



COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

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

Mark Your Calendar



January

- 16/30th Zoom Book Club **PG 12**
- 17-19th From Food to Flowers: Everything Local Conference ?

February

- 13/27th Zoom Book Club **PG 12**
- 28th IFB Rules of the Road Trucking **PG 12**

For participation details on these programs and activities, check out the related information in this publication, go to 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.

Question of the Month



Which AITC Presenter announced their retirement in November?

Call the Farm Bureau at **708-354-3276**, fax your answer to **708-579-6056**, or email to fbcooperator@gmail.com to enter the drawing for a \$25 gas card. (Please include name, FB number, and phone number)

November Winner: Jeff Zimmerman

Question: What is the name of the book being used for the 2024 Book Club for members?

Answer: "A Taste of Generation YUM"

2024 Scholarship Program

See **Page 12** for details



Reavis EARTH Youth Garden a 2023 CCFB Community Garden Grant Recipient!

Reavis EARTH Program Garden, located in Lansing, is a hands-on learning school vegetable, herb and pollinator garden (EARTH stands for: Ecology, Awareness, Research, Technology & Horticulture). The garden shows students and community the "farm to table" relationship, allows experimentation and research to better care for the environment through gardening, and trains student farmers the intricacies of agriculture. Grant funds were used to purchase soil, vegetable plants, seed, and gardening tools. For more Reavis Community Garden photos, go to **Page 8**.

Cook County Farm Bureau Supports the Community

Throughout 2023, Cook County Farm Bureau® has remained engaged with and committed to partnering with and supporting local farmers, students, and local non-profits.

Support for farmers

Cook County Farm Bureau continues to support farmers through marketing enhancement programs like Live Local, Shop Local,

Discover Local guides, and Local Farm Products website search function. All of these resources are designed to connect consumers to farmers and local produce. These resources are available at cookcfb.org.

which supports ways to turn non-consumed food into a resource through composting. It also supports reducing the regulatory constraints for on-farm materials, urban food scraps, and processing facilities.

Food pantry support

Together with partners, Cook County Farm Bureau donated much needed food staples and essential non-food items to four Cook County food pantries. Donations were raised in celebration of Food Checkout Day, which celebrates the healthy and nutritious food local

In addition to marketing tools, Farm Bureau supports local farmers through advocacy at the local, state, and national levels.

Policy revisions

Cook County Farm Bureau submitted a resolutions to Illinois Farm Bureau delegates

Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences featured in ILFB's Partners Magazine

An article about the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences was published in the Winter 2023-24 issue of Illinois Farm Bureau's Partners Magazine.

The article, "Lessons in Labs, Land & Livestock," was written by Kim Hill, with photography by Nathan Lambrecht. The article is the third of a four-part series about agricultural careers.

To read the article, visit <https://bit.ly/CHSASArticleinPartners>.

Community continues on Page 2

If you prefer to receive this publication exclusively in our electronic format, the e-Co-Operator, simply send us a request by contacting us by phone at **708-354-3276** or email us at fbcooperator@gmail.com.

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!

Community

Continued from Page 1

farmers grow and raise by providing food or cash donations to people in need.

Over \$12,688 was donated to local Cook County pantries in celebration of Food Checkout Day this year and the healthy and nutritious food grown and raised by local farmers.

Agricultural Scholarships

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation® awarded \$11,000 to four students pursuing an agriculture-related degree. The scholarship program is designed to provide college students pursuing a degree in agriculture, agribusiness, or agriculture-related course of study. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of scholastic ability and financial need.

\$450 was donated to the local FFA chapter to help support four students attending the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis.

Agricultural leadership

In addition to student scholarships, Farm Bureau provided two leaders scholarships to attend the Illinois Ag Leadership Program (IALP), a premier agricultural leadership development program.

Conservation and the Environment

Farm Bureau understands the importance of pollinators to our food system and ecosystem. Farm Bureau leaders designed a multi-faceted pollinator project to communicate farmers' efforts to preserve and increase pollinator habitat as well as to illustrate the connection between pollinators and our food system to urban consumers. This project included the creation of a community pollinator garden at the Farm Bureau building, community presentations, pollinator

garden community event, and large-scale community education event hosted in conjunction with the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago.

Monarch club

The Monarch Club, created by the organization in 2023, is open to Farm Bureau members and non-members who have an interest in monarchs, pollinators, and conservation. For more information and to get involved, contact Bona Heinsohn bona@cookcfb.org.

Supporting the local community

To support urban gardens and farms, Cook County Farm Bureau developed the Urban Garden Grant program. The grant program awards six local grants at \$350 each for a total of \$2,100 to support the purchase of plantings, seeds, and garden materials from Cook County Farm Bureau Member Greenhouses, Farm Stands and Businesses.

Support of local non-profits

As a non-profit itself, Cook County Farm Bureau is acutely aware of the power of non-profit associations and the tremendous outcomes that can occur when non-profit entities work together for a common outcome. To that end, Farm Bureau financially supported Wagner Farm in Glenview, Lake County 4H Fair Animal Auction, Greater Chicagoland Food Depository, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana, the Illinois Agricultural Association Foundation, Cook – DuPage Beekeepers Association, Illinois Farmers Market Association, Illinois Agricultural Leadership Foundation, Animal Agriculture Alliance, the Chicago Farmers Organization and other non-for profits.



HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN NOVEMBER

- ▶ **Advocated for healthy food and nutrition education programs in Cook County.**
- ▶ **Introduced numerous Cook County legislators to agriculture and fall harvest.**
- ▶ **Offered a free two-hour professional development workshop for six educators titled, "Thankful for Food and Harvest."**
- ▶ **Hosted a Farm Estate Planning for Future Generation discussion webinar for land owners and farmers and a Preparing Wills and Trust webinar for members.**

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...

- Delegates Janet McCabe, Todd Price, and Dan Biernacki and alternate delegates for willingly giving their time to review the delegate materials during the delegate listening session at the end of November.
- The 35 new participants last month for the Ag Adventures Word Search. It's great to see so many new entries. If you haven't submitted an entry before, December would be a good time to start! You can submit your entries by mail, email, fax or deliver them in person to the office.
- Estate Planning Attorney, Tom Olofsson, for providing members info and tips on preparing a will and trust during our zoom workshop.
- The many voting and associate members who have renewed their membership for 2024!
- Member British Griffis for expressing interest in the Agriculture Leaders of Tomorrow program offered by the Illinois Farm Bureau
- The voting members that submitted a proxy for participation in the Cook County Farm Bureau Annual meeting.
- The many Cook County Farm Bureau volunteers that have committed to serve the Action Teams (Ag Literacy, Commodities/ Marketing, Governmental Affairs, Member Relations, Public Relations, Young Leaders) for a two-year term.

Co-Operator

Published Monthly
Cook County Farm Bureau
 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525
 (ph) 708-354-3276 (fax) 708-579-6056
 (e-mail) ccfb@cookcfb.org (website) www.cookcfb.org



USPS No 132180 Periodical Postage Paid at LaGrange, IL 60525 & additional mailing office

Editor Bob Rohrer	Copy Analyst Ashley Christensen	Copy Development CCFB Office Staff
-----------------------------	---	--

Officers & Directors

Janet McCabe, President
 Gerry Kopping, Vice President
 Ruth Zeldenrust, Secretary-Treasurer

Dan Biernacki	Mark Yunker
James Gutzmer	Roger Freeman
Mike Rauch	Todd Price
James Bloomstrand	Greg Stack
Patrick Horcher	

Farm Bureau Manager

Bob Rohrer

Office Staff

Jill Drover	Katrina Milton
Kelli Villarreal	Linda Tobias
Bona Heinsohn	Tim Rost
Melanie Senne	Julie Hesperheide
Debbie Voltz	

Affiliated Companies

Victoria Nygren Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago North
 Kevin Gomes Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago Northwest
 Sharon Stemke Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago South
 Cary Tate Insurance Agency Manager, Orland Park
 David Swigart General Manager, Conserv FS

Postmaster – Mail Form 3579 to 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525

"Co-Operator" (USPS No 132180) is published monthly as a membership publication for \$2.50 per year to members as a part of their annual membership dues by Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525. Periodical postage paid at LaGrange, IL and additional mailing office. Postmaster: send address changes to the Co-Operator, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525.

