



CO-OPERATOR

To serve all our members of the Cook County Farm Bureau® with meaningful and beneficial programs that reflect our agricultural heritage.

Mark Your Calendar

FEBRUARY		
15	Scholarship Application Deadline	12
22	Zoom Book Club	12
23	Guatemala's Labor/Workforce Webinar	12
	Rules of the Road Seminars (Feb/March)	8
MARCH		
8 & 22	Zoom Book Club	12
9	Earth Day Workshop	6
12	Shred Day	12
24	DIY Virtual Crocheting Class	12
APRIL		
5	Workshop on Preparing Wills and Trusts	12
7	Ag Day	6

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

What are Brussels Sprouts named after?

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# and phone number)

January Winner is Marilyn McClain

Q. The Cook County Farm Bureau was presented what award for group 5 large counties which goes to the County Farm Bureau with the most outstanding overall programming from goals to accomplishments?

Answer: "Pinnacle Award"



The Cook County Farm Bureau's 2022 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 through February 28, 2022. Apply now!

- Online at <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/community-programs>
- Email Debbie at membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org
- Call Debbie at the CCFB: 708-354-3276

Young Leaders and Members Support Area Troops Through USO



Throughout November and December, CCFB members and 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 Young Leaders also shopped for the wish list to add to the donations. Young Leaders Jonathan Poole (l) and Thomas Poole(c) presented the supplies donated by Cook County Farm Bureau members and the organization to Terry from USO in January.

See page 4 for the story

Cook County Farm Bureau® to Support Cook County Families and Food Pantries as Part of Food Checkout Day 2022

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 2022 marks the 22nd anniversary of Food Checkout Day and Cook County Farm Bureau's largest 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.

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 located in Cook County. 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 six food pantries for Food Checkout Day. The food pantries were selected by our partners at COUNTRY Financial.

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Pantries and the Pandemic CCFB Helps to Meet Increased Need to Feed Families

by Carrie Steinweg, Special Feature Writer

The effects of the pandemic are far-reaching, affecting every individual in some way and in many cases hugely overhauling what their lives were like before March of 2020. One big change brought about by the pandemic has been the increased need for food assistance. According to Feeding America, food pantries served 55

percent more in 2020 than in the past and in the early days of the pandemic 4 in 10 people visiting food pantries were there for the first time.

As the pandemic lingers on, things are not necessarily getting easier. Stimulus checks are no longer arriving, people who get sick from COVID

often go unpaid as they take time off work to battle the virus and recover, some schools have had blocks of time where they've been back to e-learning and school provided lunches aren't waiting in a cafeteria and unemployment has increased due to layoffs, reduced hours and

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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 to support the success of local farmers and to keep agriculture present and strong in Cook County.

This *Co-Operator* publication is designed for members 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 bio-fuels. As an added value, we provide great membership deals, savings, discounts, benefits, programming and activities that reflect our agricultural heritage and members' modern expectations.

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

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Support Cook County Families and Food Pantries

Partners food pantries include:

Church of the Holy Spirit in Schaumburg has been providing food for families in need since 2004. As a non-denominational food pantry, the food pantry provides food for families within the pantry's service area. Church of the Holy Spirit Food Pantry was selected by Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial representatives.

Elk Grove Township Food Pantry in Elk Grove Village is a "client choice" food pantry that allows individuals to select items for themselves and their families. During 2020, the pantry served over 325 families per month compared to 230 families respectively in 2019, a 40% increase. Elk Grove Township Food Pantry was selected by Chicago Northeast COUNTRY Financial representatives.

Elsie's Food Pantry in Palos Hills is open to families in Palos Township, Bridgeview, and a portion of Lemont. Elsie's Food Pantry is a joint ministry of Savior Divine Lutheran Church and Living Faith Community Church. Eligible families receive a prepackaged box of food. Additional services are also available for families in need. Elsie's Food Pantry was selected by Orland Park COUNTRY Financial representatives.

Lakeview Pantry in Chicago is Chicago's largest and longest-operating food pantry. Lakeview Pantry's mission is to eliminate hunger and poverty in their communities by providing food to fill the basic need of hungry people, empowering clients to achieve independence through social service programming, and raising

awareness of hunger and poverty. Lakeview Pantry experienced a 400% increase in demand when COVID-19 hit Chicago and anticipates another surge in the coming winter months. The Pantry is on track to provide five million meals in Chicago this year. Lakeview Pantry was selected by Chicago North COUNTRY Financial representatives.

Share Food Share Love in Brookfield provides food assistance to residents of 15 villages in western Cook County. Like many other pantries, Share Food Share Love experienced exponential growth in need during the COVID-19 pandemic and that need continues to linger, especially as the pantry's service area continues to expand. Share Food Share Love was selected by Chicago South COUNTRY Financial representatives.

VKMI Hattie B. Williams Food Pantry in Oak Forest serves south suburban Cook County. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and its lasting effects on food insecurity, the pantry served between 50 and 60 families per week; in 2020 that number grew to over 90 families. Hattie B. Williams Food Pantry was selected by South Holland COUNTRY Financial representatives.

Additional pantries are in the process of being secured.

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 7, 2022.

Food Checkout Day 2022 Food Pantry Match Donations

Food Pantry for Match: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

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. Donations will be accepted until March 7, 2022.



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...

Diane Lund and Austin Omer for taking time to record a brief pollinators training. Stay tuned for it to air in March!

Member Patricia Summins for her phone call and generous compliment about how much she enjoyed the January Co-Operator.

Tim Stuenkel, Carl Smits, Jeff Heinsohn, and Austin Omer for participating in the Lincoln Park Zoo University continuing education panel.

Young Leaders Tom and Jonathon Poole for shopping, organizing and delivering the supplies for the USO service project for military family support.

Katie Smith, Director of Membership and Administration, for 17 years of quality service as an employee of the Cook County Farm Bureau. We wish Katie the very best in the next chapter of her life!

Team members Amy Hansmann and Bryan Blau for their interest in growing their leadership skills through the Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow Program (A LOT). Congrats on your selection to this program offered through the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Lauren Lurkins for her presentation to farmer members at the Carbon Markets: A Policy Primer lunch & learn virtual meeting. Lauren is the Director of Environmental Policy, Governmental Affairs and Commodities Division of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Pete Soltesz and Kim Kulton for training future beekeepers with a 5-week Beginning Beekeeping Course, presented virtually.

Past issues of the Co-Operator are available online at cookcfb.org/stay updated

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Pantries and the Pandemic



Food pantry operations transitioned during the pandemic to meet families' needs while still allowing for social distancing. Photo courtesy of Alicia's House.

business closures. Keeping Americans fed continues to be a huge challenge and a much more urgent one than it was before March 2020.

Juan Hernandez, who with his wife, Stella, founded Alicia's House Food Pantry in South Chicago Heights said that in 2019 they provided food to 6,563 households and 22,038 individuals, but in 2020 that jumped to 8,434 households and 34,094 individuals. In 2021, it dropped slightly to 8,074 households and 27,867 individuals, but just a few weeks into 2022, numbers are trending close back to what they were in 2020 during the height of COVID.

When there's a significant need like this, there's a lot of help required to get through the large demand. The help comes from many supporters and partners who step up to fill the gap and one has been the Cook County Farm Bureau. Hernandez expressed gratitude for the partnership.

"The Cook County Farm Bureau has been a tremendous blessing to our food pantry. Whenever we have had a need they have gone above and beyond to help. When our food supply was running low they helped to stock our shelves on their Food Checkout Day and also on another occasion donated meat," he said. "They also helped secure a grant for a new refrigerator, which allows us now to increase the amount of dairy products we are able to supply our families

with. We cannot even begin to thank them enough for all they have done to help Alicia's House feed the hungry."

The CCFB partners included 65 local food pantries, 5 elementary schools and two affiliated for-profit companies during 2020 and 2021. The project directly impacted over 7,400 individuals, engaged 153 association volunteers and 72 community partners.

The focus of the CCFB's project was threefold: to connect families to farmers who grow and raise healthy and nutritious food while supporting local food insecure families; to raise awareness of area food pantries, their services areas and services proved via social engagement; and to aid food pantries during a time of tremendous need. Through in-person efforts to purchase and deliver food and member donations, raising awareness online and providing grants to local food pantries to expand their food offerings or facilities, the CCFB has made a huge impact in feeding hungry families.

