendrochronology, Christmas tree farms, and products that come from trees. During the workshop, teachers were able to taste test a variety of maple syrups and chocolates to compare and contrast their quality. In addition to hands-on activities, including learning about the process of grafting and playing a tree matching game, the teachers also received lesson plans, resources, and book suggestions to help integrate tree science into their classrooms' curriculum.

## Meet a "face" of the Cook County Farm Bureau

Vicky Ludwig, General Manager, Ludwig's Feed Store



**Ludwig's Feed Store**  
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 Website: [www.ludwigsfeedstore.com](http://www.ludwigsfeedstore.com)  
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- Offers delivery and has a wide variety of products like animal feeds, bird feed, grass seed, fertilizer, salt products, bedding, and health care.
- Wants customers to view their business as a friendly place to visit.

**IF YOU/FAMILY WERE NOT DOING THIS, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

Working at a bakery, I love to bake!

**WHEN YOU ARE NOT IN THE WORKING, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?**

Having fun at our lake house.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PRODUCT OR SERVICE OFFERED AT LUDWIG'S?**

Baby chicks in the spring.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOD?**

I love Ramen.

**DID YOU HAVE A MENTOR OR SOMEONE YOU LOOK UP TO?**

My late husband Jeff.

**WHAT BRINGS JOY TO YOU?**

Working at Ludwig's.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FARM RELATED MEMORY?**

I have so many that there are too many to choose - everyday is a new adventure.

**WHAT IS THE MOST UNUSUAL QUESTION OR REQUEST YOU HAVE RECEIVED?**

A customer requested food to feed a camel.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SEASON?**

Summer

# Planting Seeds

By Katrina J.E. Milton, Director of Ag Literacy



Katrina J.E. Milton

I was recently asked, "Why the 4th grade?" for our Ag in the Classroom (AITC) program.

The question came from Mike Orso, of Illinois Farm Bureau's "Partners"

podcast. The podcast – my first ever audio-recorded interview – can be heard online at [www.ilfb.org/PartnersPodcast](http://www.ilfb.org/PartnersPodcast).

Most AITC programs focus on fourth grade because agriculture matches a lot of the Common Core Standards for the grade, including science, geography, social science, math, English language arts, and more.

However, our AITC is not exclusive to the fourth grade. Our Ag Day is for third graders, our Farm Shadow program is for middle and high schoolers, and we have events and outreach for all ages via all methods.

When I was in fourth grade, I remember learning about earth science and volcanoes for the first time, which sparked my interest in

vulcanology and my love for Pompeii and ancient Roman civilization. I remember loving the Magic Tree House books, Scooby-Doo, and Sailor Moon, things I was introduced to at that age and still love today.

I loved going to school at that age because I enjoyed learning and because I was able to spend time playing with friends. I wasn't worried about fitting in or being popular. I didn't have to worry about "adult" things like money or finances. I didn't worry about my GPA or extracurriculars. I just had to turn my homework in on time, study for my spelling tests, and pay attention in class to get good grades. Life was good – and easier.

I think that in fourth grade, I was able to explore my own interests and become myself. Prior to age 10 or 11, I was learning how to learn: how to read, how to write, learning the words and vocabulary needed to learn about other subjects. In the fourth grade, I was able to take that knowledge and read and study about topics on my own.

When it comes to ag in the classroom, I think the

fourth grade is the perfect age to learn about agriculture. Instead of learning that a pig goes "oink" and a cow goes "moo," we can teach students about the products made from animals. We get not only bacon from pigs, but also paintbrushes, chewing gum, and corneas and heart valves for transplant surgeries. We get not only beef and dairy from cows, but also leather, soaps, and instrument strings. We can explain the process of pollination to fourth graders, not just say that bees are yellow and black. We don't have to talk about the economy or world history, but we can teach about the food supply chain and how items end up on our grocery store shelves. We can mention topics in passing that will stick with the students forever.

I still remember that ROY G. BIV is the name given to the colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet), and that I should Never Eat Soggy Waffles to remember the directions of the compass.

Learning happens at all ages, but I think that the fourth-grade students are at a pivotal age for learning about topics that interest them. That's why we target our AITC program to fourth-grade students, to teach them about a subject that is important that they might not yet know about. We want to teach them about agriculture, growing things, and taking care of the earth and its animals. After all, 1 in 5 students will one day work in an agriculturally-related career. They may not be farmers, but they will be chefs, truck drivers, airplane pilots, graphic designers, and scientists.

We should all find our inner fourth grader and become interested and fascinated with learning again – and why not start with an agricultural topic?

Katrina can be reached at [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org).



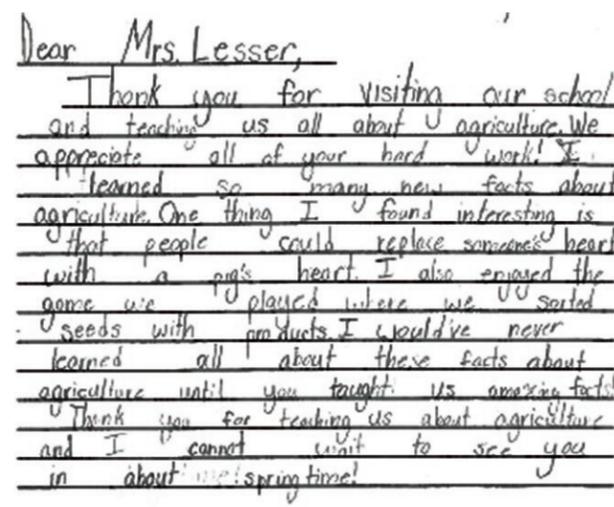
Students at Wheeling Park District's preschool listen to CCFB Director of Ag Literacy Katrina Milton explain the different agricultural uses of trees, including paper and wood. Photo courtesy of Wheeling Park District.