The Co-Operator, the monthly publication of the Cook County Farm Bureau®, is available to members through mail delivery, email, or by viewing online at www.cookcfb.org. Members that wish to receive the publication solely by email can let us know by sending an email to fbcooperator@gmail.com with the subject: E-Cooperator.



Downwind

by **BOB ROHRER, CCFB MANAGER**

“Farm Sounds”

Many times, when I reminisce about the farm, I think about the rural tranquility and peaceful sounds that call to my soul. The breeze rattling corn leaves. The gentle lowing of cattle in the pasture. The squeak of the rope swing in the tree. The purr of the barn cat. Bees buzzing in the breeze during the day. Crickets and katydids chirping at night.

Sure - those serene sounds were a part of the farm but I cannot forget the other, more intense farm noises. Less peaceful but still holding appeal.

There was the 1150 Massey Ferguson tractor I operated in the farm fields frequently during my high school and college years. Its powerful diesel engine had a muffler that didn't muffle. Its tractor cab was composed of un-insulated steel and glass that I believe was designed to amplify sound. If full body vibration through sound was your thing, that tractor hit the jackpot.

The farm featured industrial sized grain dryers with large motors to generate a heat blast using powerful fans to force drying air through bins filled with grain to take the moisture out of the corn and soybeans. The dryer sounds pounded the brain to the point of chaotic disruption.

The feed grinder, grain augers, batwing mower, honey wagon, grain cart, hay baler, post hole digger and other PTO driven implements all required the tractors engine RPMs to be at a high level to deliver sufficient power for the job at hand. An idling engine was loud enough; but full bore was necessary.

The livestock and especially the squealing pigs generated a piercing, shrill sound sufficient to rattle the ear drum (or two), amplified within the walls of the hog buildings. Our pigs did not have off switches.

The farm workshop for repairs and

projects was filled with clever noise makers called hand and power tools. Hammers. Drills. Saws – circular, table, chop. Sanders and grinders. Each ready to pump out a distinctive sound vibration.

There were always plenty of small engines around... Lawnmowers. Chainsaws. Leaf blowers. The more intense, the better!

I probably should blame Styx, Foreigner, AC/DC (Not dad's welder). I did not use earplugs to enjoy the rock music! My parents wanted to.

The rhythm and cacophony of farm life came in all types and sizes. All featuring plenty of decibels.

Apparently, those “other” farm noises and sounds had a compounding “beating” effect on my ear drums over the years. Following years of farm sounds, the net result is that I have a hearing problem.

You hear about selective hearing, especially between spouses. I have joked with my wife that 90% of our conversations are me saying “what?”. I'm not confident that she “appreciates” repeating the same words over and over, each time with an increasing volume. However, it is not selective hearing in my case - it is science. My audiologist tested me and confirmed it. After the test, she said, “you likely have difficulty hearing women's voices due to the pitch”. Yep... She nailed that one!

Selective or not, most of the farmers that I know suffer from some degree of hearing loss due to the frequent high decibel sounds from the farm. We can count our lucky stars that today, we live in a technically advanced medical society. One of those “hearing horns” from previous centuries are probably not going to be making a comeback.

I recently enjoyed adding to my life the luxury of some small, unintrusive

Recipe of the Month

— DECEMBER —



Mushroom Gruyere Quiche

By: *Gibby's Gourmet Mushroom, LLC*

INGREDIENTS

- 1, 9" frozen deep dish pie shell
- 3 t unsalted Butter
- 1/2 lb Mushrooms: King Trumpet, Shiitake, Chestnut, (don't use Shiitake stems, save for stock)
- 1/2 c shallot, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 sprig fresh thyme
- 4 lg eggs
- 1 1/4 c heavy whipping cream
- salt, 1/4 t cayenne pepper, pinch of nutmeg

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400° F and set oven rack in middle position. Remove the pie crust from the freezer and let thaw until just soft enough to easily prick with a fork, about 10 minutes. Prick the bottom and sides of the crust all over with fork. Place the crust on a baking sheet and bake until lightly golden, about 10 minutes. (Keep an eye on it, if it puffs up, gently prick with fork until it deflates). Set the pie crust aside and reduce oven temperature to 325°.

In a nonstick skillet over medium - high heat, melt 2 t butter, add mushrooms and cook, stirring often, until starting to brown, 4-5 minutes. Add remaining butter, shallots, salt and cook 2 minutes more. Add garlic, stir 1 minute. Stir in thyme. Remove pan from heat and set aside. In medium bowl, whisk the eggs, add cream, cayenne, nutmeg, remaining salt, whisk until combined.

Spread half the mushroom mixture over the bottom of the cooked crust. Top with all of the Gruyere and then the remaining mushroom mixture. Pour the egg/cream mixture over the top. Slide the quiche, (still on baking sheet) into the oven and bake for 45-55 minutes, until the top is lightly golden, and the custard is set. Serve hot or warm. Enjoy! Servings: 4 - 6 Servings.

hearing devices. The devices are electronically programmed to amplify those certain pitch frequencies that have been diminished over the years. They are bluetooth enabled for control purposes and to connect directly to the smart phone. Pretty cool!

This newfangled hearing technology is cool but also inconvenient and pricey. Better to save your hearing by wearing hearing protective devices when you

are experiencing sound 85 decibels or greater. How do you know what the decibel level is of a noise? There is now available a smart phone app that measures decibel levels. Also, pretty cool!

Those serene, peaceful farm sounds are better when you can hear them.

Bob can be reached at brohrer@cookcfb.org



Get a career without limits. Ask me how.

With no sales caps, an attractive compensation plan, and the opportunity to earn bonuses and incentives, there's no limit to your success.

Matthew Schrodt
Agency Recruiting Consultant

Chicagoland Area
Chicago, IL 60666
www.countrycareer.com
matthew.schrodt@countryfinancial.com
308-821-4030

COUNTRY Financial® is the marketing name for the COUNTRY Financial family of affiliated companies (collectively, COUNTRY), which include COUNTRY Life Insurance Company®, COUNTRY Mutual Insurance Company®, and their respective subsidiaries, located in Bloomington, Illinois. 0322-021MM_26544-1/23/2023



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATES



President Janet McCabe (L) and Sec-Treasurer Ruth Zeldenrust (R) lead the 103rd Annual Meeting of the Cook County Farm Bureau.

103rd Annual Meeting of CCFB

Janet McCabe, President; Jim Bloomstrand, Chairman of the Cook County Farm Bureau Credentials Committee and the Nominating Committee; and Ruth Zeldenrust, Secretary-Treasurer, led the 103rd Annual Meeting of the Cook County Farm Bureau held November 15, 2023.

Cook County Farm Bureau Pres., Janet McCabe chaired the meeting to address the business of the organization including receiving an audited financial report, election of directors (Jim Bloomstrand, Jim Gutzmer, Janet McCabe, Mike Rauch, Mark Yunker, and Ruth Zeldenrust were elected), approval of acts and deeds of the board for the past year, and approval of delegates to the IAA annual meeting.

President McCabe recognized the board, staff, and teams for a great year of programs and membership service and commended the board, staff, and members for their hard work through recent years with difficult circumstances.

Board of Directors Achieve 100% Certification

During the Cook County Farm Bureau Board of Directors Strategic Planning Session in February 2022, the Board was notified of a new organizational leadership growth and training program: the County Farm Bureau (CFB) Certified Director Program. The Illinois Farm Bureau's "CFB of the Future Working Group" made it a priority to provide a professional program to help build the Farm Bureau leadership across the state.