Together We Cope, a food pantry in Tinley Park, was another recipient of aid from CCFB. "Our relationship with the CCFB has been a huge help," said Tony Roman, Food Pantry Manager of Together We Cope. "We have received meat products as well as money to purchase dairy products for our clients."

As with other pantries around the country, usage has increased many times over compared to pre-pandemic times. "During the pandemic we have definitely seen an increase of people needing our services here at the pantry. There are many people that found themselves in need for the first time," said Roman. "The CCFB being able to provide us with product and monetary donations has really helped us get our clients the things they need to get through this pandemic. Without partners like the CCFB, we would be struggling to meet our clients' needs."

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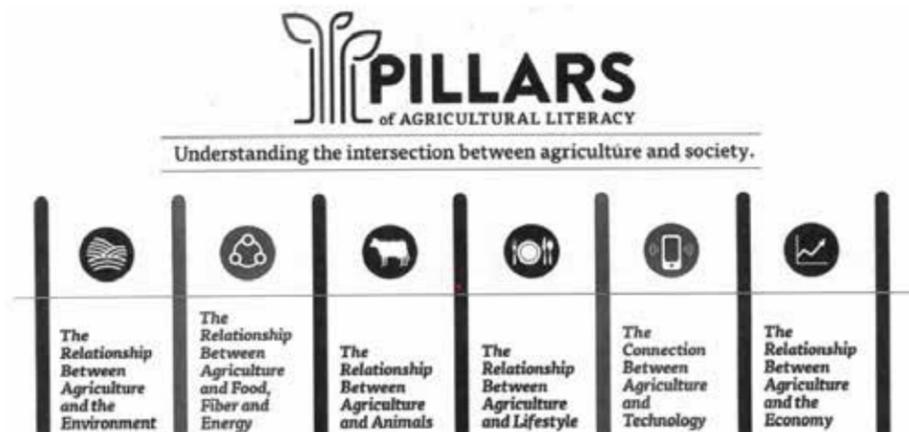


Downwind

by Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager

“Ag Literacy Pillar 6”

Over the past five months, I have been writing about the Pillars of Agricultural Literacy – Understanding the intersection between agriculture and society. This month, I am writing about the final pillar! (I have reviewed the first five pillars as shown below with previous columns available on the Cook County Farm Bureau website: www.cookcfb.org).



Pillar 6: The Relationship between Agriculture and the Economy

Many people fail to realize agriculture’s economic engine is enormous in the Chicagoland area. Chicago is surrounded by millions of acres of the most productive agriculture lands and farmers in the world. The food, fuel, products, commodities, and pharmaceuticals generated by the agricultural sector of the Midwest must be stored, moved, processed, packaged, refined, marketed, delivered, prepared, and consumed. We call this the “agriculture supply chain.”

The pandemic helped most of us better understand the supply chain and how closely it is connected to our country’s national, regional, area, and local economies. Actually, there is not just “one” agricultural supply chain. There are a number of agricultural supply chains meeting people’s needs including: Farm to Fork; Farm to Fuel; Farm to Flannel; Farm to Pharmacy, and combinations of each (see the graphic of the meat supply chain to the right).

These supply chains are packed full of businesses and jobs that enable the chain to work. Jobs equal economy. In Illinois, 20 to 25% of occupations are a part of an agricultural supply chain: farmers, truckers, input businesses, chefs, supermarkets, restaurants, marketers, nutritionists, veterinarians, food scientists, and the jobs list goes on and on.

Since the days of the stockyards, Chicago and food manufacturing have been synonymous. Today, food processing and manufacturing companies employ thousands of Illinois workers, including Kraft-Heinz, General Mills, Mondelez, Tootsie Roll, Tyson, Kellogg, Nestlé, Ingredion, ADM, Davidson’s Eggs, Armour Swift Eckrich, Hormel, Hillshire, Pepsi and Coca-Cola, Eli’s Cheesecake, Frito-Lay, Oberweis, Smithfield, ConAgra, Wrigley, and several pizza competitors, as well as many beer, wine, and spirits producers!

In rural areas, the economy is even more heavily dependent on agriculture. A good economic year on the farm will boost nearly all rural businesses, and unfortunately, a bad farm year brings a negative impact.

Supply and demand relationships are a part of the farm production and distribution just like other industries. Inflation in recent months has been a concern and is quickly noticed when prices spike on one’s favorite foods and products. Farm Bureau works hard to help ensure quality, affordable food and farm products through sensible, limited, and nonredundant regulation, minimum trade barriers, technology that enhances food quality and quantity, and a supply chain that works through good times and bad.

“Beef – it’s what’s for dinner” was the tagline marketing campaign by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and Beef Board back in the early ‘90s and is still being used today. The tagline must be effective as I certainly remember it and lately, living it!

In December, while in Chicago, I had a brief conversation with a local beef farmer. In passing, I mentioned I would be interested in a quarter beef. A couple weeks later, I received a phone call from a meat locker asking how I wanted my quarter beef cut up. Two weeks later, our freezer was stuffed full hamburger, steaks, roasts, ribs, stew meat, brisket...approximately 180 pounds of beef!

I’m a big fan of this type of relationship between agriculture and the economy featuring word-of-mouth marketing, a verbal contract, trust by all parties, and delivery of a quality product to a happy consumer! What a great supply chain!



A snap shot of part of our “Freezer Beef”



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American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting held in Atlanta

Local Farm Bureau leaders attend, participate

Over 4,000 Farm Bureau members from across the country gathered in Atlanta, Georgia January 7 through January 12 for the 103rd Annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF).



Some of the Cook County Farm Bureau Board members and spouses that attended and participated in American Farm Bureau Federation National Convention in Atlanta in January.

Cook County Farm Bureau was represented by Pres. Janet McCabe, VP Gerry and Linda Kopping, Sec. – Treas. Ruth Zeldenrust, Dan and Karen Biernacki, Jim Bloomstrand, Tim Stuenkel, Jim Gutzmer, Roger Freeman, Mark and Heidi Yunker, and Bob Rohrer.

Welcome to the National Convention

AFBF President, Zippy Duvall, welcomed attendees to his home state of Georgia and spoke to the crowd about the national organization's successes and upcoming challenges in an opening keynote address.

Duvall discussed the role Farm Bureau displayed in presenting farmer solutions for federal climate change discussions within the administration.

"We started by looking not at our differences, but at our common goals," Duvall said. "Together, we highlighted the great work being done on sustainability. We established principles and made policy proposals to advance voluntary, market-driven approaches."

A pair of AFBF coalitions — Farmers for a Sustainable Future and the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance — guided climate policy discussions among federal lawmakers and underpinned programs at USDA, Duvall said.

Duvall also called on AFBF members to recruit new voices and perspectives, "from all backgrounds, crops, races, and regions."

Illinois Farm Bureau honored for outstanding programs

Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) received a

New Horizon Award in recognition of the organization's efforts on mental health.



Illinois Farm Bureau Richard Guebert Jr., left, accepts the New Horizon award from American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall the 103rd Annual Convention in Atlanta. (AFBF photo)

The award recognizes new innovative state Farm Bureau programs. Illinois' award stemmed from its one-day Illinois Ag Mental Health Summit in March and the organization's mental health resources.

"What an honor for Illinois Farm Bureau to receive the New Horizon award," said IFB President Richard Guebert Jr., who accepted the award in Atlanta on IFB's behalf. "It speaks to the ability of county Farm Bureaus and staff to work together on behalf of our members to lift the issue of mental health to the forefront. County Farm Bureaus have worked nonstop to bring resources to our members. Many thanks to GoTeam member Adrienne DeSutter and husband, Drew, for their leadership in this topic."

IFB also received Awards of Excellence in four program areas for implementing outstanding member programs and membership achievement in 2021. IFB earned awards in Membership Value; Advocacy; Leadership & Business Development; and Engagement & Outreach.



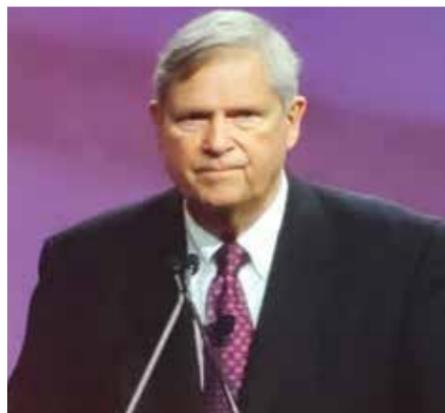
President of the United States, Joe Biden

During a recorded video message to convention attendees from the President of the United States, President Joe Biden expressed his appreciation for farmers and ranchers and

highlighted the administration's priorities related to the Packers and Stockyards Act, infrastructure improvements, and promoting fair competition in agricultural markets.