## Wheeling Preschoolers Learn about Trees

CCFB Director of Ag Literacy Katrina Milton visited Wheeling Park District's preschool on Nov. 29 and Dec. 2 to teach 70 students about Christmas tree farms, what products come from trees, and the difference between types of trees. Activities the children enjoyed included having two books read to them, making pressed leaf art, decorating Christmas trees, coloring, and investigating leaves, branches, and pinecones. The children did not know that trees can grow on farms and were surprised to learn that so many objects that they use, touch, and play with every day come from trees.

## THANK YOU LETTER

Michelle from North School in Franklin Park wrote Ag in the Classroom presenter Kathy Lesser a thank you letter after Lesser visited her fourth grade class in November. Michelle's letter was one of many received from the fourth grade students at North School. Lesser gave the presentation "Intro to Illinois Agriculture," which taught students about crops, livestock, the food supply chain, and how STEM is used in agriculture.



Sincerely,  
Michelle

## Summer 2023 Internship

Ag in the Classroom program is offering a summer internship to a college student majoring in Agriculture Education or Ag Communications. The individual selected for this paid internship will assist with all live and virtual programming including content development and delivery to teachers, youth, and community members. Familiarity with video editing tools and experience using social media is important. Position requires excellent organizational abilities, flexibility with changing priorities, and strong oral and written communication skills. Experience with agriculture outreach is a plus. Must provide own transportation as travel throughout Cook County is required for in-person programming. Position runs from late May to early August 2023. The position is selected through an interview process, short lesson/presentation of ag topic, as well as resume, application, academic transcripts, and references. Open-ended application process until filled.

Email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org) for more information or visit: <https://cookcfb.org/foundation/internships>.

### Not Your Average Summer Internship



Congratulations to Amayah from Walker Elementary. Amayah won our Disguise A Turkey contest and received two movie tickets and a copy of *Turkey Trouble* by Wendi Silvano. A big thank you to all the artists that shared their artwork.



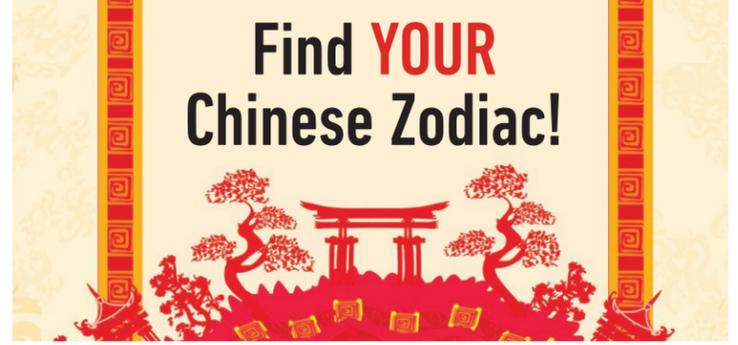
view all the disguises on our website at <https://bit.ly/turkeyTime>

# AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



## 2023: The Year of the Rabbit

2023 is the Year of the Rabbit in the Chinese zodiac. The Chinese zodiac assigns an animal and its attributes to each year in a repeating 12-year cycle. Since the Chinese zodiac is based upon the lunar calendar, people born in January and February refer not only to their birth year, but also their birth date. This year, Chinese New Year falls on Sunday, January 22. The sign of rabbit is a symbol of longevity, peace, and prosperity in Chinese culture.



### DID YOU KNOW?

**RED** is often worn and used for decorations for Chinese New Year. Red is the color of joy and good fortune in Chinese culture.

- “恭喜发财,” pronounced “Gung hay fat choy,” is how Cantonese speakers wish you a happy new year. The saying literally means, “Wishing you great happiness and prosperity.”
- Historians believe that fireworks were invented in China in 200 A.D. after bamboo stalks were thrown into a fire. Bamboo’s hollow air pockets inflate and burst with a loud sound when heated. It is believed that fireworks originated in China during the Han Dynasty (206 B.C. to 220 A.D.) to frighten and ward off evil spirits.

**Sources:**

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/lunar-new-year>  
<https://historyplex.com/ancient-chinese-fireworks-invention-history>



**RABBITS** are more than cute and fluffy pets or backyard visitors; they are also important to agriculture. Here are just a few ways rabbits are used agriculturally:

- **For their meat:** Rabbits are a great source of nutrition. Rabbit meat is a lean protein, low in fat and calories, and high in protein and iron. Rabbit meat can often be found in pet food for dogs and cats.
- **For their wool:** Angora rabbits produce coats in a variety of colors, including white, tan, gray, brown, and black. They produce 1 to 4 pounds of wool a year. Some breeds are sheared four times a year, others’ wool can easily be plucked off. Angora rabbits’ soft wool is used to make scarves, socks, and sweaters.
- **For their manure:** Rabbit manure is full of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and minerals. According to the Michigan State University Extension, it has four times as many nutrients as cow or horse manure and twice as many nutrients as chicken manure.



**RAT:**

1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020



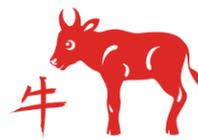
**HORSE:**

1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, 2026



**OX:**

1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021



**GOAT:**

1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, 2027



**TIGER:**

1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022



**MONKEY:**

1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028



**RABBIT:**

1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023



**ROOSTER:**

1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, 2029



**DRAGON:**

1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024



**DOG:**

1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, 2030



**SNAKE:**

1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025



**PIG:**

1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, 2031



### January Word Search

Last Month's Winner:  
**Dave Winchell**

- Animals
- Bamboo
- Calendar
- Coats
- Decorations
- Fireworks
- Happiness
- Joy
- Manure
- Minerals
- Nutrients
- Peace
- Rabbit
- Red
- Scarves
- Symbol

G A V H O R C E T R E D W S B  
 Y R R X H D O R S I A U E E J  
 Q T A T I I A U R X B V B K B  
 L H D K T G T N N N R B Q Z L  
 X D N S A O S A H A H K A O S  
 T E E L T U C M C S P D B R K  
 E C L V F N F S J J S M R U R  
 E O A C B P E O J L Y W B V O  
 D R C F K A Y I A S W A J K W  
 L A M I N A M R R O P E A C E  
 Q T T C T Y E B O T I M S P R  
 N I I U D N E L O L U I D Q I  
 L O O B I X N A C O L N K L F  
 A N Q M K B Q R R T G B B T X  
 S S E N I P P A H J Q S M Q G

### Choose Your Prize: January Word Search

Choices include a \$25 Beggar’s Pizza Gift Card, a \$25 Home Run Inn Gift Card, OR \*3 AMC Movie Tickets \*AMC Yellow tickets not valid in California, New York & New Jersey.