The CFB Certified Director Program went live on March 1, 2022 for board members, as time allowed, to begin the online instruction through the American Farm Bureau University platform, accessing various modules that provided education on key aspects for board member best practices.

In August 2023, when newest CCFB board member Greg Stack received notification of his approved Director Certification, that meant 100% of the Cook County Farm Bureau Board of Directors achieved the Certified Director designation. The 12 Board members that became certified include:

- | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Dan Biernacki | Pat Horcher | Mike Rauch |
| Jim Bloomstrand | Gerry Kopping | Greg Stack |
| Roger Freeman | Janet McCabe | Mark Yunker |
| Jim Gutzmer | Todd Price | Ruth Zeldenrust |

In addition, past board member Tim Stuenkel and Farm Bureau manager Bob Rohrer also passed the certification testing.

Certified directors received recognition, a certified director lapel pin, a certified director logo shirt, and the knowledge necessary to serve as a quality leader of the Cook County Farm Bureau. Cook County is one of a handful of County Farm Bureaus in Illinois in which 100% of the directors have chosen to become certified directors.

Instruction and testing included information on the history of Illinois Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau Federation, County Farm Bureau board development, advocacy and issue management, governance, membership, foundation, public relations, and organizational planning.

Each module took 30 to 90 minutes to complete. A 75% passing grade for each module test was required to be able to advance to the next area of instruction.

Cook County Farm Bureau President, Janet McCabe, said, "I am so proud of each director and the hard work and dedication that everyone gave to become certified. The program required time and focus to achieve and Cook County Farm Bureau will benefit from their efforts."

Board Selects Leadership Team for Next Year

At the November 15, 2023 meeting of the Cook County Farm Bureau Board, following the Annual Meeting, the Directors elected its leadership team for the upcoming year. The following individuals were selected to lead the Cook County Farm Bureau in 2024.



Janet McCabe

Ms. Janet McCabe, Orland Park, was re-elected by the Board to serve as the organization's President, a position she has held since November of 2017. McCabe and her husband, Joe, farm in the southern Cook County area and northern Will County raising corn, soybeans, wheat, and marketing hay/straw. She has served on the Cook County Farm Bureau Board since 2011 and has been a part of the organization's Team structure since it was created in 2005. She has served in a variety of leadership roles including Secretary/Treasurer, Governmental Affairs Team, Political Action Committee, Public Relations Team, Audit Committee, and Building Committee. She has served as a director on the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation® Board. She has also served in Illinois Farm Bureau statewide leadership positions. In addition to her on-farm role, Janet is a Registered Nurse and has been practicing for over 30 years.

McCabe said, "It is humbling to be re-elected to another term as President. I really look forward to continuing our work at Cook County Farm Bureau with the goal of having the importance of agriculture in everyone's daily life recognized. I look forward to working with the board to serve members in the organization."



Gerald Kopping

Mr. Gerald Kopping, Lemont, was re-elected to the Executive Committee as the Vice-President of the Board for a third term. Kopping has been a member of the Cook County Farm Bureau® Board of Directors since 2004 and has served as the Chairman of the Commodities and Marketing Team, Foundation Fundraiser Chair, Executive Finance Committee, and other leadership roles. Gerry, along with his family, operate Kopping Farms where they board 110 horses, farm 600-acres, custom farm 100-acres, and raise 35-head of cattle. In addition to Farm Bureau, Gerry is an

active member of St. James at Sag Bridge Catholic Church in Lemont, the oldest Catholic church in Cook County; a member of the Lemont Chamber of Commerce; a board member for the Francis Field Youth Foundation; a member of the Land of Lincoln, Illinois, and American Quarter Horse Associations; and a member of the Horsemen's Council of Illinois.



Ruth Zeldenrust

Ms. Ruth Zeldenrust, Chicago Heights, was elected Secretary-Treasurer by the Board. She is also Chair of the Audit Committee. She has been a member of the CCFB Board of Directors since 2011 and has been a part of the organization's team structure since it was created in 2005. She currently serves as Chair of the Governmental Affairs Team and is on the Foundation Board of Directors. She owns and operates Zeldenrust Farm Market and Greenhouses, raising local fresh vegetables and flowers/bedding plants in south Cook County.

Joining these three officers on the Executive Finance Committee for the next year will be board members Mike Rauch and Dan Biernacki, both of Tinley Park. The Executive Finance Committee holds the responsibility of the budgeting, finance, personnel, and day-to-day oversight of the organization. They also joined the three officers as part of the Foundation Board of Directors.



Mike Rauch



Dan Biernacki

From the Board of Directors, the following leaders will head up programming committees of the organization: Mike Rauch, Public Relations Team; Gerry Kopping, Commodities/Marketing Team; Jim Bloomstrand, Member Relations Team; Greg Stack, Ag Literacy Team; and Pat Horcher, Governmental Affairs Team.

Under these individuals' leadership, the Cook County Farm Bureau will be focused on achieving the goals and objectives approved by the Board of Directors in 2022.

Hot Ag Reads



Kevin Daugherty is the Education Director of the Illinois Center for Agricultural Engagement for Illinois Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom.

Looking around for a great book for the holiday season? Look no further! Check out these new to you books as reviewed by Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom.

Kevin Daugherty

The Pie That Molly Grew by Sue Heavenrich (978-1-53411-184-4).

If Jack can build a house, Molly can build a pie with an Illinois pumpkin. From seed to pie, this book covers every part of pumpkin growth with outstanding back matter.

Carl and the Meaning of Life by Deborah Freedman (978-0451-47498-8). Our theme for the 2023-24 school year is soil, and this is an excellent whimsical look at the importance of earthworms with our rich Illinois soil.

Josephine and her Dishwashing Machine by Kate Hannigan (978-1-63592-621-7). Written by an Illinois author about a famous, but lesser known, Illinois inventor. Check out the importance of Shelby County and the 1894 World's Fair. (Kate is a Cook County Author)

Buzzing with Questions: The Inquisitive Mind of Charles Henry Turner by Janice N. Harrington (978-1-62979-558-4). Another excellent Illinois author explores a pathbreaking entomologist.

My Grandpa, My Tree and Me by Roxanne Troup (9781-953458-55-1). Multiple generations involved in a pecan farm. This book will make you want to plant a pecan tree....or two.

Hopefully the Scarecrow by Michelle Houts (978-0-593-20690-4). One of our favorite authors describes the importance of stories, how we relate to them and literally how they can carry us away. (Michelle is signing books at the December Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting)

It is Time: The Life of a Caterpillar by Lizzy Rockwell (978-0-8234-5079-4). This guided reading book walks us through the life and times of a caterpillar, and an excellent month long experiment you can read over and over.

Rooting for Plants: The Unstoppable Charles S. Parker, Black Botanist and Collector by Janice N. Harrington (978-1-6626-8019-9). A look at the fascinating life of a botanist from the 1880s through WWI, the Great Depression, WWII and the Cold War. Outstanding back matter.

Underground Fire: Hope, Sacrifice and Courage in the Cherry Mine Disaster by Sally M. Walker (978-1-5362-1240-2). An adult read about a 1909 mine disaster in rural Bureau County. Connections to agriculture? Everything comes from the soil; we can grow it and mine it and the importance of rural communities.

Dry by Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman (978-1-4814-8197-7). Though not a new release, a high school to adult book that is needed. What if the Colorado River runs dry? A dystopian look at this event happening that you'll read from cover to cover.

The Peach Pit Parade: A World War 1 Story by Shana Keller (978-1-5341-1138-7). An extraordinary story of how peach pits helped soldiers of the 'War To End All Wars'. The importance of all aspects of agriculture comes to life when you might not be able to do it all, but everyone can do a little.