US Secretary of Agriculture addresses convention attendees

Following the message from the U.S. President, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack shared his thoughts on broadband deployment, trade negotiations, and investments in livestock processing capabilities. Vilsack also addressed the



Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture

prospect of climate-smart commodities.

"Listening to Farm Bureau and listening to those in agriculture, we know that it's important to establish a partnership in this effort [to create climate-smart commodities]," Secretary Vilsack said. "This is not something that's top-down, this



is really a bottom-up effort."

"We know that it has to be voluntary, and it has to be incentive-based. It can't be regulated," Vilsack continued.

A recording of the address is available on the American Farm Bureau Federation website: www.fb.org.

In other AFBF Convention news...

A border collie from Florida, "Fit," was named the 2022 Farm Dog of the Year.

Attendees communicated to the USEPA and elected leaders regarding Changes to Clean Water Rule that will "Hurt Family Farms".

Members enjoyed the entertainment offered by comedian Jeff Allen.

Terry Gilbert from Kentucky, chair of the AFBF Women's leadership committee from



Comedian Jeff Allen

2001-2015 and Sony Perdue, United States Sec. of Agriculture 2017-2021, were awarded the Outstanding Service Award by the American Farm Bureau Federation Board.



Terry Gilbert (AFBF photo)



Sony Perdue (USDA photo)

Young Leaders/Members Support Area Troops Through USO

Throughout November and December, CCFB members and 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 Young Leaders collected, organized, and shopped for the wish list to add to the donations. Chairman Thomas Poole and member Jonathon Poole from the Young Leaders Team met on January 17 to present the supplies and materials for care package boxes to support the United Service Organization (USO). Following the presentation, the materials were loaded into the USO truck for area service men and women.

Today's USO continuously adapts to the needs of our men and women in uniform and their families, so they can focus on their very important mission.

USO has a main office in Chicago but also has two locations in O'Hare airport, a location

in Midway Airport, and a location at the Great Lakes Center. USO airport centers throughout the country offer around-the-clock hospitality for traveling service members and their families.

USO tours bring America and its celebrities to service members who are assigned far from home, to entertain them and convey the support of the nation. Specialized programs offer a continuum of support to service members throughout their journey of service, from the first time they don the uniform until the last time they take it off.

The USO is not part of the federal government. A congressionally chartered, private organization, the USO relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations, and corporations to support its activities, and is powered by a family of volunteers to accomplish their mission of connection.



The Young Leaders loaded the supplies into the USO truck for use by the organization in providing care packages to area military personnel.

Five questions for Bona Heinsohn, Director of Governmental Affairs/Public Relations

What is your favorite job within the Cook County Farm Bureau?

The Cook County Farm Bureau® Political Action Committee (PAC) was created in 2009 shortly before my blue-eyed girl arrived on the scene. As a newer Farm Bureau employee, I was incredibly proud of our Board of Directors for their forward thinking and their willingness to engage in the political process. Throughout the year, the PAC files routine reports with the State Board of Elections but the real work happens during election years. It's the candidate interviews, discussions, and endorsement process that remains one of my favorite responsibilities within the Farm Bureau. This year, especially, will likely be a great year for the PAC because all 17 county commissioners are up for election.

What is your least favorite job within the Cook County Farm Bureau?

Anyone who knows me will tell you that I prefer to text or email rather than talk on the phone. Anyone who also knows my mom will tell you the same about her. Cook County Farm Bureau is a people organization. We're a membership organization and we're a volunteer-based organization, which means that we spend

a lot of time on the phone speaking with members. My least favorite role at the Farm Bureau is talking on the phone. Now that doesn't mean that I won't return your call or chat. But don't be surprised if I email first

When you are not working on Farm Bureau business, what is something you like to spend time doing?

When not working on CCFB business, I spend most of my time on the farm or with our animals. My daughter and I are avid riders and spend most of our summers at barrel races, drill competitions, and riding with a rodeo company. Our first performance for this year is in March in Springfield at Illinois Horse Fair.

What is your favorite tractor?

My grandparents relied on Case IH tractors on their dairy farm in rural McHenry County. When I met my farmer, his third-generation family farm relied on White, now AGCO tractors for their DeKalb County dairy farm. As we returned from college, my farmer and I purchased a John Deere 8300 tractor. It was our first John Deere. It was the first tractor that I used to chisel plow alone. Even though we sold that particular



Bona with her horse, Makoa

8300 several years ago, John Deere 8300 tractors remain my all-time favorite tractors

What did you want to be growing up?

Growing up I wavered between a healthcare professional like my mom and aunt or a lawyer. It wasn't until my freshman year of college that I had lunch

with a former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture who told me that to accomplish real change for the agricultural industry that I needed to work first with the legislature and then transition to a state or federal agency. While I still haven't worked at a state or federal agency, I firmly believe that we effect real change every day at Farm Bureau

Meet a "face" of the Cook County Farm Bureau

Annie & Dennis Holtz, Owners of Wrought Iron Farm



- Started in 2018 with 1.5 acres and in 2019 they formed their farm and business LLC.

- Blacksmithing and agriculture are the two main parts of their business. They expanded their micro-farm in 2021 by 10.5 acres, totaling 12 acres under their care.

- Annie anticipated an academic life, but when she learned about farming it changed the course of her life forever, and has been on that path ever since. Dennis was born with a physical disability and doctors told him he would be wheel-chair-bound by his 30s. He is now 47, a self-taught glass-blower, blacksmith, and farmer.

- They want their customers to view them as organic stewards of the land, as farmers who practice sustainable and regenerative agriculture. They believe in putting planet over profit, and the profit will follow.



Wrought Iron Farm

Phone: 708-646-4333

Email: wroughtironfarm@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.wroughtironfarm.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wroughtironfarm>

WHAT TYPE OF FARMING ARE YOU INVOLVED IN?

Our business is multi-faceted, all with the vision of sustainability through agriculture and craft. We started on 1.5 acres and last year bought 10.5 more to expand. We currently farm flowers and vegetables, blacksmith, blow glass, and weave. We will be expanding into elderberries, hemp, and—fingers crossed!—will soon offer classes on all of the above. We sell at farmers markets, art markets, and directly to customers.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FARM RELATED MEMORY?

The day we laid eyes on our new farm. That was our dream coming true.

WHAT IS YOUR MOST VALUABLE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT

Annie: the tractor.
Dennis: Annie's brain.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING TO GROW?

Dennis: Garlic and eggplant. He loves the functionality of garlic because it is the most used spice in our home, and he loves the beauty of the eggplant flowers and culinary uses of the vegetable.
Annie: Berries and woody ornamentals. She loves all things perennial.

WHEN YOU ARE NOT IN THE FARMING/WORKING, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

Blacksmithing, reading, drinking coffee, planning, and enjoying our dogs.

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

Dennis: Gerry Pleckham is a farmer and good family friend who I helped cut/rake/bale/stack hay back in the day. After that I knew I wanted to be a farmer.
Annie: I am inspired by the work of Allan Savory and Erin Benzakein.

American Farm Bureau Federation Foundation for Agriculture Announces 'Book of the Year'



The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture presented its 15th "Book of the Year" award to author Kiki Thorpe for "How to Grow a Monster." The award was presented at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 103rd Convention.

"How to Grow a Monster" explores the makers theme of gardening and includes a gardening-related activity for young makers to try themselves. Tapping into the popular makers movement (hands-on learning), the book is part of a series of fun, easy-to-read stories that focus on problem-solving and hands-on action.

Thorpe has written more than 40 books for young readers. She is the New York Times bestselling author of "The Never Girls" chapter book series, which has been published in 25 countries. Thorpe grew up in Boise, Idaho, and finds inspiration for many of her stories in memories of her childhood there. She lives with her family in Colorado.

"It's such an honor to have my book recognized by the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture. I hope 'How to Grow a Monster' inspires young readers to try growing their own food," Thorpe said.