Complete the Word Search puzzle for your chance to win! Winners will be contacted by mail.

**MAIL TO:**

Cook Co. Farm Bureau  
 Ag Adventures Word Search  
 6438 Joliet Rd  
 Countryside, IL 60525

**FAX TO:** 708-579-6056

**EMAIL TO:** FBcooperator@gmail.com

Complete and submit an entry every month all in 2023 and your name is automatically entered into an “End of Year” drawing for a gift basket full of ag themed goodies.

Deadline is the 20th of each month. **GOOD LUCK!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Choose Your Prize Preference for If You Win:

*If a choice is not made, movie tickets will be sent*

Beggar’s Pizza Gift Card  3 Movie Tickets

Home Run Inn Gift Card *(Choose one option only)*

Located on front of paper

# Cook County Farm Bureau 2022 Year in Review

The year 2022 featured plenty of ups and downs for members and the organization. Coming off the 2020 and 2021 pandemic shutdowns and related issues, as an organization, the Cook County Farm Bureau is proud to have provided another year full of service in 2022 to members. Here's a brief recap of some highlights:

## JANUARY



- We delivered an agricultural themed basket reward to Farm Bureau members Ross and Roberta Vondrak of Countryside for winning the drawing for being one of the members completing all 12 months of the Ag Adventures page word find puzzle in 2021.
- The Young Leaders Team collected and donated nonperishable foods, toiletries, and related items as well as cash donations as a part of the service project to benefit area troops.
- The Commodity/Marketing Team hosted an informative lunch & learn webinar on Carbon Markets: A Policy Primer featuring, Lauren Lurkins, Director of Environmental Policy, Illinois Farm Bureau.

## FEBRUARY

- Farm Bureau launched a Zoom Book Club in 2022. Participants examined modern agriculture through a deep dive into *Tomorrow's Table*. Authors Pamela Ronald, a University of California geneticist and her husband Raoul Adamchak, an organic farmer argued that blend of organic farming and genetic engineering is key to helping feed the world's growing population.
- The commodity/Marketing Team shared information for farmers/ag businesses about Guatemala's Seasonal Labor Program through the H-2A guest worker program for seasonal labor.

## MARCH

- The Foundation board announced 6 recipients of the 2022 College Scholarship Program for members/dependents pursuing agriculturally related careers.
- The Member Relations Team hosted a document shred day on March 12 at Oak Forest COUNTRY Financial office.
- The Public Relations Team sponsored our annual Food Checkout Day events to help replenish six Cook County food pantries with needed food and cash thanks to partnerships with the Farm Bureau PR team, board members, COUNTRY Financial agencies, and a host of supporting members.



## APRIL

- The Board of Directors, in celebration and recognition of the outstanding volunteers and supporting members, approved a donation of \$1290 to the Greater Chicago Food Depository as a part of the upcoming Volunteer Appreciation Week in April.
- CCFB Team members Bryan Blau and Amy Hansmann graduated from the Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow program provided by the Illinois Farm Bureau.
- The Cook County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom program presented an Earth Day teacher workshop in a virtual format.
- The Member Relations Team sponsored Member Appreciation Week April 18 – 22nd with many great basket drawings, complementary memberships, prizes, and gifts.
- A virtual exchange discussion between the Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leaders in the Wake County Farm Bureau Farmers and Ranchers from North Carolina was on Monday, April 18 with a discussion centered around the documentary "Kiss the Ground."

## MAY

- A special Discover Local four-page insert was provided to all members through the Co-Operator publication to help discover greenhouses, garden centers, farm stands, and area landscapers.
- We hosted a spring Butterfly Planter Workshop at Goebbert's Farm & Garden Center on May 11th.
- The Cook County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom program wrapped up a year of challenging and successful in-person and virtual presentations in Chicago and suburban classrooms reaching 17,240 students from 334 schools.
- 2022 Recipe Collection was published and distributed through farmstands and to members.
- The Cook County Farm Bureau Political Action Committee interviewed many candidates and endorsed several in County Board, Assessor, Board of Review and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District races.

## JUNE

- Our Summer Ag Institute returned June 20-22 with 3-day teacher workshop that took educators on the road to learn about our industry up-close with ag professionals.

## JULY



- The board, team members, volunteers, staff, Country Financial and the many other members and individuals that supported the July 22 "Evening for Ag Education" Fun-raising Gala in Lemont to benefit the Foundation Ag Lit efforts.
- Members of the Commodities/Marketing Team visited various Community Gardens that received support grants from the Team including 50 Acre Farm, St James Community Farm, Oak Forest Pollinator Garden, St Irenaeus Pantry Garden, Rainbow Beach Victory Garden, and Roots Community Garden.
- Farm Bureau "Partied with the Pollinators" through a educational, family-friendly member program providing information on pollinator gardens, Monarch butterflies, Bees and flowering plants.

## AUGUST

- Young Leaders members enjoyed a cookout and gathering hosted by Young Leader Chair, Blake Lanphier at Historic Wagner Farm (1510 Wagner Rd., Glenview, IL).
- The Ag Literacy program hosted a program at Morton Grove Public Library on Aug 3. During the program, Katrina Milton taught about trees and leaves and how trees are an agricultural crop.