Farm Boots by Lisl Detlefsen (978-1-948898-11-9). A can't miss for children of all ages, you see how important boots are on the farm.

Editor's note: Kevin Daugherty is a national leader in the area of Agricultural Literacy. Every year, he puts together a "best of" list of quality ag themed books. Kevin provided an early release of his list this year for Cook County Farm Bureau members to enjoy.

5 Questions with Mark Yunker, CCFB Board Member

What is a memory stamped into your mind from your involvement with Cook County Farm Bureau?

The memory stamped in my mind is every year when fellow board member, Mike Rauch, and I would attend the Agriculture in the Classroom Ag Days and teach the 4th grade students about agriculture. It's always such a fun day.

Why do you think that the Cook County Farm Bureau is important to your farming profession?

The Cook County Farm Bureau helps the public recognize and value the importance of agriculture. The CCFB informs people about the ag industry and the myths of agriculture.

What is your favorite tractor?

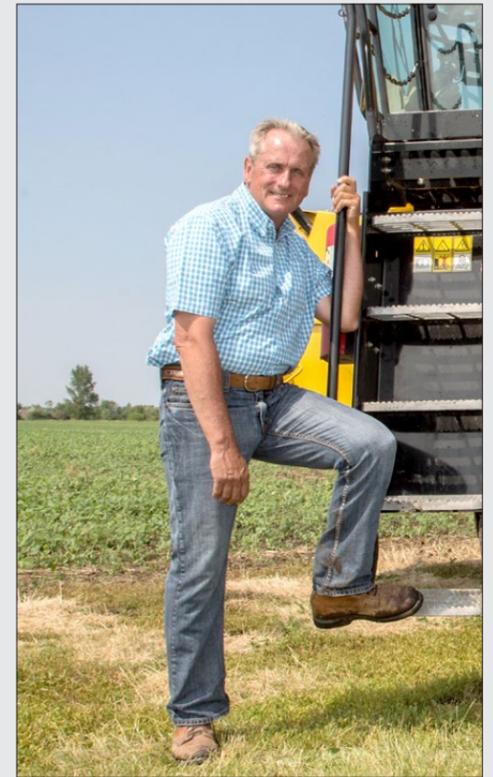
Allis Chalmers D17

What did you want to be growing up?

I always wanted to be a farmer, it's part of my family. My grandfather was a farmer, my dad was a farmer, I am a farmer, and even my son is a farmer. There are 7 generations of farmers.

What is your favorite farm memory?

On my farm I've always had kids help with baling hay, etc. It is so great to watch them grow up and see where they are today in their lives. One of my favorite stories is when I was in the field with a young worker and



Mark Yunker

the look he gave me when I picked and ate a piece of sweet corn right off the stalk.

"My mom said if you eat raw corn, you'll get worms!", he said.

I will never forget that to this day, and no, I did not get worms.

AITC Presenter Announces Retirement

AITC Presenter Linda Schaeffer announced her retirement in November. Linda has been an AITC presenter since 2017. Prior to presenting, Linda taught first grade and preschool for 18 years. She became interested in teaching children where the food they eat comes from after a preschool child told her that "chocolate milk comes from brown cows."

When talking to Linda about her more than six years teaching AITC, she said that it was "a wonderful experience" and that she will miss the students the most, especially their funny questions.

We are grateful to Linda for her years of dedication to ag education, and we will miss her on our team. We wish her health and happiness in the future!

Thank you, Linda!



Linda Schaeffer presenting Ag in the Classroom at Cicero East Elementary School in Cicero in 2018.

FROM FOOD TO FLOWERS

EVERYTHING LOCAL

THE ILLINOIS FOOD, FARMERS MARKET & SPECIALTY CROP CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE
JANUARY 17-19, 2024

CROWNE PLAZA
Springfield, IL

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Chef Rick Bayless

Planting Seeds

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



Katrina J.E. Milton

Holly Jolly Holiday Season

Christmas was always my mom's favorite time of the year. We started decorating the house Dec. 1 and left our decorations up until Candlemas

on Feb. 2. My mom's decorations included a tree in every room, lights hung on the outside, animatronic window displays, a Christmas village on the fireplace, and holiday music playing nonstop. My favorite part of the holiday wasn't the decorations or the delicious food she made – it was how my mom made the entire season special and festive.

My mom passed away in 2016, and it was difficult to celebrate the first holiday after her death. I didn't put up a tree, I didn't decorate, and I didn't even wear a Christmas sweater.

All other holidays were just as depressing: no homemade birthday cake, no giant Thanksgiving turkey, no colorful dyed eggs for Easter. The holidays wouldn't have been the holidays even with a cake or turkey or eggs. What was missing was my mom.

A year or so after her death, I slowly started celebrating holidays again,

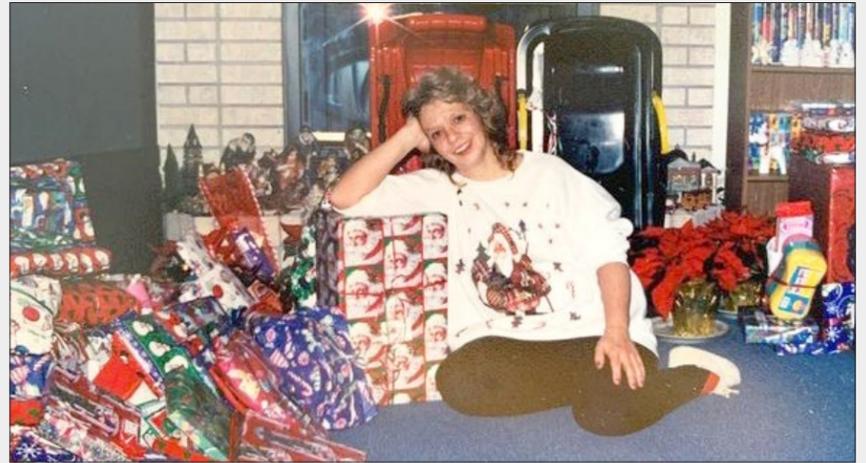
even though my mom wasn't there to celebrate with me. I think what changed my mind about celebrating was her birthday. I still wanted to celebrate her birthday and honor her on her special day. Then, I decided to make her Polish cucumber salad recipe, mizeria, for Thanksgiving.

The next year, I finally put up a Christmas tree. Instead of having the "Blue Christmas" Elvis sings about, I decorated my Christmas tree blue, which was my mom's favorite color.

Every year since, I have expanded my holiday celebrating ever-so-slightly. I now put up multiple trees (I'm up to three), I decorate, and I wear holiday sweaters every chance I get.

My mom would have wanted me to celebrate the holidays, to decorate, and to be happy. Not having her with me to celebrate is difficult, but carrying on our family's traditions and honoring my mom's memory is important to me.

I know that I'm not alone in remembering loved ones during the holiday season – everyone has lost someone important to them, whether it's a grandparent, parent, sibling, or friend.



A photo of my mom after giftwrapping and decorating for Christmas.

I hope you celebrate the holidays with your loved ones this year. I've already started a holiday bucket list: go ice skating, visit a Christmas market, see the Museum of Science and Industry's Christmas Around the World, take photos at Garfield Park Conservatory's Winter Flower Show, enjoy a Christmas lights show, and last but not least, spend quality time with friends and family. I also plan on putting up LOTS of Christmas decorations and drinking a few gallons of hot chocolate with marshmallows. (Did you know that marshmallows are made with

gelatin, a protein made from animal collagen, usually from cows and pigs, and chocolate is made from beans from the fruit of cacao trees?)

Don't forget to spend your time off of school and work living life and having fun. Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.

Happy Holidays!

Katrina can be reached at aitc@cookcfb.org.