The Book of the Year award springs from the Foundation's effort to identify "Accurate Ag Books," a collection of nearly 500 books for children, teenagers, and adults that accurately cover agricultural topics. Book of the Year selections are educational, help to create positive public perceptions about agriculture, inspire readers to learn more, and touch their readers' lives as well as tell the farmer's story. The Accurate Ag Books database is available at <http://www.agfoundation.org/recommended-pubs>.

To accompany "How to Grow a Monster," the Foundation has created an educator's guide.



Diane Merrion, CCFB Director of Ag Literacy

Ag Lit Bit

Nuts are my 'go to' snack most days. When I need a boost, have brain fade, or need something to hold me over, nothing tastes better to me.

While I would just say I eat nuts, I'm not actually

sure what I eat are truly nuts. I have learned over the years that there is a lot more to most foods than we normally give much thought to. Such is the case with my nuts.

My preferred nuts are a bag of Dry Roasted and Salted Mixed Nuts that contains almonds, cashews, pistachios, and macadamias. But are these nuts, truly nuts? To clear up my confusion (and yours) I turned to horticulturist and Ag Literacy Team member, Greg Stack who answered my inquiry as follows:

Welcome to the world of botanical nomenclature or how botanists explain something. Botanists can be very precise in how they talk about plants and plant parts. So much so that it can be confusing at times. Take for example the word nut. To most people a nut is a nut is a nut. To others sometimes you feel like a nut sometimes you don't. But what about when you grab a container of 'mixed nuts' from the grocery shelf. Your first thought is, 'Boy, these are going to be good for snacking.' A botanist on the other hand gets right to work and separates out the true nuts from the nut lookalikes called drupes seeds.

To boil this down to something that is easy to understand and get around the mumbo jumbo, a true nut botanically speaking is a hard-shelled pod that contains both the fruit and seed of the plant, where the fruit does not open up to release the seed to the world. Examples of true nuts are chestnuts, hazelnuts, and acorns.

The nut lookalikes are called drupes seeds. A drupe is a type of fruit in which the outer fleshy part surrounds a shell (sometimes called pit) with a seed inside. Some examples are peaches, mangos, coconuts, almonds, cashews, and pistachios.

And then there is the poor peanut; while nut is in its name, it is a legume like soybeans and lentils. So, the next time you go to the store, don't look for a can that says mixed nuts, drupe seeds, and legume seeds any time soon. This might make the botanist happy, but it might make you run toward the potato chip section."

My thanks to Mr. Greg Stack for sharing his botany knowledge. On a side note, I know I am not alone in my fondness of nuts for a snack. A certain FB Manager who you may know enjoys a regular snack of Grape-Nuts, another non-nut nut snack (Grape-Nuts contains neither grapes nor nuts. It's made from wheat and barley.) Maybe he can provide a column about them someday.



Cashews grow on fruit producing trees which produce a 'false fruit' known as the cashew apple. <https://blogs.extension.iastate.edu/answerline/2021/04/13/cashews-not-really-a-nut/>



Pistachios are one of the oldest flowering nut trees. The nuts grow in clusters, like grapes. The tree typically starts producing nuts around its seventh year.

Diane can be reached at aitc@cookcfb.org.

FEBRUARY YOUNG READER RECOMMENDATIONS

George Washington Carver for Kids

George Washington Carver for Kids by Peggy Thomas tells the inspiring story of this remarkable American. Carver was a scientist, educator, artist, inventor, and humanitarian. Born into slavery during the Civil War, he later pursued an education and would become the first black graduate from Iowa Agricultural College. It includes a timeline, resources for further research, and twenty-one activities to help better appreciate Carver's genius.

Mr. Lincoln's Whiskers

A letter written to Abraham Lincoln in 1860 is the focus of this historical fiction children's book. Lincoln was the first President of the United States to wear a beard, an idea that came from a letter he received from an eleven-year-old girl from Westfield, New York named Grace Bedell.

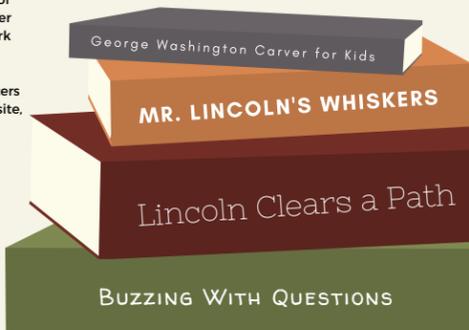
Readers old and young will enjoy this story about the power of taking the time to write a letter. Historical documents of the letters and information about Bedell can be found on the authors website. <https://karenbinnick.com/my-books/mr-lincolns-whiskers/>.

Lincoln Clears a Path

Illinois author Peggy Thomas writes about how Abraham Lincoln spent his whole life clearing a path for others. As a boy he helped his father clear a trail through the woods. As a young attorney he guided farmers, businesspeople, and inventors through the courts. As President of the United States, he passed laws that made life easier for all Americans.

Buzzing With Questions

Illinois author Janice Harrington captures the life of this inspiring Illinois scientist and educator in this nonfiction picture book, highlighting Charles Henry Turner's unstoppable quest for knowledge and his passion for science. Plants and animals and bugs fascinated him. And even when he faced racial prejudice, Turner did not stop wondering. He constantly read, researched, and experimented. Book includes an author's note, timeline, bibliography, source notes, and archival images.



Scan code to watch a short video featuring alpacas



AG DAY 2022

Bring Your 3rd Grade Students to the Farm

April 7, 2022

Registration information is found at <https://bit.ly/AgDayWebsite> or email aitc2@cookcfb.org for more information.



with

The Children's Farm at The Center Palos Park

There's Ag on My Plate

This free 45 minute interactive live or virtual 4th grade presentation teaches students about the farm to table process, food ingredients, nutritional content and the importance of making healthy choices.

to reserve your spot

visit

<https://bit.ly/Agbooking>



EARTH DAY WORKSHOP
CONNECT YOUR STUDENTS TO NATURE THROUGH LESSONS AND ACTIVITIES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9, 2022
4:00-5:00PM

Topics include seeds/germination, compost/soil and pollinators.

Special guest presenter is author, artist, writer and teacher, Ms. Lori Harris owner of The Salt Creek Butterfly Farm

Teachers will receive a box of materials to use during and after the workshop.

Virtual via Zoom
Registration: Call Jill or Diane at 708.354.3276 or email aitc2@cookcfb.org



EARN ONE FREE PDCH

Agriculture Adventures for Families

Since we don't have a natural furry coat to keep us warm, we depend upon a variety of resources to provide our clothing during the cold winter months. Alpaca, sheep, and goats are just a few of the many animals who share their fiber with us. Livestock, in turn, depend on farmers to support their health during the winter months including nutritious feed, water and shelter. For a close-up look at sheep, visit <https://bit.ly/356LAJJSHEEP>.



Fiber to Keep Warm?

Are you curious about the materials used to make your favorite sweater? You probably won't find many details on the garment label. Sheep are the most prevalent producers of wool, though it also comes from rabbits, goats and alpacas. Here are some commonly used types of wool:



Alpaca fiber is considered luxury material because it is soft and fine. It is popular for spinning and knitting, and is also used for hair on dolls and figurines.

Cashmere goat wool is extremely soft and tends to be expensive because the combing and shearing of Cashmere goats is very time consuming.

Dorset sheep produce very white fleece that is strong and free from dark fiber. Dorsets are the No. 1 white-faced breed in the United States.



Merino sheep wool is the finest and softest of all sheep wool. It is used in intense cold-weather applications for its breathability, temperature regulation and moisture control. It is also used for felting of purses, bowls, slippers and scarves.

Montadale sheep produce fleece popular with hand spinners that is used for sweaters, socks, scarves, hats and needle felting.

Source: <https://www.iffbpartners.com/family/wool-comes-from-many-animal-breeds/>



How Does Livestock Keep Warm?

Cows



In the winter, cows' thick skin and hair is a natural insulator that protects them from the bitter cold. Their hairy coat grows longer and thicker in the winter. When it snows, the hair catches the snow and forms a layer over the cow. This creates an air pocket between the snow and the cow's skin, which is then warmed by the cow's natural body temperature of 102 degrees.



Sheep

Sheep will often handle cold temperatures better than goats, so long as they have their wool coats. If they have been sheared recently, sheep will be more at risk for cold stress. As temperatures drop, ruminants will eat more, and their feed will have to be adjusted to make up for the loss in energy.

Water should be one of the first items to check during the winter months and should be checked twice daily.