## SEPTEMBER

- A workshop for teachers and educators was held September 29. The workshop, "Ag-Citing Ways to Add Ag to Your Curriculum," provided fun ways to integrate agricultural topics into your curriculum through book and project grant applications.
- Summer Selfie Contest winners selected from June, July, and August entries. Categories: 1) Farmers' Markets 2) Crops/Gardening 3) Farm Animals
- The Member Relations Team partnered with AARP to offer a Smart Driver course September 20 and 21 where members learned the current rules of the road, defensive driving techniques, and how to operate your vehicle more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment.
- The 6th Annual Farm Crawl was held on Saturday, September 17th. The Farm Crawl featured 24 member Ag locations who graciously agreed to open their doors and offer tour, workshops, programs, specials and discounts on agritourism, pumpkins, honey, activities, and the best of local produce and plants this fall using our Crawl Passport and interactive map.

## OCTOBER

- The 22nd Annual Giant Pumpkin, dessert, carving, local honey, and youth contest was held at Puckerville Farms in Lemont which featured great member participation.
- The Member Relations Team hosted a Virtual Wills/Trust Seminar and a Shred Day in Rolling Meadows that generated a lot of member attendance and participation.



## NOVEMBER

- A free PDCH workshop for a small group of educators was held at the Cook County Farm Bureau with topics of "Branching Out into Tree Science," agroforestry, Christmas tree farms, maple syrup, and more.
- Cook County Farm Bureau® actively supported the ordinance to repeal the Cook County's wheel tax that will be effective June 30, 2023.
- On Tues. Nov. 29, the Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leader prepared and served dinner at the RMH near Advocate in Oak Lawn.

## DECEMBER

- The Cook County Farm Bureau was recognized at the Illinois Farm Bureau annual meeting with many awards including the Pinnacle Award for top County Farm Bureaus, Eva Manzke as Illinois AITC Teacher of the Year and Greg Stack as Illinois AITC Volunteer of the Year.

## OTHER

- The Shop Local Directory available through the Cook County Farm Bureau website expanded for better information and to allow local agricultural businesses to conduct e-commerce through it.
- The Master Gardner Resource Center and help desk served members from April through November by providing advice regarding soil test results, soil amendments, growing plants guidance, and researching related issues.

# Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure

By Bona Heinsohn, CAE | CCFB Director of Gov. Affairs and Public Relations



**Bona Heinsohn**

I didn't make resolutions this New Year. I didn't follow through with them in 2022.

I haven't reduced my Dr Pepper consumption. Probably actually increased it now that I think about it. Oops.

I am not more tolerant of the creepy crawlers. Despite our abundance of animal feed. Hay. Straw. Cattle. And horses. I still don't understand or tolerate that creepy crawlers decide that our farm is the place for them. We are not welcoming people. We don't enjoy entertaining. And we're not accommodating hosts under the best of the circumstances. This summer a mouse family moved in under the horses' water tank. They made themselves a home to raise their little ones. We discovered their home when cleaning

tanks one weekend. They were welcomed to our farm by our wildly talented barn cat.

Unfortunately, for my blue-eyed girl and big-little boy I haven't given up news radio. Podcasts. Or my affinity for quiet. 'Traffic on the eights' remains on repeat. WBBM 780 is the first preset on my truck radio. The Daily Punch podcast remains my personal favorite. This fall Campaign HQ with David Plouffe was also a hit.

And unfortunately for more than just my blue-eyed girl and big-little boy, no one listened to my resolution asking for society to place partisan politics to the side and to place people before party.

I'm not in the mood to make trivial resolutions about food. Drink. Exercise. Or dieting. Instead, there are certain things that I'm shocked that in 2023 we're still debating. Paid sick leave for one. I fully understand that farmers

are small business owners. I fully understand that small businesses don't have the staff nor oftentimes the finances to offer paid sick leave, but multi-national corporations do and should. If COVID-19 taught us nothing it has taught us that people should not come to work sick.

Start controversial, stay controversial. It's 2023 so why are we still debating the outcome of the 2020 election? I was raised to respect the office even if I don't like the individual who won. Even if I didn't vote for the individual who won. I've voted for a lot of second place finishers since my eighteenth birthday and that's just part of the great experiment we call democracy.

It's 2023 so why is there even a conversation about whether or not people should go and vote. Of course you should vote. I remind my farmer each election that no vote means no complaining. I vote to have

a voice. In my government. And in my house. I may like to complain.

To end on a light yet probably just as controversial of a topic: I'm a John Deere girl. The first tractor I drove by myself was a John Deere 8300. Although

we don't have that particular tractor, we still have an 8300. Why is there even a question about the best tractor brand? Sorry, Case IH it's John Deere for me.

**Bona can be reached at [Bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:Bona@cookcfb.org).**

## LOCAL LEGISLATORS



Retiring State Representative Greg Harris from Chicago visits with Cook County Farm Bureau board members, Janet McCabe (pictured in black) and Ruth Zeldenrust during the Illinois Agricultural Association Annual Meeting. On numerous occasions, Representative Harris has been named a 'Friend of Agriculture' in recognition of his outstanding voting record on agricultural issues.



Recently elected State Representative Debbie Meyers-Martin engaged with Cook County Farm Bureau members, Janet McCabe (pictured in black) and Ruth Zeldenrust. The Mat-teson-based State Representative visited with her local Farm Bureau members and Peoria County Farm Bureau members during Annual Meeting in December. Representative Meyers-Martin is "adopted" by the Peoria County Farm Bureau.

## Policy Successes at Annual Meeting

Cook County Farm Bureau® members submitted numerous policies to the Farm Bureau delegates during the 2022 Annual Meeting in Chicago. Approved policy items include:

### Food Access

With nearly 39.5 million people or 12.8% of the US population living in low-income and low food access areas, Cook County Farm Bureau identified the need for policy addressing avenues to improve food access for residents not only in Cook County.

Generally, the policy supports incentives, including but not limited to, offering tax credits or breaks to grocery stores in underserved areas as well as calling for the simplification of permitting and launching grocery stores.

### Organic Agriculture

Organic certification is designed to create a linked system of compliance providing complete source-to-sale traceability of organic products and accountability at each step of the global supply chain. Certification is key to the National Organic Program.

Revisions include calling for broad availability of information on the USDA-certified organic program, certification process, and labeling requirements, as well as other unbiased information on organic products or production as well as allowing first year organic producer to utilize the organic prices for federal crop insurance. The policy also calls for strict consequences for ACA implicated in domestic or foreign fraud and significant non-compliance.

### Specialty Crops

Specialty crops are defined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops including floriculture. Farm Bureau's language recognizes the importance of specialty crops to Illinois and Cook County's agricultural industry as well as calling for funding for research, Extension services, pathologists, and entomologists to assist with the growth of the industry.

### Government Assisted Nutrition Programs

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a block grant, enacted in 1996 to provide cash assistance to families with children experiencing poverty. TANF guidelines require participants to participate in "work activities" for a minimum of 30 hours per week. There are 12 categories of work activities that can count toward the work rates. It limits the extent to which participation in some types of work activities, including job search or readiness programs, can count for the work rate calculations.

Language approved by delegates support eliminating barriers to access Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits by allowing people who are pursuing education or related job training to qualify for the program.

### Farmer Mental Health

In 2022, the Cook County Farm Bureau identified the support of farmer mental health as a priority. To further that priority, Cook County Farm Bureau introduced policy 91 to support mental health and stress management services.

Members are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at 708-354-3276 with any feedback or questions on these policies.

FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | 24/7

CALL OR TEXT  
**1-833-FARM-SOS**

EMAIL  
[FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com](mailto:FarmFamilyResourceHelpline@mhsil.com)

VISIT  
[siumed.org/farm](http://siumed.org/farm) for more resources




# COOK COUNTY

## Financial Representatives of the Month

The Financial Representative of the Month program is designed by COUNTRY Financial Agency Managers of Cook County to recognize overall Insurance Leaders in Life, Disability, Auto, Home, and Health production during the month. The agent earns the award through efforts to provide quality service to existing and new clients. Listed below are the various agents honored by their agency manager with the Financial Representative of the Month designation.



**\*MIRSAD KLJUCANIN** has been named Financial Rep of the month for November 2022. His office is located at 5750 Old Orchard., Ste. 550, in Skokie, IL. His phone number is 773-728-3041. Mirsad has been a Financial Representative since February 2010.

**Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager**



**ALEX SWISTUN** has been named Financial Rep of the month for November 2022. His office is located at 225 N. Arlington Heights Rd., in Elk Grove Village, IL. His phone number is 847-427-8280. Alex has been a Financial Representative since March 2002.

**Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager**



**\*GWEN SHAW** has been named Financial Rep of the month for November 2022. Her office is located at 820 E. 87TH St., Ste.212, in Chicago, IL. Her phone number is 773-487-0919. Gwen has been a Financial Representative since March 2009.

**Chicago South Agency, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager**



**\*JIM ANDRESEN** has been named Financial Rep of the Month for November 2022. His office is located at 17605 S. Oak Park Ave., Ste. C & D, in Tinley Park, IL. His phone number is 708-633-6490. Jim has been a Financial Representative since January 2003.

**Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager**

\*Indicates that this Financial Representative is a CCFB Financial Certified Representative. The Cook County Farm Bureau Certified Financial Representative Program is designed to strengthen the partnership and relationship shared by Financial Representatives from Country Financial with the Cook County Farm Bureau organization.

### ABC'S OF FOOD

At Cook County Farm Bureau, we love food... All types of foods in all types of shapes and all types of flavors. In this feature, we will be highlighting different types of food, primarily fruits and vegetables, from A to Z (we are not sure what to do with X yet!).

This month  
"L"

## LYCHEE



**A tropical fruit that is native to China but can grow in certain warm regions of the U.S.**

Known as "alligator strawberry" for its red, bumpy skin.



Lychee (*Litchi chinensis*) is a fruit that belongs to the soapberry family, Sapindaceae, and is native to the provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien in southern China.

Lychees are round or oblong in shape and are 1 1/2 to 2 inches in diameter.

A lychee tree grows between 30-100 feet and produces clusters of 2-20 fruit.

To eat, crack open the lychee just below the stem. Peel away the leathery red skin and then eat the lychee fruit just like you would a cherry, discarding the seed.



The flavor of lychee fruit has been described as tasting like something between a strawberry and a watermelon with some delicate floral notes.

Next month...Mango

## Your Member Health Benefits

Start the New Year off safe and healthy with a little help from your member benefits!



**Peace of Mind** – Farm Bureau members can now rest a little easier, knowing their loved ones are protected in their own homes, with just the push of a button. Medical alarm works with all phone lines and monitors 24/7, 365 days a year. Members receive 1 month FREE of monitoring and there is no initial fee. Call 855-872-8404 to order.

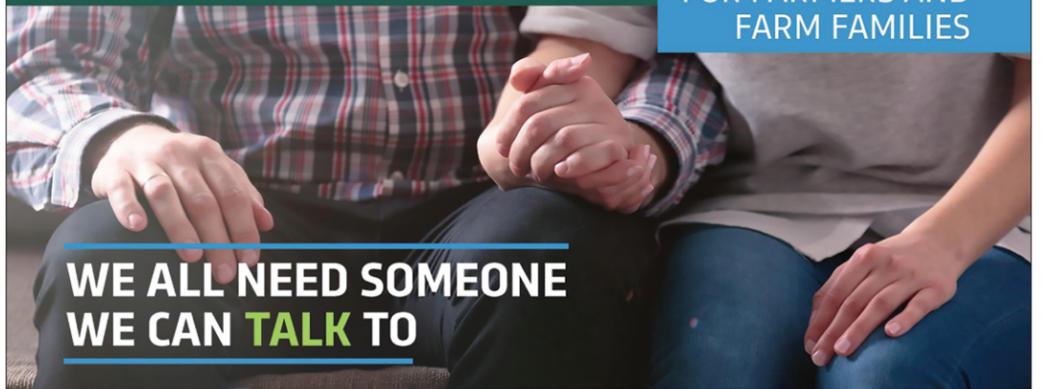
**Lifeline (stroke screening)** – Early Detection for Stroke & Cardiovascular Disease Risk. Members receive a \$24 savings off regular price. Call 844-591-7109 to schedule a screening and use code ILFB001.

**Prescription Drug Program** – Members can save with the use of two prescription drug programs: Agelity & Scriptsave. With Agelity, you can save on average 20% on brand name and 75% on generic drugs. To obtain an Agelity card (valid for the entire family), visit our website at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org) and click on Member Benefits. To contact Agelity's customer service call 866-292-7822. With Scriptsave you can save up to 75%. To print an e-card visit: [www.scriptsave.com](http://www.scriptsave.com) and use Group #162W. To contact Scriptsave's customer service call 800-700-3957.

**Qualsight Lasik** – Laser eye surgery at a savings of up to 45% off the national average cost. Call Qualsight at 866-977-3012 with questions or to schedule an appointment.

## SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

FOR FARMERS AND FARM FAMILIES



WE ALL NEED SOMEONE WE CAN TALK TO

With suicide on the rise within the agriculture community, the Farm Family Resource Initiative is launching an open support group for farmers and farm family members 18 years and older who have lost a loved one.

**First Wednesday of each month**  
Beginning November 2, 2022

**3:30-4:30 pm | Virtual**



PRESENTER

**Bonnie Landwehr, LCSW** is a licensed clinical social worker and behavioral health program supervisor with SIU Medicine's Department of Family and Community Medicine. She and her husband farm in Macoupin County.

To register or for more information, contact Bonnie Landwehr at 217.757.8115 or email [blandwehr54@siumedu.edu](mailto:blandwehr54@siumedu.edu).



# Assessments Not Always the Cause of Property Tax Increases

It seems reasonable to assume a property tax increase is due to a rise in the assessed value of your property, but is this true? Assessed value is only one component in the total equation used to calculate your property tax bill. If you assume the assessed value is the driving factor behind higher taxes, you are missing the full picture and, in many cases, the truth behind a higher tax bill.

### Property taxes are based on three primary factors:

1. The assessed value of your property
2. The assessed value of all property within the district and
3. The financial needs of local taxing districts.

Changes in any of these from one year to the next will impact your property taxes. In fact, it is possible to see a decrease in the assessed value of your property yet still see an increase in taxes. On the flip side, you might also see an increase in your property's assessed value yet have a lower tax bill.

Considering these three factors, assessments have only a moderate impact on property taxes. Tax bills are largely driven by the budgets set by taxing districts serving you and your property. The aggregate amount of money budgeted by your taxing districts determines the amount of

taxes needed from property owners – known as the levy. Dividing that levy by the assessed value of all property determines the tax rate. That rate is then multiplied by the assessed value of your property to determine the taxes owed.

### Consider the following scenarios:

**Scenario 1:** The assessed value of your property decreased. Concurrently, one or more of the taxing districts serving your property increased their budget, resulting in a higher tax rate. The higher rate can lead to an increase in property taxes.

**Scenario 2:** The assessed value of your property increased. Concurrently, one or more of the taxing districts serving your property decreased their budget, resulting in a lower tax rate. The lower rate can lead to a decrease in property taxes.

**Scenario 3:** The assessed value of your property decreased, and your taxing districts had only minimal changes in their budgets. Concurrently, the value of surrounding property decreased. For example, a rural business shuttered, removing that property's value from the total tax base. With the loss of that value, the tax burden will shift to all other properties in the area. This shift can lead to an increase in property taxes.

*Originally published in LINK July-August 2022.*



## COMMUNITY GARDENS

**Our 2023 Community Urban Garden Grant Program is looking to award six gardens a \$350 grant!**

All community-based urban gardens in Cook County are encouraged to apply. Grant details and applications are available from January 9 through February 28, 2023. Application available now...why wait!

- **Online:** <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/community-programs/profile/grants-1>
- **Email Debbie:** [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org)

If you have questions or need additional information, contact Deb at the Cook County Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.

## CCFB Annual Report:

### Check It Out Online!

Cook County Farm Bureau's "Investing in our Local Communities" annual report summarizing the board support of the organization in the areas of Investing in Agricultural Leaders, Enriching Local Communities and Championing Agriculture has been posted on the **Cook County Farm Bureau Website**. We encourage members to look at this broad support and commitment provided by the association, made possible by the support of many members.



## CLASSIFIED ADS

All ads that we receive for The Co-Operator are also listed on our website at [cookcfb.org/membership/classifieds](https://cookcfb.org/membership/classifieds). If you have a photo of the item(s) that you are selling you can email it to us to include it on our 'Classifieds' page on our website only along with your ad.

Email your ad (and photo if you have one) to [fbcooperator@gmail.com](mailto:fbcooperator@gmail.com). Please be sure to include your full name, Farm Bureau number, and phone number. Deadline for Classified ads is the 17th of each month. Any ads submitted after the 17th will appear in the following months.

**Co-Operator.** Members may run up to four non-commercial classified ads annually for free. Any ads submitted after the fourth, will be charged.

If mailing your ad, please mail to: Cook County Farm Bureau, Attention: Classified Ads, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside, IL 60525. You can also fax your ad to 708-579-6056.

### FOR SALE

Amazon Deal- leg massager with heating functions, brand new, never used, paid \$100. Asking for \$40. **Call 708-654-2010.**

Dark room equipment for sale, Enlarger Me Opta Axomat 5, Lens Omnicron – El 105081 1:2. 8/5.0, exposure timer for enlarger: ITC, Industrial timer corp, model GR-90, time w glow-dial. Developer tanks, paper developer trays, bulk film loader, safety lights and much more. **Call 312-560-0369.**

Tractor tire- New, harvest king 5.50x16 C Front Tractor II-\$50, This is brand new, never been mounted. These hard to find since the tractor supply stores no longer carry them. Inner tube to fit, silver state 550/600R 15/16 TRI 15-\$15. **Call 312-560-0369.**

Armless lounge chair- \$150. Freshly covered and rebuilt. The condition is like new. This is a nice addition to any room. Dimensions of base 32" deep by 30" wide and height is 33". **Call 312-560-0369.**

Opening skylight with screen- \$200. Roof mounted tinted skylight with screen and rotary ("manually vented") which opens and closes the skylight, with laminated glass. Dimension roughly 24 by 48". **Call 312-560-0369.**

Vintage & Classic outboard motors- 1949 thru 1958- Mercury, Johnson & Evinrude models, 3 h.p. to 25 h.p. – each with 2-wheeled motor carrier cart, restored to operating condition mechanically and cosmetically, reasonably priced, currently individually covered and stored in temperature and humidity controlled commercial facility in Palatine, entire collection or individual motors available, inventory available. **Call Ron 847-977-3625.**

For sale John Deer 826 snow blower. Elec start w/cab, \$250. 2 metal school desks, \$10 each. **Call John 630-738-2266.**

### FOR RENT

Vacation Villas at Fantasy World II Resort in Kissimmee, Florida. Seven (7) nights in one bedroom suite, full kitchen, outdoor swimming pool, sleeps four (4). \$650 for seven (7) nights. No presentation is required. **Call Ms. Day at (708) 347-9369 for availability.**

### WANTED

Wanting to buy your HO scale or N scale electric train engines, cars, buildings, or anything train related. Do you have electric trains in your closet, basement, crawl space, attic or garage that you're not using? I buy train items from just a few pieces to hundreds of pieces at a time. Why sell them bit by bit, I'll offer you a price on all you have! I'm retired and just enjoy trains. I realized that some may need work from sitting for a long time, but I have the time to fix them! **TURN THOSE UNWANTED TRAIN ITEMS INTO CASH and give me a call! I also buy slot cars. Call 630-272-4433 ask for Ron. Thanks!**

## Programs, Workshops and Webinars

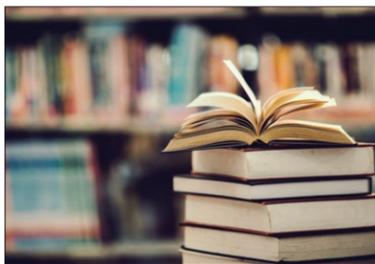
For Members, Farmers, Teachers, Landowners, Foodies, Business Owners, and those that want new experiences and to have a great time!



**REGISTER TODAY** for the following great programs by calling the office at **708-354-3276** or at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org). Scan our QR for our Events Calendar.

### “Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman” Zoom Book Club

Unfolding as a journey down the Mississippi River, Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman tells the stories of five representatives of this stewardship movement: a Montana rancher, a Kansas farmer, a Mississippi riverman, a Louisiana shrimper, and a Gulf fisherman. In exploring their work and family histories and the essential geographies they protect, Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman challenges pervasive and powerful myths about American and environmental values.



**DATES:** January 24, February 7, February 21, and March 7  
**Documentary Screening March 14 in Glenview, more details TBD.**

**TIME:** 6:30 pm **FEE:** No Charge **LOCATION:** Live via Zoom

**REGISTRATION:** Register by January 13th at <https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/rlwjmtq0jfspvj/>

### Risk Management of Commodities for Farmers Webinar

CCFB Member, Steve Stasys of the CME Group will discuss Risk Management for Grain Commodities.



**DATE:** Thursday, February 23, 2023

**TIME:** 1:00 pm **FEE:** Free to Join!

**LOCATION:** Zoom Webinar – link to be emailed the day before.

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center; For additional information, email Debbie at [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org).

### Beginning Beekeeping Course In Person at the CCFB

Beekeeping for those interested and never kept bees and beekeepers looking to learn and overcome challenges of bee loss and keeping bees sustainably.



**DATE:** Saturday & Sunday, March 11-12, 2023

**TIME:** 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

**LOCATION:** Cook County Farm Bureau  
6438 Joliet Rd Countryside 60525

**FEE:** \$75.00 for members of CCFB or CDBA.  
\$100.00 for non-members; ask how to join!

**REGISTRATION & PAYMENT:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276; For additional information, email Debbie at [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org).

### Workshop on the Credit System and Improving the Accuracy of Your Credit Report



(Presented by Jim Droske, President of Illinois Credit Services)

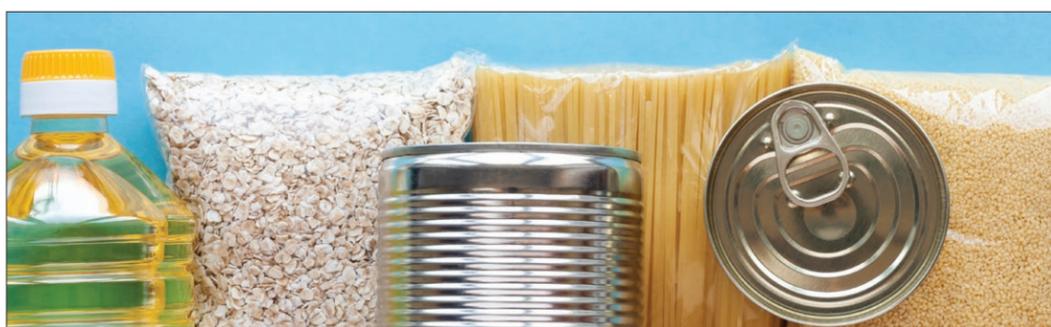
What is a credit score? Is it important and how can I improve it? This program will help understand the credit system and improve the health and accuracy of your credit reports. Credit expert witness, Jim Droske, will take you through the process of understanding of credit reporting, credit scores, the credit disputing process, and how to get help!

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 15, 2023 **LOCATION:** Zoom

**TIME:** 6:30-7:30 pm

**FEE:** Free for CCFB Members! \$10 for Non-Members

**REGISTRATION:** Call the CCFB at 708-354-3276.



# CCFB to Support Cook County Families and Food Pantries

## AS PART OF FOOD CHECKOUT DAY 2023

In celebration of the healthy and nutritious food grown and raised by local farmers, Cook County Farm Bureau® members and partners are supporting local families and food pantries.

The year 2023 marks the 23rd anniversary of Food Checkout Day and Cook County Farm Bureau's latest effort to date to support local families in need. Rather than support a single charity or even a handful, **Cook CFB will match member donations to any Cook County food pantry up to \$1,000.**

Farm Bureau members who wish to donate to a local food pantry in celebration of Food Checkout Day are asked to complete the form below and to designate the food pantry that their donation and Cook CFB's match is for. The food pantry selected must be a registered 501(c)3. Farm Bureau will match the first \$1,000 donated. All donations will be considered part of Food Checkout Day.

In addition, Cook County Farm Bureau is partnering with four local food pantries for Food Checkout Day. The food pantries were selected by our partners at COUNTRY Financial.

**All Saints Food Pantry** in Palatine is an extension of the ministries of All Saints Lutheran Church. All Saints Food Pantry supplies food to underserved individuals in the northwest suburbs of Cook County, including Rolling Meadows, Palatine, Mount Prospect, and Arlington Heights. Through their Pantry on Wheels, over 100 families are served weekly. The mobile pantry serves area apartment complexes on a rotating basis. Member donations will directly benefit the individuals served through the mobile pantry. All Saints Food Pantry was selected by Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial Representatives.

**Alicia's House** in South Chicago Heights is dedicated to Alicia who loved people and loved helping people. She would spend hours working with her Grandma Stella at the church food pantry, making bags of food to hand out to people in need. Although her grandma had a specific way to nutritionally pack the bags, Alicia would always add her special touch by making sure each bag would contain a special treat, usually candy. To honor the memory of Alicia who passed away at the age of four, Grandma Stella and Poppy Juan started Alicia's House. Alicia's House feeds hundreds of hungry families and each bag of food contains Alicia's special loving touch. Alicia's House serves the communities of Beecher, Crete, Steger, Peotone, University Park, Monee, and South Chicago Heights. Alicia's House was selected by Chicago South COUNTRY Financial Representatives.

**Niles Township Food Pantry** in Skokie serves over 1,000 families in the area. With the assistance of the Niles Township Food Pantry Foundation, the pantry is able to provide assistance five days a week. Niles Township Food Pantry was selected by Chicago North COUNTRY Financial Representatives.

**Together We Cope** in Tinley Park serves 27 south suburban communities in four townships, Breman, Orland, Palos, and Worth. Monthly, over 5,000 individuals rely on the services provided by the pantry. Together We Cope was selected by Orland Park COUNTRY Financial Representatives.

Donations can be made by credit card by calling the Farm Bureau office at **708-354-3276** or by mailing in the form below with a check. **Donations will be accepted until March 3, 2023.**

### Food Checkout Day 2023 Food Pantry Match Donations

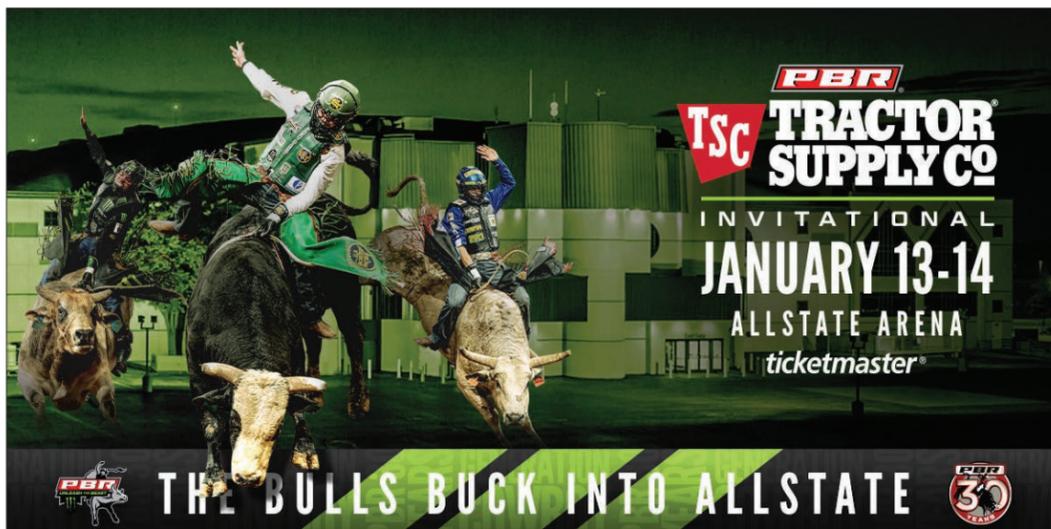
Food Pantry for Match \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Cook County Farm Bureau. **Checks should be mailed to Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525.** All proceeds will be donated to Cook County food pantries.



Farm Bureau members can save up to **30%** on select seats!

Visit: <https://www.ticketmaster.com/promo/ng5ucq> and use passcode 'FARM'.