13 High School Students Attend Apple "Farm Shadow" Program



Mary Kay Nielsen, the barn manager of the Evergreen Park Urban Barn, leads a tour of the facility's apple orchard Oct. 24 during Cook County Farm Bureau's Farm Shadow Program. During the program, 13 Lyons Township High School students learned about apples and tree science.



Greg Stack demonstrates grafting on an apple tree sapling during Cook County Farm Bureau's Farm Shadow Program, held Oct. 24 at the Evergreen Park Urban Barn.

Three High Schools Participate in 2023 Ag Leadership Academy



Students from Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, Lyons Township High School, and Rich Township High School pose for a group photo at AHW LLC in Manteno during Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag Leadership Academy on Nov. 14.



Students watch as Cook County farmer Mike Rauch harvests corn in his field in Matteson during Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag Leadership Academy.

AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



Make Your Own PAPER POINSETTIA CRAFT

SUPPLIES

- Sheets of construction paper (two per poinsettia)
- Green construction paper (for leaves)
- Yellow construction paper (for cyathia)
- Scissors • Glue
- Stapler • Hole Punch



DIRECTIONS

Step 1: Fold two pieces of paper accordion-style.

Step 2: Cut two inches off of the second piece of paper.

Step 3: Cut a curve into both ends of the paper. Repeat with the curve in the opposite direction for the other piece of paper.

Step 4: Fold both pieces of paper in half.

Step 5: Place the smaller paper on top of the larger paper. Staple in the middle.

Step 6: Pinch ends of the paper together in a fan shape and staple together. Repeat on both sides.

Step 7: Punch holes out of yellow construction paper. Glue to the middle of the poinsettia.

Step 8: Cut leaf shapes out of green construction paper. Glue to the edge of the poinsettia.



FUN FACTS ABOUT Poinsettias

- Poinsettia flowers are the plant's leaves, called "bracts"
- The tiny yellow flowers in the center are called "cyathia"
- Poinsettias change color when the days get shorter
- Freezing temperatures will kill poinsettias; they do best in temperatures above 65°F
- Poinsettias' botanical name is Euphorbia pulcherrima, which means "very beautiful" in Latin
- Poinsettias are native to central America; their sap was used to control fevers and their bracts were used to make a reddish dye
- In Mexico, the poinsettia is a perennial shrub that will grow 10 to 15 feet tall
- Poinsettias are not toxic or deadly to humans or pets, but can cause skin rashes if touched or stomach pain or upset if eaten
- There are more than 100 varieties of poinsettias available today. Poinsettias colors include red, white, pink, burgundy, yellow, apricot, marbled, and speckled.
- December 12 is Poinsettia Day, which marks the death of Joel Roberts Poinsett in 1851. The plant is named after Poinsett, the first U.S. minister to Mexico, who shipped cuttings back home.

Facts are from Illinois Farm Bureau's Partners magazine, <https://ilfbpartners.com/farm/ten-interesting-facts-about-poinsettias/>

December Word Search

Last Month's Winner:
Anita Baltimore

Beautiful	A	L	C	P	S	S	C	Y	A	T	H	I	A	A	X
Botanical	X	I	A	D	T	R	W	S	P	T	J	O	S	K	D
Bracts	F	B	T	C	E	E	G	S	A	P	H	D	L	Q	I
Cyathia	N	P	A	T	I	D	E	T	I	H	W	W	E	O	N
Flower	N	R	L	U	E	N	V	X	T	E	X	O	A	S	N
Indoor	B	P	V	A	B	S	A	Y	B	F	N	L	V	K	V
Leaves	B	X	A	U	N	I	N	T	A	N	C	L	E	O	M
Pink	T	E	R	X	N	T	X	I	O	N	F	E	S	N	C
Plant	I	H	A	D	D	P	J	B	O	B	R	Y	G	B	Z
Poinsettia	S	Q	O	U	I	H	M	D	F	P	E	M	R	H	A
Red	V	O	E	N	T	N	P	F	L	L	W	F	D	L	T
Sap	R	J	K	O	A	I	T	L	A	N	O	S	A	E	S
Seasonal	T	W	H	U	Y	T	F	B	G	L	L	C	C	U	V
Shrub	E	S	P	Z	N	V	A	U	V	D	F	X	J	L	U
White	N	R	M	O	X	L	O	W	L	P	G	J	W	T	N
Yellow															

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
 Delta Sonic Car Wash (Choose one option only)

Located on front of paper

Choose Your Prize: December Word Search

Choices include a \$25 Beggar's Pizza Gift Card, Delta Sonic Car Wash (Super Kiss Wash and *10-min Interior Cleaning) OR **3 AMC Movie Tickets

*Additional charge will apply when using Interior cleaning for Full-sized Vehicles

**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!**

DECEMBER 2023

At The Farm Gate

by Joanie Stiers



Christmas Crazed Ready to celebrate the season on the farm

"I'm sorry; I'm a little Christmas obsessed," I texted our farm's scale operator. My attempts to stream holiday tunes through the tractor radio failed. Rather, my smartphone connected over the internet to a speaker miles away in the scalehouse where an employee was weighing truckloads of corn. "Haha, yeah there's been some Christmas music here and there," she texted back ... on November 2.

I was born to love this holiday. A Christmas Eve baby, my parents celebrated Christmas in the hospital. Mom brought me home in a stocking and thankfully before one of the worst blizzards on Illinois record – the type that prompted our farm and others to buy tractor-mounted snow blowers.

Today, I have more Christmas tunes than country songs in my playlist. I own a half dozen full-sized, decorated trees and an undisclosed number of evergreens shorter than two feet. Admittedly, I'm "one of those" who decorates before Thanksgiving. I leave our outdoor lights off until the turkey and pumpkin pie are served, but indoors, my mood and mental state have moved on to staircase garland and lights on timers. I figure that if I can decorate with pumpkins for six weeks or more, then greenery deserves as much time out of the tote.

During a harvest rain-out in October, I bought cow-themed wrapping paper and balsam-scented air fresheners. I started shopping lists and volunteered to help with our church's Christmas

Eve service. Mom and I worked on details for our farm's employee Christmas party, including gifts that bring conveniences to life and work. Likewise, new and improved tools always make it under the tree at family gatherings, two of which we will host in the farm shop.

In preparation for these four-generation events, the guys pause machinery maintenance, remove the farm equipment and scrub the concrete floor. Delightfully, the kids make memories of gymnasium-style fun to a backdrop of tools, oil drums and welding materials. In the conference room and shop kitchen, we dine and snack on foods from some of the best cooks in farm country. When everyone departs, a star shines atop the grain bin and a lighted tree illuminates the barn's loft window. Come Christmas morning, the same will glow while Dad feeds the calves at dawn, a daily routine that takes no holidays.

At the scalehouse, a Christmas tree sits covered in a back corner waiting for its post-Thanksgiving appearance near the front windows for highway travelers. Even with my musical urging, our scale operator resisted any inclination to expose it early and rock around the Christmas tree during harvest.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family in West-Central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans, hay and cover crops and raise beef cattle, backyard chickens and farmkids.

DECK your HALLS
this holiday season with fresh trees, garland, wreaths, poinsettias, greens and décor!



Purchase from a Farm Bureau Member Business.
To locate one near you, visit our ShopLocal online directory at:
<https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/shop-local/online-directory>

MEMBER BUSINESS

- Clarke's Garden Center** Chicago Hts. | Wreaths, garland, greens, poinsettias, decor
- Gorman Tree Farm** Monee | Trees, wreaths, garland
- Horcher's Farm** Wheeling | Trees, handmade wreaths, greens, flowers
- Kolze's Corner Garden** Woodstock | Trees, wreaths, garland, poinsettias, decor
- Melka's Garden Center** Mokena | Trees, wreaths, garland, greens, poinsettias, decor
- Puckerville Farms** Lemont | Trees, wreaths, garland, decor
- Smits Farms** Sauk Village | Trees, wreaths, greens
- Ted's Greenhouse** Tinley Park | Poinsettias, greens, handmade bows
- The Children's Farm** Palos Park | Wreaths
- Historic Wagner Farm** Glenview | Trees, wreaths, roping, garland, greens
- West End Garden Ctr** Evanston | Trees, wreaths, greens, flowers, plants, decor

Voting open for People's Choice Pup

Help the American Farm Bureau Federation choose the next People's Choice Pup as part of the 2024 Farm Dog of the Year contest.

The contest celebrates the furry friends that work along-side farmers and ranchers to provide food tour tables (and their pet bowls). Participate in the social media contest by "liking" your favorite pup and by voting at FB.org/FarmDog. Voting is open until December 20.

CCFBF to Support Healthcare Providers

Cook County healthcare providers in need of continuing education credits or looking to expand their knowledge of issues facing individuals in agriculture are encouraged to consider FarmResponse on-demand training.

FarmResponse is a 3.5-hour continuing education course developed by national experts from the AgriStress Response Network. AgriSafe's FarmResponse course provides the full range of competencies necessary to provide appropriate mental healthcare for agricultural producers and their families. This knowledge is critical for a healthcare professional to effectively care for a farmer's total health.

Course learning objectives include

- Identifying agricultural financial stress factors
- Naming work challenges inherent in different types of agricultural production
- Identifying the primary acute and chronic health conditions in individuals working in agriculture
- Identifying diverse cultures found within farming
- Identifying the impact of farming cultures on farmer mental health and health-seeking behaviors
- Identifying the special challenges faced

by minority and marginalized groups in agriculture

- Identifying the impact of opioids and alcohol in the agricultural community
- Identifying suicide rates in agricultural populations
- Identifying risk factors for suicide, including access to lethal means
- Identifying strategies to support farmers and ranchers experiencing mental stress

Registration is available at <https://learning.agrisafe.org/cart>.

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation is pleased to offer a \$150 scholarship to Cook County licensed healthcare providers who take the course. To receive the scholarship, individuals should contact Bona Heinsohn at bona@cookcfb.org and provide the following

- Proof of course payment
- Certificate of course completion

Scholarships will be provided upon completion of the training. Licensed healthcare providers do not have to be Cook County Farm Bureau members. Preference will be given to healthcare providers serving Cook County residents.

For questions or additional information, please contact the Cook County Farm Bureau at **708-354-3276**.



Reavis EARTH Youth Garden



Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure

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



Bona Heinsohn

Politicians are gearing up for the 2024 elections. Illinois candidates will again pass and file nominating petitions. Offices on the March ballot include but are not limited to U.S. House of Representatives, State Senators, State Representatives, Metropolitan Water District Commissioners, Clerk of the Circuit Court, State's Attorney, District One County Commissioner, and District Three Board of Review.

Incumbent MWRD Commissioners Kari Steele, Marcelino Garcia, and Daniel Pogorzelski received the party nod, as did appointed MWRD Commissioner Precious Brady-Davis. Surprising few insiders, MWRD Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos received the party's endorsement over incumbent

Clerk of the Circuit Court Iris Martinez for that office. Given that State's Attorney Kim Foxx isn't running for re-election, Clayton Harris instead received the nod.

In 2024, the Cook County Farm Bureau® Political Action Committee (PAC) will interview and endorse local candidates. These endorsements will be shared in a future Co-Operator.

Looking at historical data, we can guess what voter turnout will look like in March. In 2020, primary turnout was 28.36 percent, or 2,279,439 voters pulling a ballot. While 2020 was a Presidential primary with a hotly contested State's Attorney primary to boot it was also in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, so turnout was startlingly low. Also vote-by-mail, which is now commonplace, was brand new. Ironically, 2020 wasn't the lowest historic voter turnout; 2000 was. Does

the pandemic account for the 18.20 percentage point decrease between 2020 and 2016? Maybe?

While 2022 was a midterm election, voter turnout increased compared to 2020. Illinois is home to 8.1 million registered voters. Of those, 4.1 million voters or 51 percent pulled a ballot. In 2018, 57 percent of voters pulled a ballot. With vote-by-mail firmly in place in Illinois, why wasn't 2022 voter turnout higher than in 2018? Was it the result of partisan charged rhetoric? Lackluster candidates? Voter apathy? Perhaps that's a question better left to political scientists.

In November, voters will turn their attention to electing a President and Vice President. U.S. voters will also fill the Senate and House of Representatives. Again, control of both is up in the air. Political pundits believe that the U.S. House and Senate could

both flip. Ready for a Republican Senate and Democratic House? Ready for Congress to remain divided regardless of who is in the Oval Office?

Democrats need to pick up five seats to flip the House. There are 18 seats in play that are currently held by Republicans that President Biden won in 2020. On the opposite side of the rotunda Republicans are eyeing up the most favorable map in years. At-risk incumbents include those in Montana, Ohio, and West Virginia. Historically battleground states, including Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Nevada, and Wisconsin, will also be in play.

Regardless of individual's political leanings, the most important thing anyone can do is vote. Vote in March. Vote again in November. Repeat.

Bona can be reached at
Bona@cookcfb.org.



CANTY VISITS "ADOPTED" FARM

State Representative Mary Beth Canty (D-Arlington Heights) visited Evan Hultine's Bureau County farm this fall. In addition to harvesting corn, she visited a beef farm. Representative Canty is "adopted" by Bureau County Farm Bureau through Farm Bureau's Adopt-a-Legislator program.



SYED VISITS HENRY COUNTY FARMERS

State Representative Nabeela Syed from Palatine visited Steve Nightingale's Henry County farm. Rep. Syed joined the Illinois General Assembly in January of 2023 and Farm Bureau's Adopt-a-Legislator® program shortly after. She is "adopted" by Henry County Farm Bureau. Farm Bureau developed its Adopt-A-Legislator® program in 2001 with the purpose of building long-term personal relationships between urban state legislators and farmers from across the state. The goal of the program is to educate urban legislators about agriculture, while also helping members better understand the needs and concerns of an urban district like those in Cook County. Legislators are matched with a "downstate" county Farm Bureau (which "adopts" the legislator), and the program kicks off by holding a district visit. Cook County Farm Bureau works in tandem with the "adopted" county and legislator on the district visit.

Resolution 23-5456 Food is Medicine

Food insecurity is defined as the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. It affects approximately 33.8 million people in the United States and is linked to lower food quality and a higher probability of chronic disease diagnosis.

The Greater Chicagoland Food Depository projects that over 613,000 Cook County residents live in food insecure households. According to data from the Cook County Department of Public Health, the south and west suburbs of Cook County shoulder the greatest burden of low income and low food

access, with over 35 percent of the population living in these land tracts are either low income or low food access.

To address these concerns, Commissioner Dennis Deer introduced Resolution 23-5456 recognizing the concept that food is medicine and the importance of access to high-quality food in the management and prevention of chronic disease and obesity and to:

- Create "Food is Medicine" advertising campaign.
- Build upon existing healthy food programs throughout Cook County Health System.

- Create a Food Security Program Manager within Cook County Health to prioritize equitable food security impact on health outcomes.
- Engage organizations that provide fresh produce for "Food is Medicine" programming.
- Create "Food is Medicine" educational interactive website.
- Create a "Food Passport" program in partnership with local restaurants.

Cook County Farm Bureau supported the resolution.

Farm Bureau Communicates Farm Vehicle Regulations with Area Police Chiefs

This fall Cook County Farm Bureau sent a communication to area police chiefs and the Cook County Sheriff regarding vehicle regulations related to farm implements and commodity transportation. Below is some of the information shared in the communication. Members with additional questions are encouraged to visit <https://tinyurl.com/3y7xjakk>.

- **Implements of husbandry** are vehicles designed and adapted exclusively for agricultural, horticultural, or livestock raising operations, including farm wagons, wagon trailers, or like vehicles used in conjunction with farming (625 ILCS 5/1-130).
- Implements of husbandry are generally not subject to **vehicle registration** (625 ILCS 5/3-402) or **mandatory insurance** requirements (625 ILCS 5/7-601). Some equipment can be required to display specialized plates (625 ILCS 5/3-809(c)).
- A **driver's license** is not required to operate a farm tractor on public roads from farm-to-field or field-to-field (625 ILCS 5/6-102). "Farm tractor" includes any self-propelled implement of husbandry (625 ILCS 5/1-120).

- Implements of husbandry may be operated on public roads **after dark**, as the law suggests (625 ILCS 5/12-205.1). There's no statutory prohibition against on-road operation from sunset to sunrise.
- Implements of husbandry are generally exempt from **weight limits** (625 ILCS 5/15-101(b).) Exceptions would include wagons, fertilizer buggies, and nurse tanks, which are generally limited to 36,000 pounds gross vehicle weight with no axle limit (625 ILCS 5/1-130) and (625 ILCS 5/3-809(a)).
- Implements of husbandry are not required to have the lighting and markings of commercial vehicles. Example: some wagons may not have **turn signals**. Implements manufactured prior to 2003 are treated differently than those that are manufactured that year or after that time. Standards for markings on farm equipment and nationally recognized industries are set by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers. In Illinois, the ASABE lighting and marking standards (S279.11) apply only on equipment manufactured in 2003 or later (625 ILCS 5/12-205 and 12-205.1).

COOK COUNTY Financial Representative 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.



*ROBERT (CODY) BARRON

has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for October 2023 by Vicki Nygren, Agency Manager. Cody's office is located at 2134 W. Lawrence Ave #1, Chicago, IL 60625. His phone number is 773-728-3102. Cody

has been a Financial Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since October 2016.

Chicago North Agency, Vicki Nygren, Agency Manager



*NADIA ABUEID

has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for October 2023 by Cary Tate, Agency Manager. Nadia's office is located at 12130 S. Harlem Ave, Unit A, Palos Heights, IL 60463. Her phone number is 708-995-

0233. Nadia has been a Financial Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since December 2019.

Orland Park Agency, Carry Tate, Agency Manager



*BRETT RIEKENA

has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for September 2023 by Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager. Brett's office is located at 23042 N. Main St, Prairie View, IL 60069. His phone number is 847-415-2666. Brett has been

a Financial Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since May 2011.

Chicago Northwest Agency, Kevin Gomes, 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.*

Have a tough-to-buy-for relative or friend on your holiday shopping list?

Consider purchasing a Cook County Farm Bureau membership and check the box!

A membership features:

- Agricultural fun
- Farming information
- Agriculture literacy and school connections
- Great discounts, benefits, and services
- Virtual and in-person programs and activities **and much more!**

All for the low price of \$20 (Associate member) and \$45 for the farmer/agriculture professional!

Contact the Cook County Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or go to the member center at www.cookcfb.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU® IS A VOLUNTEER DRIVEN ORGANIZATION AND WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU AS A VOLUNTEER!

Learn more at:

<https://cookcfb.org/contact-us/volunteer-opportunities>



Let your Farm Bureau membership benefits help with holiday gift giving ideas and savings!

CHICAGO BLACKHAWKS



Enter Promo Code: **CCFB** to unlock your exclusive savings
December Games
Dec 5 vs. Nashville Predators
Dec 7 vs Anaheim Ducks
Dec 17 vs Vancouver Canucks
Dec 19 vs Colorado Avalanche

CAR WASH TICKETS



Super Kiss Car Wash: \$13.00
Deluxe Car Wash: \$9.50
10 min Interior Cleaning: \$14.50



Enter Promo Code: **FARMNOV** for savings on tickets
December & January games are updated on our website as they are released to us.

MOVIE TICKETS



AMC Tickets \$9.50
Regal Cinemas \$9.50
Marcus Theatres
Platinum: \$8.00
Silver: \$7.00*

*Marcus Silver tickets are not valid within the first 14 days of select features.

PBR BULLRIDING TICKETS



January 12 & 13 at the Allstate Arena
Discount Code: **FARM**
Save 20% on tickets!

ABENITY APP

ILFB Membership Benefit Platform



Download the 'Illinois Farm Bureau Membership Benefit Platform' App on Android or iPhone for even more savings. Login or register with your Farm Bureau number.

Order Movie or Delta Sonic tickets via credit card by calling 708.354.3276. See our website for entertainment links, pricing, and app instructions: <http://www.cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits>

CLASSIFIED ADS

All ads that we receive for The Co-Operator are also listed on our website at 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. 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

MISC. ELECTRICIAN TOOLS FOR SALE: 1) Chicago Bender (Lidseen) 1-1/4" & 1-1/2" rigid heavy wall bender, \$500.00. 2) Hand Bender, 1-1/4" thin wall bender, \$100.00. 3) Portable, standing Tripod Pipe Vise, \$100.00. 4) Large Conduit Reamer for rigid pipe up to 2", \$100.00. 5) All Metal Masonry Hammer Drill with three (3) bits and wood carrying case. \$75.00. 6) Brand new Milwaukee 1/2" 90° drill, \$100.00 7) Heavy Duty Cable Cutters, \$40.00, able to cut 2/0. 8) Ratcheting Pipe Threader Set, with sizes 1/2", 1-1/4" and 2", \$100.00. MISC. LAWN/OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT FOR SALE: 1) Craftsman, 5 HP, 24", gasoline powered snow blower, \$300. 2) Craftsman lawn mower, 20", gas powered, with grass catcher, \$50.00. **Call Marty at 773-225-0356 (cell phone)**. Photos available upon request.

EQUIPMENT FOR SALE: X580 John Deere 200HR x 54 inch deep deck, comes with 2 stage snow blower, extra blades, extra filters. \$5,300. Honda 10 HP rear tine rototiller very little use \$1,100. **Call 708-856-2172**.

- 3 Lionel steam locomotives, late 40's. Prairie 2-6-2 2025 Type \$125
- 1950 736 Berkshire w/magne-traction \$175
- 1954 682 Turbine 6-8-6 w/magne-traction. This set has 4 freight cars \$450
- Late 90's Hudson by Williams \$300.

All 4 locos smoke, whistles blow on all 4 coal tenders. **Call 847-946-6036**.

FOR RENT

For Rent – Streamwood - 3 Bedroom 2.5 Bath plus Den Townhome. Beautiful water views with a paved walking path that surrounds the complex. 2.5 Car attached Garage. Fireplace. Lots of living space.

Can be Rented furnished or unfurnished. \$2499/ month. Available now. **Contact Dave for more details and photos. (312) 951-6412.**

5 Star Resort: 3 br/2 ba condo 2 miles from Disney World Orlando. Rental rates from \$149/night. **Call 630-853-7669** or go to www.vrbo.com/218673.

WANTED

Wanting to buy your H/O and N scale electric trains; and H/O scale slot cars and tracks. I buy large and small collections. **Turn those unwanted items into cash give me a call at 630-272-4433 Ron.**

Wanted LP Rock & Roll album records, call **John 708-860-9562**. Pre-1971 Baseball cards, call **Gary 708-363-4559**.

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!).

VEGETABLE SOUP



Vegetable soup is a common soup prepared using vegetables and leaf vegetables as primary ingredients.

It is typically served hot, although some, such as gazpacho, are typically served cold.

Vegetable soup can be prepared as a stock- or cream-based soup.



America's first colonists carried "Pocket soup", a substance not unlike today's bouillon cube, to which one could add hot water and various wild or domestic roots and vegetables and make a nutritious soup.

Nutritious

Including a veggie soup into your regular dietary regimen, prevents osteoporosis in adults and helps in bone development and growth in children.

VEGETABLES USED IN THE VEGETABLE SOUP ARE HIGH ON ANTIOXIDANTS.

Vegetable soups having a lot of water in it nourishes the body cells and keeps the skin fresh.



Source: https://kids.kiddle.co/Vegetable_soup

2024 Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit

AVAILABLE SHORTLY

Notarized copies should be sent to:

Cook County Assessor's Office
 Incentive Department
 Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit
 118 N. Clark Street
 Room 301
 Chicago, IL 60602
Be sure to retain a copy for future reference.

The 2024 Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit for Cook County should be sent out by the Cook County Assessor shortly. The filing deadline date is January 31, 2024, and the forms must be notarized.

Cook County Farm Bureau has two staff members who are notaries and will notarize documents free of charge (please call in prior to stopping in the office to ensure they're in the office).

Copies of the 2024 Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit can be obtained at www.cookcountyassessor.com/farms

Farm Estate Planning Webinar Recording Available

The Cook County Farm Bureau C/M Team hosted a conversation webinar about Farm Estate Planning and Continuation to the next Generation, with Kevin Brooks, Farm Fund Manager and U of I Extension Farm Business Management and Marketing Educator.

If you are interested in viewing the webinar recording, please email membershipdebbie@cookcb.org.

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. Scan our QR for our Events Calendar.



“A Taste of Generation YUM” Zoom Book Club

The book club will be reading: How the Millennial Generation’s Love for Organic Fare, Celebrity Chefs and Microbrews Will Make or Break the FUTURE of FOOD. There are roughly 80 million Millennials in America. Never before has a young generation paid this much attention to food. Starting back in 2012, Millennial author Eve Turow set out on a journey to understand why.



DATE: January 16, January 30, February 13, and February 27

TIME: 6:00 p.m. each night

LOCATION: Live via Zoom

FEE: No charge for CCFB Members; \$10 for non-members

REGISTRATION: Register by January 10 at <https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/w1s6vkmi1cvncp3/>



SCAN TO REGISTER

IFB Rules of the Road Trucking Seminar

Illinois Farm Bureau will host a 2-hour program for members focusing on transportation laws and regulations as they pertain to the agricultural industry. CCFB members are welcome to attend this free program held at our neighboring Will County Farm Bureau auditorium. A light meal is at 5:30 pm followed by the program at 6 pm. Registration deadline by Feb 23, 2024.



DATE: Wednesday, February 28, 2023

TIME: 5:30 pm light dinner served; 6-8 pm meeting

LOCATION: Will County Farm Bureau 100 Manhattan Rd #1, Joliet IL 60433

FEE: FREE for CCFB members, advanced registration required

REGISTRATION: Required by February 23, 2024 - call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or email ccfb@cookcfb.org; For additional information, email Debbie at membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org.

Beginning Beekeeping Course

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 9 & 10, 2024

TIME: 9:30 am – 3:30 pm each day

LOCATION: Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside

FEE: \$75.00 for members of CCFB or CDDBA, \$100.00 for non-members

REGISTRATION: Call the Farm Bureau at **708-354-3276**; For additional information, email Debbie at membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org.

Happy Holidays!

From our family to yours the Cook County Farm Bureau would like to wish you a warm and safe Holiday!

CCFB BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Standing left to right: Mike Rauch, Dan Biernacki, Jim Gutzmer, Pat Horcher, Mark Yunker, Greg Stack, and Gerry Kopping

Sitting left to right: Ruth Zeldenrust (Secretary/Treasurer), Todd Price, Janet McCabe (President), Roger Freeman, and Jim Bloomstrand

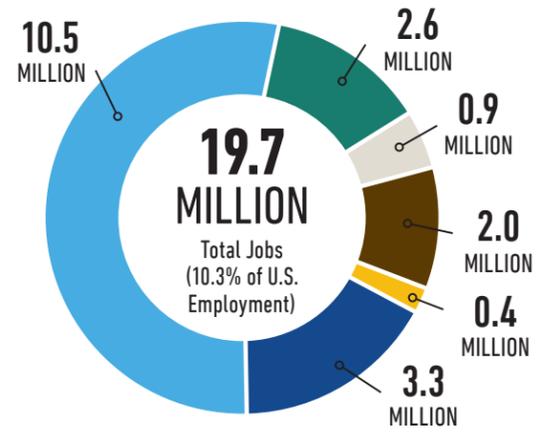
Employment in Agriculture, Food, and Related Industries, 2020



SOURCE: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce,

Bureau of Economic Analysis, data as of September 23, 2021

Note: Employment includes full and part time jobs



- Food Service, Eating & Drinking Places** (5.5% of U.S. Employment)
- Farming** (1.4% of U.S. Employment)
- Forestry, Fishing & Related Activities** (0.5% of U.S. Employment)
- Food, Beverage & Tobacco Manufacturing** (1.0% of U.S. Employment)
- Textile, Apparel & Leather Manufacturing** (0.2% of U.S. Employment)
- Food & Beverage Stores** (1.7% of U.S. Employment)

2024 Foundation Scholarship Applications

NOW BEING ACCEPTED

Careers in Agriculture include more than farming! According to the USDA’s Economic Research Service, a total of 19.7 million jobs, or 10.3% of U.S. employment, were related to agriculture in 2020. Farming only made up 13.5% of agricultural employment, food service made up 53.4%, and food and beverage stores made up 16.5%. There are more than one million agriculture-related jobs in Illinois alone.

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has several opportunities for those who are pursuing careers in the following fields: plant science, animal science, agricultural business, agricultural mechanics, food science, diesel mechanics, ag-related education, technology, mental health, and more!

2024 General College Scholarship Program – Deadline to apply: February 16, 2024

The CCFB Foundation scholarship application window is now open for the 26th Annual “Farm and Food” Agricultural Scholarship and the Stuenkel Family Scholarship Program. The Foundation offers these scholarships to college students who are pursuing an ag-related career with the opportunity to start or continue their higher education. The application is available on the CCFB Foundation website: www.cookfb.org/Foundation.

Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Ag Scholarship (\$3500) and General Scholarship (\$2000) –

Scholarships for individuals and Cook County Farm Bureau members that are focused on agriculturally related careers for those interested in farming, greenhouse, agronomy, horticulture, aquaculture, agribusiness/management, rural healthcare, veterinarian medicine, nutrition/food science, agriculture education, forestry or a number of other agriculturally related pursuits.

The Board will name the top applicant as the Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship recipient. In addition, up to 6 general scholarships may be granted.

Stuenkel Family Scholarship (\$3000) – This scholarship has been

designed for individuals and CCFB members who are pursuing higher education with a focus on an agriculturally related career in the areas of technology, education, leadership development and/or mental health.

In addition to the “Farm and Food” Agriculture Scholarship and the Stuenkel Family Scholarship, there are other scholarship opportunities available throughout the year which include:

“Moving Ag Forward” Vocational Ag Career Training (Available in Three Cycles In 2023/2024) –

These scholarships have been designed for individuals and Cook County Farm Bureau members pursuing training in agriculturally related skills including tractor/truck diesel mechanics, CDL for crop, food and livestock hauling, welding, agricultural technology, etc.

Adult Scholarships (Availability Based on Training Sessions and Acceptance) – Scholarships for Cook County Farm Bureau members include tuition assistance for

- Master Urban Farmer training and certification
- Master Gardener training and certification
- Illinois Ag Leadership Program (IALP) training program
- Ag Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT) training program

Mental Health Training Expense Reimbursement – Mental Health

Professionals or Cook County Farm Bureau members seeking to assist the farmers and rural community who attend and participate in mental health/suicide prevention training seminars, conferences, or educational sessions may be eligible for support and reimbursement. Contact the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation at 708-354-3276 or email ccfb@cookcfb.org. See separate article titled: CCFB Foundation to Support Healthcare Providers on **Page 8**.

Visit www.cookcfb.org/foundation for more information on these scholarships and to apply.