Horses

Their winter coat has longer and coarser hairs than their summer coat, and they use them to keep themselves warm by fluffing them up to trap heat. The individual hairs stand up rather than lying flat against the skin, which traps warm air close to the body and insulates them from the cold. Horses naturally spend winter days roaming outside and are equipped to stay warm when temperatures are cold, but that doesn't mean he will not benefit from a carefully chosen blanket.



Source: <https://equimed.com/news/general/how-your-horse-stays-warm-in-cold-weather>

Fiber

Source of Fabric



Product/Uses



Wool	Wool is shorn from Sheep	Seaters, pants, coats, mittens, hats
Cotton	Fiber surrounding the seed of the cotton plant	Jeans, T-shirts, sheets, underwear
Polyester	Petroleum	All kind of clothing and household goods
Nylon	Petroleum	Exercise/sports clothing, nylons
Linen	Fiber from the stem of the flax plant	All kinds of clothing and household goods
Acrylic	Petroleum	Sweaters, shirts, and other clothing items
Silk	Filaments which silkworms spin to make their cocoons	Evening wear, ties, undergarments, bed linens

Source: https://cdn.agclassroom.org/media/uploads/2016/07/25/answer_key.pdf

February Word Search

Clothing

- Cold
- Cotton
- Cow
- Fabric
- Fiber
- Fleece
- Hat

Horse

- Knitting
- Mittens
- Ruminants
- Sheep
- Sweater
- Warm
- Wool

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

Choose your prize:

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 2020 and your name is automatically entered into an "End of Year" drawing for a gift basket full of ag themed goodies.

Good luck!

Last Month's Word Search Winner Is..

Jennifer Rifis-Meng

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Membership #: _____

(Membership # is located on front of paper)

If you were to win, check your preference:

___ Beggar's Pizza GC ___ HRI GC ___ 3 Movie Tix

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

Deadline is the 20th of each month.

No Time to Chill: Winter a Season of Evaluation



the pump, imagine filling up a 300-gallon tank in a combine. Supply shortages and soaring input costs challenge farm families like ours everywhere this winter, prompting us to store herbicide like toilet paper in case of a shortage. Our breakeven spreadsheets evolve and include approximate costs on products that retailers can't even price yet.

Thankfully, crop values are strong, and we take comfort in surrounding ourselves at these conferences with people who understand and possess the faith to persevere. The recent conference offered perspective on the future of food and farming and the anticipated disrupters in the marketplace. Expert panelists discussed biofuels, global protein demand, soil microbials and carbon. They shared dialogue on commodity and financial markets, supply chain issues, cryptocurrency, farmland values and consumer mindset about food. Between sessions we met with vendors of innovative farm products and further quizzed experts on the topics most impacting our family farm.

For decades, farm meetings and conferences have sparked the adoption of innovation on the farm, helping operations of all sizes attain the ideal of continuous improvement. At these places, we discover new solutions to complex problems and make choices to advance methods for growing crops and raising animals. That said, the winter season provides limited time to chill.

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

On the six-hour drive home, we jotted down action items to improve the family farm. The list added to the workload that had accumulated while away from the farm office for the better part of three days. But nothing seemed unattainable. We had just left a farm conference packed with a lineup of brilliant speakers and creative thinkers, the type who can re-ignite the motivation that the pandemic and its policies had temporarily siphoned from us.

Farm conferences and annual meetings return this winter at hotels and conference centers across the nation after a two-year hiatus. The face-to-face networking, the sharing of knowledge and the trips south to warmer locations rejuvenate souls in the agriculture industry this winter season, traditionally a time for self-evaluation on the farm. Farmers, perhaps, evaluate more this year than in recent ones. The pandemic has been the annoying rock in our boot and record-high costs a rockslide challenging our path to profitability.

Fertilizer prices have more than doubled in a year. Roundup prices are up 300%. And while anyone who drives can relate to the pain at

Family Farm and Food Bytes

MORE THAN 250,000 SERVINGS DONATED

TO ILLINOIS FOOD BANKS - The Illinois Pork Producers Association (IPPA), Illinois Corn Marketing Board and the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) Checkoff Program donated 64,497 pounds of pork to food banks throughout the state in 2021 as part of Pork Power: Partnering to Fight Hunger in Illinois campaign.

Donations included to the Greater Chicago Food Depository and Northern Illinois Food Bank. Since its inception in 2008, the Pork Power program has generated over 986,000 pounds of pork — enough for over 3 million meals — for families throughout Illinois. (FarmWeekNow)

GMO LABELING NOT LIKELY TO IMPACT PURCHASE DECISIONS, STUDY SAYS - Most food products sold in the United States that are made with ingredients with detectable genetically modified DNA need to identify that on their labels. And though GMO labeling has been a hot topic of discussion for years, a new study indicates that there may not be much new consumer reaction to the required on-package disclosures. (Food Dive)

FARMER VETERAN COALITION SEEKS GRANT APPLICATIONS - The Farmer Veteran Coalition is accepting applications for its Fellowship Fund small grant program until Feb. 14. The nonprofit organization, based in Sacramento, California, awarded 138 grants last year. Grants were used for greenhouses and grow tents, walk-in coolers and cold storage units, milking systems, water filtrations, and honey extractors and even a mushroom substrate steamer and a copper still. For more information or to apply, visit farmvetco.org/fvfellowship. (FarmWeekNow)

FEDERAL PROGRAM ALLOWS SOME AMERICANS TO USE FOOD STAMPS FOR SELECT LOW-COST RESTAURANTS, PREPARED MEALS - In the past two years, six states have opted in to a little-used federal program that allows older adults to use their food benefits on select, low-cost restaurant meals. The Restaurant Meals Program is most widely available in California and Arizona, and newer entrants such as Maryland and Illinois are still ramping up their operations. (USA Today)

JOHN DEERE INTRODUCES IOWA-BUILT DRIVERLESS TRACTOR, TOUTED AS THE NEXT REVOLUTION IN AGRICULTURE - Touting it as the next revolution in agriculture, John Deere this week unveiled an autonomous tractor, slated to go into production later this year in Iowa. (Des Moines Register)

WEEKLY AGRICULTURE: USDA SENDS MORE DOLLARS FOR SCHOOL MEALS - USDA announced late last week that it will give schools roughly 25 cents more per school lunch this year. That might sound small, but it's a big deal for

school food operators struggling with increased costs, from food to labor and packaging, as well as upended supply chains. (Politico)

CHIPOTLE IS IGNORING BEYOND AND IMPOSSIBLE'S FAKE MEAT IN FAVOR OF CREATING ITS OWN, AND EXPERTS SAY IT'S A BRILLIANT MOVE - Chipotle just announced its vegan chorizo would expand to menus across the US. The chain developed its own plant-based meat, instead of working with an outside company. (Business Insider)

RESTAURANTS AND HOTELS HIRED THE MOST OF ANY INDUSTRY IN DECEMBER, LEAVING ECONOMISTS HOPING FOR 'LIMITED LABOR MARKET DAMAGE' FROM OMICRON - Restaurants and hotels saw the largest number of jobs added in December. With a gain of 53,000 in leisure and hospitality, that's a slightly better gain than the 41,000 jobs added a month before. Food services and drinking places added 42,600 jobs. (Business Insider)

GROCERY STORES STILL HAVE EMPTY SHELVES AMID SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTIONS, OMICRON AND WINTER STORMS - Shortages at grocery stores across the country have grown more acute in recent weeks as omicron continues to spread and winter storms have piled on to the supply chain struggles and labor shortages. (USA Today)

RENEWABLE DIESEL POISED TO POWER GROWTH IN SOYBEAN DEMAND - Soybean growers could see demand growth from the biofuels sector in the next decade, reminiscent of the ethanol boom that shifted into high gear in the early 2000s and pushed corn use to new heights. (Effingham Daily News)

WHERE ARE THE TRADE AGREEMENTS, MR. PRESIDENT, AFBF ECONOMISTS ASK - While everyone seems to be focused on higher crop input costs, the largest group of U.S. farmers wants to know when the Biden administration will work on trade talks. (Successful Farming)

OFF-SEASON 'COVER' CROPS EXPAND AS U.S. GROWERS EYE LOW-CARBON FUTURE - The purpose of cover crops is to restore soil, reduce erosion and to pull climate-warming carbon from the atmosphere through photosynthesis. More and more U.S. farmers are planting cover crops, from grasses like rye and oats to legumes and radishes. (Reuters)

About Family Farm and Food Bytes: This is a collection of articles gathered from both mainstream and agriculture media and is designed to keep you informed as a member and leader within the Cook County Farm Bureau® organization. The articles summarized above are not intended to represent Cook County Farm Bureau policy or positions, but rather to provide members an idea of what is being reported regionally, nationally, and globally.

RULES FOR THE ROAD 2022

Learn more about trucking regulations to help you stay legal and safe when you hit the road.

FEBRUARY
 22ND AT 6 PM CHRISTIAN CFB*
 24TH AT 8 AM CHAMPAIGN CFB*

MARCH
 1ST AT 10 AM HAMILTON CFB
 2ND AT 10 AM COLES CFB
 3RD AT 10 AM HENRY CFB
 8TH AT 10 AM MCHENRY CFB
 10TH AT 6 PM MADISON CFB
 15TH AT 10 AM FULTON CFB

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON
 Attendance is open to all Illinois Farm Bureau Members
 REGISTRATION OPENS MONDAY, JANUARY 17TH. Please contact your local County Farm Bureau to register.
 *Virtual option available



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Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure



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

For many of us, Chicago has always consisted of 50 wards and 50 aldermen. I also only remember three mayors: Richard M. Daley, Rahm Emanuel, and Lori Lightfoot.

Recently, I had a little driving to do so I was also

catching up on my podcast listening. A little Unsolved Mysteries. A little Daily Punch. And a little CloutCast, a Chicago centered podcast by the Chicago Daily Line. During an episode of the latter, Bill Cameron, a longtime City Hall reporter for WLS, discussed the current Chicago map process and how it stacks up to prior map making.

A quick refresher, after every federal census, legislators are tasked with drawing new boundaries of their legislative districts. The idea is that during the 10 years preceding the federal census, population shifts. People move into an area. People leave. The ethnic and cultural demographics of the area change. New legislative boundaries are designed to reflect these changes. In theory. In practice, legislative boundaries are designed to get people elected. Keep people in office. And maintain a political party's control.

Cameron's overview of the council's once-a-decade map process also examined a time when the city council operated as a community council with six wards, two members each. A time prior to 1923. Chicago's 50 wards and 50 aldermen is unusual even among large US cities. The theory behind more wards and more aldermen was to promote diversity and representation.

On the other hand, that many people in power may also create a hotbed for corruption. The first conviction of a Chicago alderman and Cook County Commissioner was in 1869 for accepting bribes to rig a contract. From 1973 to 2012, 31 aldermen were convicted of corruption. During that same time about 100 aldermen served, which equates to a conviction rate of about one-third.

Chicago observers may contend that perhaps part of the prevalence of corruption

is due to the expectation of "aldermanic prerogative" or nearly unilateral control over the decisions and services within an alderman's ward. This unwritten rule gives alderman control over zoning, licensing, contracts, patronage jobs, and even garbage disposal in their ward. You want a city job? See your alderman. Need a liquor license? See your aldermen. Garbage strewn across your yard? See your alderman.

Critics also argue that Chicago's old school patronage practices of doling out jobs, money, and insider contracts have also led to corruption. Machine politics dictated that job applicants and contractors sought a letter of recommendation from a local party official before they were even considered. With that letter also came a promise of political work and financial support for the party. For the politician and party this process resulted in easy campaign funds and workers. For the public the process led to expensive contracts, a bloated government payroll, and questionable services.

Under previous mayors, both aldermanic prerogative and city jobs were used as tools to move a map forward to approval. Additional items often on the bargaining table include committee appointments, office space, and even big-ticket legislation. An agreement is needed to avoid a citywide referendum where the voters actually get to decide on the ward boundaries. The last referendum was in 1992. According to Alderman Harris that referendum cost taxpayers \$20 million, and estimates she's received from the Budget Office place the cost of a referendum in 2021 double that amount. Candidly, there's no cost outside of staff and aldermanic time to place a question on the ballot. The only real cost is voter education. Remember that handy blue brochure that landed in your mailbox before the November 2020 election and the progressive income tax? There's also advertising cost, but this isn't a taxpayer burden. Coalitions on all sides will raise funds and purchase advertising.

Call me a dreamer but I like the idea of voters approving ward boundaries.

Bona can be reached at Bona@cookcfb.org

Submit Comments Now to Oppose Damaging Federal Water Regulation



In November 2021, the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released their proposed rule formally repealing the 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR) and replacing it with an updated version of the U.S. EPA's 1986 Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) regulation.

Farm Bureau is concerned that the agencies are bringing back the significant nexus test. This is a case-by-case test that allows the agencies to regulate ditches, ephemeral features, or low spots on farmland and pastureland that "have a more than speculative or insubstantial" impact to a navigable water. The test also allows the agencies to aggregate waters that are "similar situated" so they can expand their reach and capture entire watersheds. That could make activities as simple as moving dirt, plowing, or building fences subject to regulations.

Farm Bureau is also concerned that the

agencies are attempting to eliminate clarity that was provided in the NWPR regarding the Prior Converted Cropland (PCC) exemption. The agencies are taking us back to the original 1993 PCC definition that created confusion across the country.

The back and forth over water regulations casts uncertainty over farmers across the country and threatens the progress they've made to responsibly manage water and natural resources. Farmers deserve consistency and a rule that is fair and doesn't require a team of attorneys to interpret.

Please join us and submit your comment to the agencies NOW asking that they recognize the burden overreaching regulations place on farmers and respect the statute by not writing the term "navigable" out of the Clean Water Act regulations. To take action, text "IFB WOTUS" to 52886.

AFBF Delegates Approve Urban Agriculture Policy

Voting delegates at American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF)'s 2022 Annual Meeting adopted more than a dozen new policies including a policy on urban agriculture, submitted by the Cook County Farm Bureau.

Cook County Farm Bureau's policy defines urban agriculture as a wide range of activities from cultivation to processing and from marketing to distribution of food in urban and suburban settings in both outdoor and indoor facilities. It also recognizes the importance of urban agriculture to the agricultural economy.

Adam Nielsen, Illinois Farm Bureau® National Legislative Director, said both California and Michigan Farm Bureaus presented their own policies on urban agriculture to the AFBF Resolutions Committee, suggesting that the issue is top-of-mind for farm member organizations across the U.S.

Cook County Farm Bureau's urban agriculture policy is the direct result of member engagement and Farm Bureau's grassroots policy process. Farm Bureau members recognized the need for policy language supporting and encouraging the development and expansion of urban agriculture and moved the issue forward to the Illinois Farm Bureau Resolution Committee, full voting delegation, and ultimately AFBF. Members are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at bona@cookcfb.org to discuss policy ideas.

Urban Agriculture

This new policy section lays out Farm Bureau's support for urban agriculture. Policy points include:

1. Recognizing the importance of urban agriculture and its contribution to the agricultural economy.

2. Urban agriculture providing safe, attractive, and welcoming spaces for neighbors to gather and foster a sense of community.
3. County Farm Bureaus working with units of government to develop agriculture-friendly zoning policies.
4. Using land management tools such as land banks, land trusts, conservation easements, and long-term leases on public and private lands so urban agriculture can flourish.
5. Advocating for new developments to include opportunities for agriculture, including rooftop and home gardens, community gardens, and urban farms, where appropriate.
6. Community programs providing services including trash collection, composting, water, and storage opportunities to alleviate costs and barriers to entry.
7. Ensuring that urban agricultural sites have access to affordable clean water sources.
8. Diverting organic waste into compost.
9. Using raised beds or hydroponics to address soil-quality concerns.
10. Using season extension tools such as indoor facilities and high tunnels.
11. The keeping of bees and beehives in urban settings providing that best management practices are followed.
12. Urban agriculture sites gaining access to agricultural markets.
13. Developing infrastructure to transport and store food for market.
14. Providing job training and skills development to beginning farmers and garden managers.

Pros and Cons of Township Government

As we evaluate our policy relative to the large number of local units of government in Illinois, consider the questions, "How much is too much?" and "What are the benefits and drawbacks of so much government?"

Township government is a general-purpose

unit that is often in the spotlight when these types of questions are raised. As we consider our own policy, using township government as an example, take a look at some of the pros and cons of layering units of government and services.

Benefits	Drawbacks
Township government is close to the people and generally easily accessible; officials are likely to be your neighbors or acquaintances. It is most often aware of conditions and needs within the township and can quickly respond to those needs. The township's Annual Town Meeting is the closest thing to a true democratic process still found in any unit of government in Illinois.	While townships are empowered under Illinois statutes to provide a wide range of services, few downstate townships exercise many of those authorities. For the most part, particularly in rural areas, townships' major functions are providing roads and administering General Assistance funding. The 1,429 townships in Illinois contribute to the confusion voters have about which of our 6,800-plus local governmental units provides what services. Keeping track of another layer of overlapping government adds to that confusion.
In government in general, individuals elected to office are generally more dedicated to fulfilling their responsibilities than would be an employee hired to complete the same task. The vast majority of township officials are part-time officials and work for relatively low salaries or per diems.	The vast majority of township officials are part-time, which does not allow them the opportunity to dedicate time to thoroughly learn the laws and business of government. There is rarely professional staff available on a day-to-day basis to provide that knowledge. Townships generally lack adequate revenue to hire professionals to assist in evaluating, engineering, and managing the issues they deal with.
Few downstate rural townships have full-time staff. The bulk of the work is done through volunteer efforts or the efforts of elected officials- helping to keep costs down. Voters can generally "see" where their township dollars are going and can readily form an informed opinion on those expenditures. Voters have opportunities to review proposed budgets at township budget hearings. Voters have the opportunity to conduct official business of the township at the Annual Town Meeting.	Townships are funded primarily by property taxes, placing a tax burden on farmland owners. Township budgeting often goes on without public scrutiny. Some tax rate changes may be made at the Annual Town Meeting, which traditionally very few voters attend. This means a small handful of people (often only the elected township officials) set tax rates for the entire township.
Township road districts vary tremendously in size and function. Generally, rural downstate districts provide roads that reflect the revenue	Generally, rural, downstate township road districts lack professional engineering oversight for routine maintenance and day-to-

What's Hot Listing Released by National Restaurant Association

Each year, we take a look at the National Restaurant Association's 2022 Culinary Forecast: "What's Hot" listing. The National Restaurant Association partners with professional chefs from the American Culinary Federation to invite their members to rank food items and culinary concepts. According to the forecast, the National Restaurant Association indicates that attention to health is back at centerstage.

The top 10 trends listed are:

1. Packaging: sustainable (reusable/recyclable)
2. Packaging: food quality (travels intact)
3. Packaging: retains temperature
4. Zero waste/sustainability
5. Immunity-boosting snacks
6. Menu streamlining (fewer menu items, cutting SKUs)
7. Immunity-boosting/functional ingredients

8. Plant-based sandwiches
9. Packaging: food security (tamper-proof)
10. Alternative sweeteners (maple sugar, coconut sugar)

In addition, other various meal trends identified included:

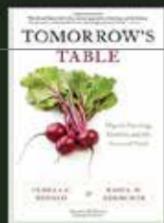
- Egg-based breakfast bowls
- Grain-based bowls
- Less expensive chicken cuts (thighs vs wings)
- Less expensive beef cuts
- Upscale potato chips
- CBD desserts and snacks
- Nut "milk" drinks
- Global foods from Southeast Asia, South America, the Caribbean, and Africa

To see the complete report or for more information, contact the National Restaurant Association at askus@restaurant.org.

Zoom Book Club

Want to learn more about how your food is grown?

In *Tomorrow's Table* authors Pamela Ronald, a University of California geneticist and her husband Raoul Adamchak, an organic farmer argue that blend of organic farming and genetic engineering is key to helping feed the world's growing population.



Dates: February 22, March 8 and 22

Time: 6:30 pm

Cost: Free to Cook CFB members, \$10 for non-members

Sign up link: <https://bit.ly/3t6x0tz>
Last day to sign up is February 11.



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.



Ilir Numani

Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager

*Ilir Numani has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 6650 N. Northwest Hwy., Ste 200, in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-631-2909. Ilir has been a Financial Representative since April 2005.



Lucas Dyhrkopp

Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager

Lucas Dyhrkopp has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 1426 W. Fullerton Ave., in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-822-8444. Lucas has been a Financial Representative since September 2021.



Matt Powell

Chicago Northeast, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager

Matt Powell has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 4200 W. Euclid Ave., Ste E., in Rolling Meadows, IL. His phone number is 847-934-5117. Matt has been a Financial Representative since February 2005.



Ray Massie Jr.

Chicago Northeast, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager

Ray Massie Jr. has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 25 NW Point Blvd., Ste. 850 in Elk Grove Village, IL. His phone number is 847-794-1217. Ray has been a Financial Representative since May 2019.



Brett Riekema

Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager

Brett Riekema has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 23042 N Main St., Prairie IL. His phone number is 847-415-2666. Brett has been a Financial Representative since May 2011.



Faustino Ramirez

Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager

*Faustino Ramirez has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 1515 E. Woodfield Rd., Ste.930, Schaumburg, IL. His phone number is 847-891-3937. Faustino has been a Financial Representative since October 2017.



Ed Beavers

Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager

Ed Beavers has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 1401 S. State St., #150 in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 312-588-1404. Ed has been a Financial Representative since October 2020.



Kirk Gregory Jr.

Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager

Kirk Gregory Jr. has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2021. His office is located at 1401 S. State St., #150 in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-619-0649. Kirk has been a Financial Representative since February 2018.



Jim Andresen

Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager

*Jim Andresen has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for December 2021. 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.



Kyle Huppe

Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager

*Kyle Huppe has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for December 2021. His office is located at 9731 W. 165TH St., Ste. 36, in Orland Park, IL. His phone is 708-226-0350. Kyle has been a Financial Representative since October 2020.



Paul Malito

South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager

Paul Malito has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for December 2021. His office is located at 30 S. Ash St., in Frankfort, IL. His phone number is 815-464-0123. Paul has been a Financial Representative since December 1995.

*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.

BENEFITS OF Volunteering with the Cook County Farm Bureau

LEARN MORE ABOUT FOOD

MEET FARMERS

LEARN NEW SKILLS

MEET NEW PEOPLE

FUN

HELP OTHERS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

SOCIALIZE

CONFIDENCE BUILDING

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

Invest In Your Future

The CCFB Foundation is offering scholarships ranging from \$500-\$3,000. Application deadline is February 15, 2022

Deadline Approaching!

2022 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR FARMING/AGRICULTURAL RELATED CAREERS

Online application and guidelines can be found at www.cookcfb.org/foundation/college-scholarships



For your comprehensive access to membership discounts & offers,
Go to www.cookcfb.org/membership

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!).

BRUSSELS SPROUTS



The growing season is late summer and early fall in the Midwest.

They really are named after Brussels, the capital of Belgium, where they were a popular 16th century craft

Colorful purple sprouts are the result of a hybrid developed from purple cabbage in the 1940s.



Some people call Brussel sprouts "baby cabbages" because they belong to the cabbage family and resembled miniature cabbages. Their cousins include kale, collards, kohlrabi, broccoli and cauliflower.

Brussel sprouts can be eating raw, boiled or roasted.

¼ pound of Brussel sprouts have about 48 calories, 10 g carbs, 4 g protein, and zero fat and cholesterol



Depending on the size, there are 17 – 50 sprouts in a pound.

THE BEST BRUSSELS SPROUTS SPORT TIGHTLY WRAPPED LEAVES, A BRIGHT GREEN COLOR AND FIRM STEMS.

80%
About 80% of brussels sprouts are sold frozen rather than fresh

Next month... Celery

Source: www.aveggventure.com, Hitchcock Farms, Inc., Salinas, CA

Classifieds

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

New Window Pella- One piece (2 double hangs) 74"x 35 \$175. One piece Fanlight (Half Circle) 33"x69" \$150. One Triangle 71" x 28" ht. \$100. One solid Oak French door 32" \$150. One solid pine door 32" w/window \$75. Call Louie 847-361-9292.

New Shower Buddy Tubby buddy transfer system for standard bathtub SB2T. Bath transfer chair that goes over the bathtub. Chair tilts with head and footrest. Weight capacity is 300lbs. \$3,000. Contact Pat 404-414-6933.

2016 Used Black Pride Mobility Quantum Q6 edge power chair that tilts and reclines with leg and seat lift. Battery charger included. Weight capacity is 300lbs. \$4,500. Contact Pat 404-414-6933.

For Sale 2- Automobiles BMW 2001 4-door model 740. BMW 2001 model 740-IL 4-door. Call Mary for details 847-297-6807.

Fantastic Opportunity- Solo brick commercial building, with full basement, zone b2, 2350sq.ft., 1 mile from expressway, very near Arlington Park Metra and new Chicago Bears Stadium. Call 847-259-9339.

John Deere M#826 snow blower- 2 stg, elec. Start, cab, drift blades, runs well- \$250. Trim-rite edger- gas powered -\$75. Pressure washer - 120v 20A, 1500psi -\$75. Maple desk w/bookcase & chair- 44" wide all wood- \$150. Cherry China cabinet - 48" wide, all wood -\$150. 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

Wanted to buy broken or good gold jewelry, honest prices paid, turn broken chains, bracelets, earrings, dental gold into cash. Call Bob 708-602-3350.

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

Wanted 1972 older cars, trucks/ parts unfinished projects and 1967/69 Camaros. Call 708-439-9770

Wanting to buy your HO scale on 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 realize 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 sort cars. Call 630-272-4433 ask for Ron. Thanks!

Wanted: Part Time worker to provide periodic maintenance for 20,000 sq. feet, office building and grounds. Diverse skills in areas in HVAC systems, carpentry, plants and grounds, basic electrical and comfortable with hands-on labor. Hourly 8-12 hours per week. Send cover letter and resume to Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525.

FREE CLASSIFIED ADS

For Cook County Farm Bureau members All Cook County Farm Bureau members may run four non-commercial classified ads annually for free in the Co-Operator. Only items of personal property will be accepted. Ads must be in the office by the 17th of each month.

Category:

- For Sale
- For Rent
- Wanted

To place an ad, call the CCFB office at 708-354-3276 or mail details to Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525. You can also fax your ad to 708-579-6056 or email to juanita@cookcfb.org. Non-member ad rate: \$.75 per word; \$15.00 minimum

Recipe of the Month:

Green Beans with Cherry Tomatoes & Fresh Basil

Jane Muelink

- 1 ½ lb fresh green beans, cooked until tender-crisp, drained
- ¼ c butter
- ¼ t garlic salt
- 1 ½ c fresh basil, torn
- 1 T sugar
- ¼ t pepper
- 2 c fresh cherry tomatoes, halved



While beans are cooking, melt butter in large skillet. Stir in sugar, garlic salt, pepper, and basil. Add tomato halves and cook until tomatoes slightly soften. Toss gently with beans. Makes 6 side-dish servings.

2021 Recipe Collection Booklets are available!



To receive a free copy: Email: membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org

Download a digital copy at: <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/recipes>

Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276

EQ Compost

EQ Compost can be blended with topsoil and potting soil for establishing plants or used as mulch around plants. EQ Compost supplies organic matter and improves the structure and porosity of soils.

EQ Compost meets the highest standard set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and can be used in vegetable gardens and as fertilizer and soil amendments for growing crops, ornaments, trees and turfgrass

Ordering- biosolids@mwrdd.org

Delivery is available within MWRD boundaries within Cook County to schools, non-profit organizations and residents with a 10 cubic yard minimum. For smaller amounts, MWRD offers a B.Y.O. Bucket program at several of their plants including Calumet, Egan, Hanover Park, Kirie, O'Brien, and Stickney.



Recipes wanted for our 2022 Cookfresh® Recipe Collection!

The 2022 Cookfresh Recipe Collection is in need of your favorite recipes, prepared using the freshest locally grown ingredients. Recipes submitted by March 1st will be included in a special drawing to win \$50 Farm Fund\$ for use at a participating Cook County Farm Bureau® Member Farm and Farm Stand.

Send your recipe, along with your contact information to: membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org or Cook County Farm Bureau, Attn: Recipes, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside IL 60525





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.



“Tomorrow’s Table” Zoom Book Club
 “Tomorrow’s Table” is for anyone who wishes to know more about how the food they eat is grown. It is for every shopper, policy decision maker, farmer, or anyone who has at one time or another wondered what labels such as “organic” or “GMO” truly mean for the health of the population and the future of our planet.
Dates: Tuesdays – February 22, March 8 and 22
Time: 6:30 PM
Location: Live via Zoom
Price: Free to CCFB Members, \$10 for non-members
Registration: Register at <https://bit.ly/3t6xO1z>.

Last day to sign up is February 11



Guatemala’s Seasonal Labor Program | Guatemala for H-2A: Diversifying Your Workforce Webinar
 Do you need agricultural workers for your next season? William L. Carlson, Ph.D., Senior Technical Advisor, H2 Visa Programs with The Palladium Group will join us to discuss H-2A Visas for Guatemala labor for seasonal work at Ag Operations.
Date: Wednesday, February 23
Time: 6 pm
Location: Webinar: zoom link will be emailed the day before
Fee: Free
Registration: Email Debbie at: membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org

cookcfb.org or call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.



Shred Day
 Bring any old documents (up to 3 bankers’ boxes) that you would like to have shredded.
Date: Saturday, March 12
Time: 10am-12pm
Location: 4845 167th St #101, Oak Forest, IL 60452
Price: No Charge
Registration/Description: Call the CCFB at 708-354-3276 to make a reservation



CCFB DIY Virtual Crocheting Class
 Learning the Basics: Single Crochet Granny Square Hot-Pad Holder. No artistic experience required with step by step guidance. Materials needed to create this project are (members will purchase on their own and the cost is approx. \$20 for items listed below—all items can be found at Michael’s):

- Crochet needle (5mm)
- Yarn—Impeccable Brand (color of your choice) used for a 5mm crochet needle
- Stitch markers
- Yarn Needle
- Scissors

Date: Thursday, March 24
Time: 7-8 pm
Location: Zoom (the zoom link will be emailed to all participants the evening before the class)
Fee: \$10
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.



Workshop on Preparing Wills and Trusts and Transferring Non-Titled Property Estate Planning and Trust Administration
 Do you need to update your will? Do you know what to do in preparing a will and a trust? Do you understand what probate court is? This program will provide the advantages and disadvantages of preparing a will and trust. The program will inform you what types of information you will need to gather and decisions you will need make before meeting with a lawyer to prepare a will or trust. Also, tips will be shared on what to look for in choosing a lawyer and where to locate a lawyer for this task.

Date: Tuesday, April 5
Time: 6:30-8:00pm
Location: Zoom (the zoom link will be emailed to all participants the evening before the class)
Price: No charge for Cook County Farm Bureau Members. \$10 for non-members
Registration: Call the CCFB at 708-354-3276.

2022 Foundation Scholarship Applications Being Accepted



The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has opened the 24th Annual “Farm and Food” Agricultural Scholarship Program. The Foundation is offering college students the opportunity to start or continue their higher education with a scholarship. Last year, the Foundation provided seven scholarships ranging from \$2,000 \$4,000 each.

The Board will name the top applicant as the Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship recipient. The Foundation will award a scholarship(s) to college students pursuing agricultural related fields of study. The Conserv FS Agriculture Career Scholarship for \$1,000 will also be offered to individuals in Cook County involved past or present in an FFA Program or attended/took agriculture related classes in a Cook County high school. A Cook County Farm Bureau membership is not required for this scholarship.

submitted to the CCFB Foundation by February 15, 2022. Late applications will not be considered. Much of the application can be submitted electronically.

- All applicants must be members or dependents of members in good standing with the Cook County Farm Bureau for at least one year (with the exception of the Conserv FS Agriculture Career Scholarship).
- 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 will be awarded following application evaluation for exceptional academic ability, financial need, demonstrated interest in agriculture, evidence of self-help, and character.



For more information or an application, please contact the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation at 708-354-3276 or access an application from our website www.cookcfb.org/foundation.

What is an Agricultural Career? Farming, of course, but so much more!



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

- Applications must be completed and



NEW PRICES

Super Kiss Car Wash

Member Price: \$13.00,
 regularly \$22.00

Featuring Touch-Less Car Wash (no spinning brushes), Revitalizer, Clearcoat Polish, Clearcoat Protectant, Rust Inhibitor, Underspray, Brake Dust Remover, 5-Day Guarantee

Deluxe Car Wash

Member Price: \$9.50,
 regularly \$12.00

Featuring Touch-Less Car Wash (no spinning brushes), Revitalizer, Brake Dust Remover, 24-Hour Guarantee

Members purchase discounted Delta Sonic Car Wash tickets from CCFB by calling

708-354-3276

Access your great membership benefit package of discounts, deals, and services at www.cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits