



# COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

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

## Mark Your Calendar



### April

17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> Member Appreciation Week **PG 12**

19<sup>th</sup> IL Farm to School Network **PG 10**

27<sup>th</sup> Intro to Backyard Chickens **PG 12**

### May

2<sup>nd</sup> DIY Barn Quilt Workshop **PG 12**

5<sup>th</sup> Make a Spring Planter Workshop **PG 12**

17<sup>th</sup> Social Security 101 Webinar **PG 12**

### June

14<sup>th</sup> Raffle for Ag Education Drawing **PG 1**

15<sup>th</sup> Shaken or Stirred with Herbs **PG 12**

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

## Question of the Month



What are the dates for CCFB Member Appreciation Week this year?

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

**March Winner: Linda Rizza**

**Question:** Last month, the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation kicked off its 2023 fundraising raffle to benefit agricultural literacy and education in Cook County. What is the price of a raffle ticket?

**Answer:** \$50



**AG DAY 2023** Cook County Farm Bureau Board Members and Agricultural Literacy Team Members Mike Rauch, left, and Mark Yunker taught third grade students how corn and soybeans are grown and the crops' byproducts during Ag Day South, held March 16 at The Children's Farm at The Center in Palos Park. Rauch and Yunker used posters and household items to demonstrate the many ways crops are used every day. **For more information and photos from Ag Day 2023, go to page 6.**

## Agriculture Resolution APPROVED

### Cook County Board Recognizes and Celebrates Agriculture in the County

During the March board meeting, Cook County Commissioners approved #23-1426, a resolution celebrating the importance of agriculture in Cook County.

Sponsors include Commissioners Scott Britton, Josina Morita, Sean Morrison, Dennis Deer, Bridget Degnen, Bridget Gainer, Brandon Johnson, Donna Miller, Kevin Morrison, Maggie Trevor, and Alma Anaya.

*Resolution continues on Page 9*

# "Raffle for Agriculture Education"

## BUY YOUR TICKETS WHILE THEY LAST!

Drawing will be held Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Details on how to tune in online to watch the drawing live will be shared on <https://cookcfb.org/foundation/raffle-for-ag-education>.

\$50 per ticket.  
Three big payout winners!

### CASH PAYOUTS:

1st: \$2,500

2nd: \$1,500

3rd: \$500

To Purchase tickets over the phone, call (708) 354-3276.

\*Payouts are based on selling 300 tickets. If fewer tickets are sold, see raffle rules on CCFB Foundation webpage for adjusted payout schedule.

Must be 18 or older at the time of entry purchase. Winner need not be present to win, and winner is responsible for

all local, state, and federal taxes associated with prize.

The intended purposes from the proceeds of the raffle are to

- Fund the Cook County Farm Bureau's award-winning Ag in the Classroom program
- Provide scholarships for members/dependents pursuing agriculturally related careers
- Fund the Foundation sponsored internship to support the agriculture literacy program

For sponsors, official rules and to purchase ticket please go to [www.cookcfb.org/foundation](http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation)

We'd like to send a huge thank you to our "Raffle for Ag Education" sponsors!

### CURRENT SPONSORS:

#### PLATINUM



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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 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!

# Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman: Book Review and Documentary Screening

**By Linda Bosy, Public Relations Team member and Book Club participant**

In the book, *Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman* by Miriam Horn, readers are exposed immediately to the grandeur of the Mississippi River and its 7,000 tributaries that flow water from the Rockies and the Appalachians into a basin that ends in the Gulf of Mexico. The author, a former employee of the Environmental Defense Fund, notes that the Mississippi River basin is the third largest in the world, behind only the Amazon and Congo. Its importance as a great natural resource is set early on.

This book was Cook County Farm Bureau's 2023 selection for its book club that this year drew more than a dozen participants. As a bonus after reading the book, all CCFB members and friends were invited to view the documentary film of the same name at the Historic Wagner Farm, adding a rich audio-visual dimension to the reading and discussion experience.



**DOCUMENTARY SCREENING PANEL** Panel members (left to right) Blake Lanphier, Doug Yunker, Mike Rauch, Jeff Heinsohn and moderator Bona Heinsohn open the discussion following a public screening of the documentary *Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman* based on the 2017 novel by the same title by Miriam Horn. Numerous Farm Bureau members have been participating in conversations regarding the novel during the Book Club hosted by Cook County Farm Bureau®.

The author, who holds a PhD in earth and environmental sciences, sets the stage for a wondrous adventure down the river as told by five kinds of American conservationists:

a rancher in Wyoming, a farmer in Kansas, a riverman from Mississippi, a shrimper in Louisiana, and a fisherman in the Florida Gulf. All have livelihoods that involve the Mississippi River indirectly or directly.

Readers are treated to in-depth features of each family that covers their backstory, their commitment to work, family, faith, country, and their local and national political in-

volvement to result in a better world for their children and next generations. Note: almost all have deep American roots and in one case, the shrimpers as immigrants, have adapted to and adopted the American way with fervor and their own religious hybrids.

While each family works with natural resources in different ways based on geography, climate, and land with farming, ranching with animals, navi-

gating waterways, shrimping in salt and fresh waters, or fishing in competitive waters, the consistent throughline revealed their unwavering commitment to conservation. That goal allows for the sustainment of resources that produce our food, water, clean air for sustenance, and recreation.

Their in-depth knowledge and constant attention to conservation and advancements resulted in each becoming sought-out leaders to represent their respective professions, often being the only person closest to the land (or water) at the table.

Because of their cooperation with a variety of stakeholders, they were able to smooth out tensions – or least explain another point of view – when meeting with regulators, environmentalists, industrialists, lawyers, politicians, academics, and others.

The CCFB book club participants noted their appreciation of the far-reaching work of these dedicated and “colorful conservationists” who, until recently, have been quietly working to advance environmental conservation. After reading this book, the group expressed a sense of hope for the future.

## 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...

- The Cook County Board of Commissioners for their approval of a resolution recognizing and celebrating agriculture in Cook County.
- The members and volunteers who spent every other Tuesday in conversations regarding *Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman*. We're looking forward to next year's discussions.
- Public Relations Team member and Book Club participant Linda Bosy for writing a tremendous summary of this year's book club selection, *Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman*.
- Donors, volunteers, COUNTRY Financial representatives and staff, and everyone who made this year's Food Checkout Day a tremendous success.
- Jim Droske with Illinois Credit Services for presenting a workshop to CCFB members on the Credit System and Credit Reports.
- Board member Dan Biernacki for recently preparing for and completing the Certified Director Training Program offered by the Illinois Farm Bureau to build better leaders to serve members. He joins 10 other CCFB directors that have completed the certification program.
- The Foundation scholarship applicants that are pursuing agriculturally related career aspirations.
- The various volunteers of the Cook County Farm Bureau that attended meetings, hosted programs, provided time, and lent the organization their skills this past month for the benefit of members and society.
- The Raffle for Ag Education Foundation Fundraising Committee (Janet McCabe, Gerry Kopping, Ruth Zeldenrust, Dan Biernacki, Mike Rauch, Sharon Stemke, Kim Morton, Heidi Yunker, and Karen Biernacki) for developing a great fundraiser to enhance agriculture literacy in Cook County. We also thank the growing list of sponsors and raffle ticket purchasers!
- Everyone who attended the documentary screening at Wagner Farm in Glenview.
- The Children's Farm and Wagner Farm for opening their facilities for Ag Days South and North for the benefit of third graders and teachers from the area.

## Co-Operator

Published Monthly

### Cook County Farm Bureau

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# Downwind

by BOB ROHRER, CCFB MANAGER

## “End of an Era”

In July of 2015, I wrote a Downwind column entitled “**Making of a Superhero**” with the follow-up Downwind column in June 2016 entitled “**And the rest of the story**”.

These articles helped chronicle what I characterized at the time was an “inappropriate gift” by my wife and I and what Mom did with that gift. The gift was a new beehive to my non-beekeeping mother. Consequently, she had many “adventures” raising bees and harvesting honey. (Some of our children and friends privately confided in us that it was possibly the worst gift ever!)

And now, “**the end of the story**”. After eight years, Mom decided to retire from the challenges of bee keeping. She did it as a hobby. One hive. The honey distributed as a special treat to family and friends.

Mom tried to retire from beekeeping a couple years ago following a frustrating

summer of attempting to keep her bees and beehive alive and functioning. As most beekeepers can attest, hive failure happens. No more bees.

It was a forced retirement, not on her own terms. But she wasn’t ready start over. However, the vacant beehive became re-habitated by a wandering colony of “migrant” bees that took refuge in the hive and stayed...Beekeeping resurrection! A few more years of honey ensued.

This time around, the beekeeping retirement decision was made on Mom’s own terms. The retirement will be permanent. She gave away that colony of “migrant” bees...they headed down the road to a friend and fellow beekeeper. Her beehive boxes and beekeeping equipment was loaded into my vehicle a few weeks ago.

A donation made to the Cook County Farm Bureau.



**Part of me wonders about Mom’s “gifting back” the beehive to me and the Farm Bureau. Could it be my mother’s revenge? Or, rather than the end of the story, could it be “the next chapter”?**

Here at the Farm Bureau, we plan on doing a little repair and applying a paint job to the boxes. Then, the beehive will be put on display on the property of the Cook County Farm Bureau. We will use the beekeeping equipment as part of our Commodities/Marketing and Ag Literacy educational programming.

Will bees inhabit the hive on the Farm Bureau property? That question goes unanswered at the moment.

I did ask Mom how she felt about beekeeping “retirement” this time around. She responded that her heart is “content” this time. Here is a big shout out to my beekeeping superhero... Mom! Happy beekeeping retirement!

P.S. I miss the honey already.

\* \* \*

My wife and I went to dinner recently. An average middle-class joint. When we saw the menu prices, we said “Holy Chicken Nuggets” (or something like that). Some folks may believe with the increase in food costs has come an increase in farmer wealth. I know better.

The following day, I read the headline, “Farm Income to Fall Amid Rising Food Prices”.

Based on the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Sector Income Forecast and their latest Market Intel report, American Farm Bureau Federation economists provided in-depth analysis of the **drop** in income farmers are facing, despite record food prices. And lest anyone question the facts, the USDA is considered a nonbiased data source.

The key takeaway is that U.S. farmer net farm income is forecasted to fall almost 16% (adjusting for inflation shows an even greater drop) while farm costs are expected to increase more than 4% following record increases in production expenses last year.

- Cost of supplies are following and exceeding inflationary levels.
- Labor and wages are increasing costs.
- Interest rates are rising which increases operating loan expense as well as real estate debt.
- Energy, as such an important part of all farm operations in the cost of electricity, natural gas, propane, and energy-based fertilizers, are all high-priced ticket items.

I am not an economist but, “Hello”!

My message to consumers: Please take it easy on the Farmers. Despite food price increases, farmers are not getting richer, and many are struggling with the increased costs identified above. Financial pressures have a way of “beating up” people physically, emotionally, mentally, and psychologically. Farmers are no different. And with their more individualized lifestyle, mental health can become an issue.

My message to Cook County farmers... Each of you is Important. Necessary. Needed.

Checkout more on food prices and inflation at <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/news/ccfb-news>. FarmWeek Senior Commodities Editor, Daniel Grant, FarmWeek Publication, wrote a series of articles that did a great job of identifying cause and impact with food inflation and other factors. We took the liberty of reprinting key portions of his articles for your informational benefit. Enjoy!



## Recipe of the Month

### Shrimp & Cheesy Cauliflower Grits

Cheryl Armstrong,  
My IN Home

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 14 raw medium (31-40 count) shrimp, unpeeled
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 T Old Bay seasoning
- 1 t Worcestershire sauce
- 1 lg head cauliflower, about 2 lbs
- 1 c milk
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 T butter, divided
- 1/2 t salt
- 1/4 t freshly ground black pepper
- 2/3 c sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- crushed red pepper flakes, to taste
- 1/2 cup green onions, chopped

#### DIRECTIONS: Makes: 2 servings

Peel the shrimp, leaving the last segment above the tail on. Place the prepared shrimp in a gallon-size, zip-close bag. Add olive oil, Old Bay seasoning and Worcestershire sauce; seal the bag; and toss to coat the shrimp. Set aside. Cut cauliflower into 8 to 10 pieces. Using a coarse grater, grate the cauliflower into pieces about the size of rice grains. Place the riced cauliflower in a medium saucepan. Add the milk, garlic, 4 T butter, salt and black pepper to the saucepan and stir to combine. Cook over medium-high heat until the mixture starts to bubble, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring frequently, for about 10 minutes until the mixture is soft and looks like corn grits. Remove from heat and stir in the cheese. Adjust the seasoning and add red pepper flakes to taste. Cover with a lid to keep warm. In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, melt the remaining 2 T butter, just coating the bottom. When the butter starts to bubble, add shrimp to the skillet and arrange in a single layer. Cook shrimp for 2 minutes on each side. Immediately remove to a plate. Divide the cauliflower grits between 2 shallow bowls or rimmed plates. Sprinkle with half the green onions, then place 7 shrimp on top of each serving of grits and sprinkle with the remaining green onions. Serve immediately.

## Rost Joins CCFB Staff



Tim Rost

Mr. Tim Rost, Indian Head Park, has joined the Cook County Farm Bureau staff to provide building maintenance and support on a part-time basis. Rost has previously served as assistant property manager for Acacia Association, industrial arts educator in Brookfield District 95 and sales associate for True Value Hardware. Rost has a bachelor of arts degree with the University of Illinois, Chicago and a Masters of Educational Leadership degree from St. Xavier University, Chicago.

### 2023 Recipe Collection Available Soon!

To request a of the 2023 Recipe Booklet, available later this month, please email: [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org) or call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.

# Cook CFB® and Partners Raise Donations for Local Food Pantries

*Cook County Farm Bureau® Celebrates its 23rd Annual Food Checkout Day*

Together with partners, Cook County Farm Bureau® donated much needed food staples to four Cook County food pantries. Donations were raised in celebration of Food Checkout Day. Food Checkout Day celebrates the healthy and nutritious food local farmers grow and raise by providing food or cash donations to people in need.

In light of the tremendous pressure created by inflation, Cook County Farm Bureau matched members' monetary donations. Over \$10,000 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. The donations directly benefited the one in seven individuals in Cook County who are hungry.

Partner food pantries, Alicia's House, South Chicago Heights; All Saints Food Pantry, Palatine; Niles Township Food Pantry, Skokie; and Together we Cope, Tinley Park were selected by local representatives from COUNTRY Financial®. Representatives were from the following COUNTRY Financial agencies: Chicago North, Chicago South, Chicago Northwest, and Orland Park.

"Cook County and Illinois farmers are committed to growing safe and nutritious food for our families and for others," said Janet McCabe, President of Cook County Farm Bureau®. "Food Checkout Day allows us to recognize the importance of healthy, nutritious food while supporting local families in need, especially during this time of elevated food prices."

For 20 years, Cook County Farm Bureau partnered with Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana. Through the generosity of partners for nearly two decades, Farm Bureau donated over \$145,000 and nearly 100,000 pounds of food.

Thank you to the following individuals who donated cash:

### Alicia's House, South Chicago Heights

- Robin Scheldberg
- Susan and Michael Schumer
- Phyllis Vandermolten

### All Saints Food Pantry, Palatine

- Don and Linda Anderson
- Larry and Sharon Barr
- Janet McCabe

### Niles Township Food Pantry, Skokie

- Mike Basile
- Malgorzata Jura
- Natasha Neskovic
- Vicki Nygren
- Bob Sitkiewica
- Agents of Chicago North COUNTRY Financial

### Together We Cope, Tinley Park

- Jim Andresen
- Dan Gallivan
- Tom Geraghty
- Tim Hartnell
- Kyle Hastings
- Karen Kavalas
- Terry LeMastus
- Julie and Dwayne Michaels
- George Parthemore
- Tony Palumbo
- Bob and Jayne Rohrer
- Piero Setta
- Cary Tate



On March 8, Kevin Gomes, Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial Agency Manager, was presented the coveted Tipping the Scale award for this year's Food Checkout Day events by Cook County Farm Bureau President Janet McCabe. Kevin's Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial Agency earned the recognition through the largest accumulation of points combining food donations with cash donations.

Thank you to all the members, supporters, and COUNTRY Financial representatives who donated non-perishable food items.

### Donations matched by the Farm Bureau to local food pantries that were not partner pantries:

- Pamela Bruns, donation to Elk Grove Township Food Pantry
- Kathy Engert, donation to the Common Pantry
- Mike Rauch, donation to Hattie B. Williams Food Pantry

Food Checkout Day is possible only through the efforts of volunteers, including Farm Bureau leadership and committee members and Chicago North, Chicago South, Northwest, and Orland Park COUNTRY Financial representatives and staff members. Volunteers were integral to the success of the shopping spree portion of Food Checkout Day.

### Volunteers

- Jim Andresen, COUNTRY Financial Orland Park Agency
- Dan Biernacki
- Karen Biernacki
- Bryan Blau
- Linda Bosy
- Laura Elkins, COUNTRY Financial Orland Park Agency
- Jim Gutzmer
- Bona Heinsohn
- Matt Huonder, COUNTRY Financial Chicago Northwest Agency
- Kyle Huppe, COUNTRY Financial Orland Park Agency
- Gerry Kopping
- Linda Kopping
- Janet McCabe
- Liana Mierendorf, COUNTRY Financial Orland Park Agency
- Natasha Neskovic, COUNTRY Financial Chicago North Agency
- Tim Perchinski, COUNTRY Financial Chicago South Agency
- Tino Ramirez, COUNTRY Financial Chicago Northwest Agency
- Bob Rohrer
- Mike Rauch
- Ciria Serrano, COUNTRY Financial Chicago North Agency
- Sharon Stemke, COUNTRY Financial Northeast Agency
- Linda Tobias
- Diane Tom, COUNTRY Financial Chicago Northwest Agency
- Mark Yunker
- Lisa Zielinski, COUNTRY Financial Orland Park Agency



**ALICIA'S HOUSE** Farm Bureau volunteers Gerry Kopping and Mike Rauch assisted Juan Hernandez (pictured left) load food donations from Alicia's House in South Chicago Heights. Alicia's House is dedicated to Alicia who loved people and loved helping people. Alicia's House serves the communities of Beecher, Crete, Steger, Peotone, University Park, Monee, and South Chicago Heights. Alicia's House was selected by Chicago South COUNTRY Financial Representatives.



### ALL SAINTS PANTRY

We're excited to announce that the Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial Agency is this year's 'Tipping the Scales' winner! Representatives and their clients raised significant financial and food donations for All Saints Food Pantry in Palatine.



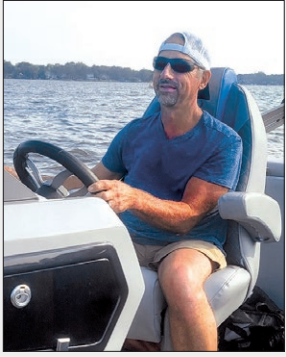
### NILES TOWNSHIP FOOD PANTRY

Cook County Commissioner Josina Morita (pictured left) joined Farm Bureau volunteers and COUNTRY Financial agents and staff Food Checkout Day food delivery at the Niles Township Food Pantry in Skokie. Niles Township Food Pantry serves over 1,000 families in the area. With the assistance of the Niles Township Food Pantry Foundation, the pantry is able to provide assistance five days a week. Niles Township Food Pantry was selected by Chicago North COUNTRY Financial representatives.



**TOGETHER WE COPE** Shoppers completed their donation to Together We Cope. Volunteers and leaders donated a substantial number of non-perishable food items as well as cash donations. Since their fire in 2022, Together We Cope has been providing families with emergency food bags directly from their office.

# 5 Questions



Dan Biernacki on the water

with Dan Biernacki,  
CCFB Board Member

**What impresses you about the Cook County Farm Bureau?**

The professionalism and true concern for the members and their benefits.

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

It is one voice that speaks for and represents our vast industry and our values to all the citizens and government officials in our county with pride and integrity.

**What is a favorite farm or food memory?**

Picking an entire truckload of cabbage, getting the truck stuck in the field, finally getting home and then making ALL of it into Sauerkraut with my dad and friends.

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

Anything to do with water: boating, fishing, snorkeling, swimming, or just relaxing by the beach.

**What did you want to be growing up?**

I grew up actively working on the 'farm' (greenhouse) and in high school wanted to pursue Graphic Arts. After a summer away from the 'farm', I realized how much I loved it and returned.

**COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU**

## MONARCH CLUB

The mission of the Monarch Club is to connect individuals interested in learning more about expanding monarch populations with others who share a similar interest. The Monarch Club is designed for individuals to share resources, build their personal networks, and assist with the Cook County Farm Bureau® pollinator garden.

**OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:**

- NETWORKING
- RESOURCE SHARING- SPEAKERS FOR THE GROUP, HABITAT GUIDE SHARING, SPEAKERS ON THE TOPIC FOR THE SPEAKERS BUREAU

Three meetings per year, at least two in-person, more if the Club would like. Summer, fall and winter.

**CONTACT BONA AT (708) 354-3276**

## HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN MARCH

- ▶ **Provided travel benefit info for members to start planning upcoming getaways and vacations.**
- ▶ **Hosted a workshop on the credit system and improving the accuracy of your credit report.**
- ▶ **Advocated for Farm Bureau's priority issues with over 30 Cook County state representatives and senators.**
- ▶ **Donated over \$10,000 to Cook County food pantries to support families in need.**
- ▶ **Hosted a Beekeeping Workshop to train future beekeepers.**



## Nursing Scholarship Application Available



Applications are now available for nurse practitioner scholarships through the Illinois Farm Bureau® Rural Nurse Practitioner Scholarship Program. There will be 15 scholarships, worth \$4,000 each, granted this year.

The scholarship program, now in its thirty first year, helps encourage and develop the pool of rural health practitioners to help meet primary health care needs in rural Illinois. Students who receive scholarships agree to practice for two years in an approved rural area in Illinois.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be Illinois residents and be a Registered Nurse accepted or enrolled in an accredited Nurse Practitioner Program. Funding is provided by the Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program (RIMSAP).

Applications are available at county Farm Bureaus® throughout the state, on the Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program website at RIMSAP.com, or by writing Donna Gallivan, Program Manager, Illinois Farm Bureau, 1701 Towanda Avenue, Bloomington, IL 61701. Applications are due May 1.

**For additional information, contact Donna Gallivan at 309-557-2350, or via e-mail at dgallivan@ilfb.org.**

# Planting Seeds

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



Katrina J.E. Milton

At the Cook County Farm Bureau, we celebrated National Ag Day (March 21) with two Ag Day events for third grade students: Ag Day South on March 16 at The Children's Farm in Palos Park and Ag Day North on March 22 at Historic Wagner Farm in Glenview.

During both events, students rotated through eight different crop and livestock stations to learn more about agriculture. They learned about a variety of topics, including how bees make honey, the difference between beef and dairy cattle, what byproducts come from corn and soybeans, and how plants grow. They were also able to touch and pet farm animals, including chickens, horses, pigs, sheep, and cows.

For many students, Ag Day is their first time visiting a working

farm. Visiting a farm is a unique experience. While visiting a farm, you have the opportunity to learn where your food comes from; not the grocery store, but from hard work and time spent planting and harvesting crops and caring for livestock.

When interacting with students, the first question Ag in the Classroom (AITC) presenters ask them is, "What is agriculture?" Most students give an answer relating the word to farming, which can lead to other questions: what is a farm, what grows on a farm, what animals can you find on a farm? Many students relate agriculture and farming to Old MacDonald, pigs, and cows. We haven't had one student relate the terms to science, technology, careers, drones, or robots. But we do teach about all of those topics during our AITC presentations!

The goal of our AITC program is to teach students – and people of every age – that agriculture is more than Old MacDonald and cows. The clothes we wear, the food we eat, the ethanol in the gasoline in our cars, even the soybean ink and paper used to print the Co-Operator – all of these things are agriculture. The more you know about agriculture, the more you'll see its countless connections in daily life: the milk in your cereal, the cotton in dollar bills, the sheep's wool in scarves, the honey made by bees.

An easy homework assignment for students is to have them go home, pick any item, and explain how it is connected to agriculture. By reading and doing research, they are able to follow the item's agricultural

connections from farm to table to create a drawing or write a story about that journey.

Ag Day is so much more than a holiday on a calendar; it is the opportunity to celebrate and recognize the importance of agriculture every day of the year. Even if you missed celebrating National Ag Day, make today and every day Ag Day, because agriculture is a part of your life today and every day. Happy Ag Day!

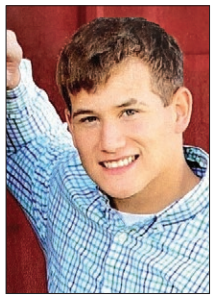
Katrina can be reached at [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org).



## CCFB Foundation Scholar Winners Announced

The Board of Directors of the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has selected three individuals as recipients of the 2023 Scholarship Program. Elijah Floerke of Orland Park was awarded the Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship. Receiving general farm and food scholarships were Matthew Smits of Sauk Village and Amelia Niedbalec of Mundelein. A total of \$9,000 of scholarship funds were distributed.

### Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship Recipient



#### ELIJAH FLOERKE

Floerke attends Illinois State University and is majoring in Agribusiness. He plans to study abroad this summer in France to grow his knowledge of agriculture and to gain an understanding of the business side of ag. Elijah is the son of Jeff & Janelle Floerke of Orland Park.

**This scholarship** is designed to honor Mr. Howard Paarlberg, the first President of the Foundation and President of the Farm Bureau for 16 years. The recipient of this scholarship carries the prestige of being the top-rated applicant and a greater financial reward for the individual.

### General Agriculture Scholarship Recipients



#### MATTHEW SMITS

Smits attends Purdue University and plans to graduate from the College of Agriculture with a degree in Horticulture with a concentration in production and management. He hopes

to expand and improve the productivity and efficiency of his family farm after he graduates. Matthew is the son of Carl & Debra Smits of Sauk Village.



#### AMELIA NIEDBALEC

Niedbalec will attend the University of Missouri with a major in Biology and will be exploring

the field of agriculture. Amelia is the daughter of Mariusz Niedbalec of Mundelein.

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation was established by the Cook County Farm Bureau to carry out charitable, literary, and educational work in Agriculture. The Foundation Board established the Agricultural Scholarship Program to provide financial assistance to students pursuing education for agricultural careers and to encourage the best and brightest young minds to return to Agriculture as their chosen career.



### PDCH WORKSHOP

On March 8, 10

educators virtually attended the PDCH workshop "Earth, Water, and Soil" on Zoom. The workshop, hosted by Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Program, was led by Ag Literacy Director Katrina Milton, pictured left, and featured a guest speaker, Soil Scientist Theresa Johnston, right. The workshop provided the educators with lesson plans and resources, including the free Ship-a-Kit Soil Kit, to integrate agricultural topics into their classrooms.

## AG DAY NORTH AND SOUTH



Blake Lanphier, the farm operations manager at Historic Wagner Farm and chair of the CCFB Young Leaders, teaches students about farm implements and the history of tractors during Ag Day North.



Students learn about redworms at the University of Illinois Master Gardeners' station during Ag Day South at The Children's Farm at The Center in Palos Park.

### EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### SUMMER AG INSTITUTE 2023

---

JUNE 19-22

WITH AN OVERNIGHT JUNE 20-21

"EXPLORING ILLINOIS' AGRICULTURAL INNOVATIONS PAST & PRESENT."






# AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



## Name that Seed!

Can YOU correctly identify the type of seed shown in the picture?

**WORD BANK:** SOYBEAN | PUMPKIN | CARROT | TOMATO | CORN

- 1  \_\_\_\_\_
- 2  \_\_\_\_\_
- 3  \_\_\_\_\_
- 4  \_\_\_\_\_
- 5  \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: (1) Pumpkin, (2) Tomato, (3) Corn, (4) Soybean (5) Carrot

### Choose Your Prize: February Word Search

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Germination:

**Germination** is the phase of plant growth when the seed begins to sprout.

According to the **Farmer's Almanac**, the average last spring frost for Countryside occurs on April 25, and the best time to start seeds outdoors is:

**Radishes:** Feb. 27 – March 21

**Potatoes:** April 18 – May 9

**Peas:** March 14 – April 4

**Cilantro:** April 25 – May 9

**Spinach:** March 14 – April 4

**Dill:** April 25 – May 30

**Carrots:** March 21 – April 4

**Green Beans:** May 2 – May 23

**Chives:** March 28 – April 4

**Corn:** May 9 – May 30

**Parsley:** March 28 – April 11

**Okra:** May 9 – May 23

**Onions:** March 28 – April 18

**Winter Squash:** May 9 – June 6

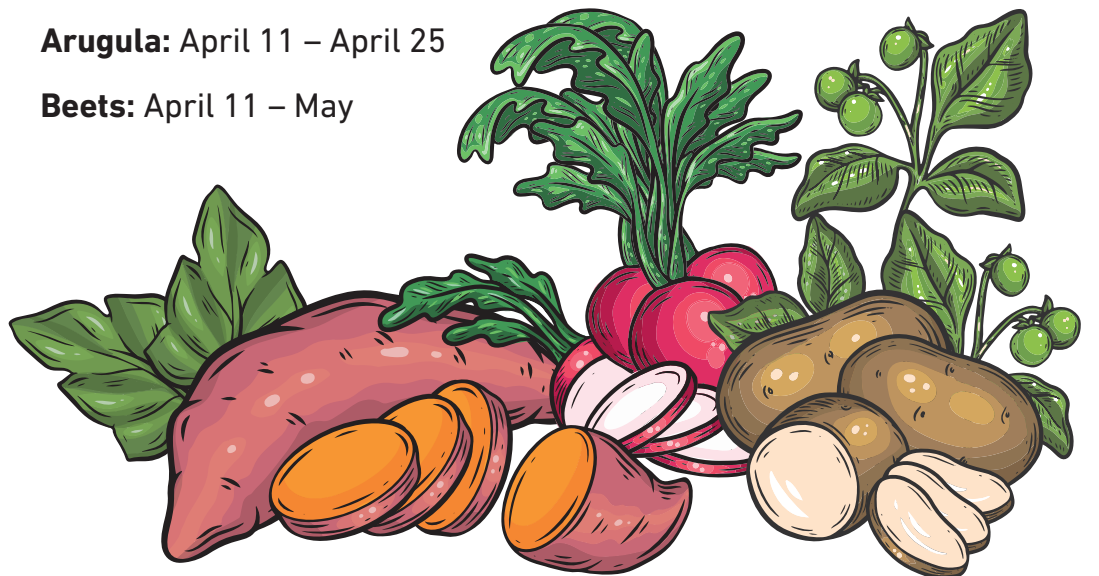
**Turnips:** March 28 – April 18

**Sweet Potatoes:** May 16 – May 30

**Parsnips:** April 4 – April 25

**Arugula:** April 11 – April 25

**Beets:** April 11 – May



## April Word Search

Last Month's Winner:  
**Brian Drake**

Almanac	B	I	E	F	S	N	R	J	L	N	O	K	G	B	L
April	M	Y	Y	D	Q	G	R	M	A	I	U	S	E	E	D
Carrot	C	Q	E	C	K	O	W	O	G	K	T	G	R	K	C
Corn	A	E	Y	N	T	Y	H	F	C	P	S	U	M	X	A
Farmers	S	U	Y	A	T	M	D	U	Z	M	I	M	I	H	I
Frost	V	B	M	T	F	Z	B	F	A	U	D	W	N	D	L
Germination	E	O	F	R	O	S	T	Y	A	P	E	S	A	A	I
Grow	T	Y	C	S	E	N	P	T	P	X	I	S	T	U	R
Outside	U	W	Z	A	Y	N	X	R	B	L	O	S	I	L	P
Plant	E	W	V	B	N	E	E	D	I	Y	A	C	O	C	A
Pumpkin	G	T	Y	Y	W	A	Z	M	B	N	B	N	N	S	G
Seeds	T	O	R	R	A	C	M	E	C	M	G	Q	T	R	C
Spring	S	P	R	O	U	T	A	L	T	X	V	E	O	L	N
Sprout	S	Y	X	L	V	N	F	G	A	S	T	W	M	T	F
Soybean	H	F	S	R	E	M	R	A	F	O	U	J	H	Q	G
Tomato															

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Choose Your Prize Preference for If You Win:

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

Beggar's Pizza Gift Card  3 Movie Tickets

Home Run Inn Gift Card (Choose one option only)

Located on front of paper

APRIL 2023  
**At The Farm Gate**  
 by Joanie Stiers



weather comes with greater variability and extremes from cold to hot and dry to wet. Since 1980, the number of days it has rained more than two inches has doubled in Illinois, a statistic cited in a docuseries at WatchUsGrow.org. More rain in a shorter time can trigger crop losses and soil erosion, but farmers have adjusted to protect crops and the environment.

More than ever on our farm and farms across the state, farmers use cover crops, or groundcover between primary crops. They install grass filter strips along streams and use reduced tillage practices to slow and filter water flowing across the land.

When the weather finally cooperated in June 2019, we had a full crew and machines ready to act. The air conditioning stopped working in a tractor, but my brother sweated it out. We planted four times more acres in a day than in the prime of Grandpa's career and dutifully planted every acre we could.

*About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family, growing corn, soybeans, wheat and hay and raising beef cattle and backyard chickens in West-Central Illinois.*

# Farmers adapt to weather

"We have always been able to plant," I reassured Mom while seated at my desk that faces hers. We should have been seated in a tractor. The season was spring and the year 2019, when it rained.

And rained.

And rained.

I took screenshots of weather forecasts, showing seven days of clouds and rain. It seemed unbelievable, and mentally, an out-of-body experience that endured. By May 30 of that year (past our typical planting season), we had 80% of our acres yet to plant and had dumped 10-plus inches from the rain gauge. The guys used the rainy days to start maintenance on harvest machinery. They had faith that we would have a crop to harvest.

For generations, farmers have endured weather stresses that impact farm production and livelihoods, and they can name those most-adverse years like sports statistics. Thankfully, technology and modern research give us an adaptive edge, building resilience in the face of weather variability.

Our planters hold more seed in one fill than Grandpa could plant in a single day in the 1970s. Bigger and faster planters plant crops quicker and more precisely, necessary with larger farm sizes today. Smartphones show live subscription weather forecasts and field-specific precipitation totals. Tile drainage systems improve water management within fields.

Data shows that over time

## CALLING ALL AG ENTREPRENEURS: \$165K IN STARTUP FUNDS AVAILABLE Apply for Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is seeking entrepreneurs to apply online for the 2024 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge. Now in its 10th year, this national business competition showcases U.S. startup companies developing innovative solutions to challenges faced by America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

Farm Bureau is offering \$165,000 in startup funds throughout the course of the competition, which will culminate in the top 10 semi-finalists competing in a live pitch competition in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives at the AFBF Convention in January 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Applications remain open through May 12, and the 10 semi-finalist teams will be announced Sept. 12. Each of the semi-finalist teams will be awarded \$10,000 and a chance to compete to advance to the final round where four teams will receive an additional \$5,000 each. **The final four teams will compete to win:**

- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Winner, for a total of \$50,000
- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Runner-up, for a total of \$20,000
- People's Choice Team selected by public vote, for

an additional \$5,000 (all 10 semi-finalist teams compete for this honor)

Prior to the live pitch competition, the top 10 semi-finalist teams will participate in pitch training and mentorship from Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business faculty, and network with representatives from the Agriculture Department's Rural Business Investment Companies.

Recent winners of the Ag Innovation Challenge include NORDEF, a company that developed technology to produce diesel exhaust fluid at the point of use (2023 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner) and Grain Weevil Corporation, a grain bin safety and management robot that improves farmer well-being by controlling risks and costs (2022 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner). Other examples of successful Ag Innovation Challenge participants, as well as detailed eligibility guidelines and the competition timeline, can be found at [fb.org/challenge](https://fb.org/challenge).

Entrepreneurs must be members of a county or parish Farm Bureau within their state of residence to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit <https://www.fb.org/about/get-involved#join> to learn about becoming a member.

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 12.

## Introducing the 2023 CookFresh® Community Urban Garden Grant Recipients

- **Dunning Community Garden**, located in Chicago, is looking to expand their community garden to house a dedicated "food bank section" to provide produce to the St Cyprian food bank, serving local area residents in need. This community garden is home to many community growers' raised beds and the Global Garden Refugee Training Farm, a pollinator section housing two beehives. Grant funds will be used for vegetable seedlings, compost, and garden materials.
- **Barn at Sexton Park Pollinator Garden** is located at the entrance of the barn and existing gardens in Evergreen Park. This new pollinator garden will educate students and visitors on the importance of pollinators to our ecosystem and to learn about conservation, land stewardship, and environmental sustainability. Special needs high school and adult transition students aged 14-22 will visit the garden to participate in a work study program and a week-long camp is also planned for the garden. Funds will be used for pollinator plants, seed, and mulch.
- **Lemont Township Community Garden**, located in Lemont, is ran by community members and the Lemont Garden Club. All produce grown is donated to the Lemont Food Pantries to citizens in need. The garden also serves as a place where local primary and high school students gather to learn about growing food, pollinators (garden houses two hives), as well as fulfilling community service hours and working in the garden. The only source of funding is the garden club's annual plant sale; grant funds will be used for soil, seed, vegetable seedlings, fertilizer, and garden materials.
- **Tri-Village Garden Club Food Pantry Garden** is a collaborative garden serving three county communities: Bartlett, Streamwood, and Hanover Park. In 2022, the garden donated over 800 pounds of produce to their community food pantry, TVGC, and flowers to be used at a local church. With no outside funding other than from members, the garden seeks to expand in 2023 and will use grant funding for vegetable plantings, soil, seed, and garden material.
- **St Irenaeus Pantry Garden**, located in Park Forest, is a food production garden that provides the only fresh produce Saint Irenaeus Food Pantry has, while supporting other food pantries, when possible. Local youth utilize the garden to fulfill service requirements while learning gardening skills. This volunteer run garden receives little to no outside funding, so the grant funds will be used to purchase starter plants, seeds, fertilizer, soil, and compost.
- **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 will show students and the community the "farm to table" relationship, allow experimentation and research, learning how to better care for the environment through gardening, and train student farmers the intricacies of agriculture. Grant funds will be used for soil, vegetable plants, seed, and gardening tools.
- **Evergreen Park Youth Garden's** mission and educational goals are building community and teaching youth to care for and grow, by learning the values of being a part of something greater than themselves, learning useful skills of growing food to donate to a local food pantry, as well as to take home. The funds will be used to expand their 2021 garden space in 2023 and will utilize garden funds for vegetable plantings, soil, compost, garden materials, and tools.

Illinois Farm Bureau members receive  
**\$500 EXCLUSIVE CASH REWARD\***  
 ON ELIGIBLE NEW SUPER DUTY®, F-150, RANGER OR MAVERICK

FORD SUPER DUTY    FORD F-150    FORD RANGER    FORD MAVERICK

We value our long-standing partnership with Farm Bureau and are proud to offer you exclusive savings.

**BUILT Ford TOUGH** Don't miss out on this offer.  
 \*Visit [FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com](https://FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com) today for complete offer details!

**ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU**  
 Farm. Family. Food.™

\*Farm Bureau Exclusive Cash Reward is exclusively for active Farm Bureau members who are residents of the United States. \$500 Exclusive Cash Reward on the purchase or lease of an eligible new 2021/2022/2023 Ford Maverick, Ranger, F-150 or Super Duty®. This incentive is not available on F-150 Lightning, F-150 Raptor, F-650 and F-750 Super Duty®. This offer may not be used in conjunction with most other Ford Motor Company private incentives or AXZD-Plans. Some customer and purchase eligibility restrictions apply. Must be a Farm Bureau member for 30 consecutive days prior to purchase or lease and take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by January 3, 2023. Visit [FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com](https://FordFarmBureauAdvantage.com) or see your authorized Ford Dealer for qualifications and complete details. Note to dealer: Claim in VINCENT using #38326

## Automotive Discounts for Farm Bureau Members



Present your Cook County Farm Bureau Membership Card for a **10% discount OFF** your total purchase.

Visit any of Cassidy Tire and Service's 11 Chicagoland locations for a discount towards tires, brakes, oil changes, batteries, and nitrogen- if we have it.

Visit our website for locations:

<https://cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits/profile/automotive>



# Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure

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



**Bona Heinsohn**

Food deserts are not limited to urban areas. They are not limited to Cook County. Or to Illinois. Instead, they exist throughout the United States. Nearly 39.5 million people or 12.8% of the U.S. population are living in low-income and low food access areas.

Food deserts are frequently found in areas of high poverty. These areas are characterized by smaller populations, abandoned or vacant homes, low incomes, and high rates of unemployment. Urban food deserts, where convenience stores and corner shops are prevalent, are a disproportionate reality for Black and minority communities.

In an effort to situate Farm Bureau in

a position to actively engage in conversations related to food access and food deserts, at the end of 2022 Illinois Farm Bureau® delegates approved Farm Bureau's first ever food access policy. The language for this policy was introduced by the Cook County Farm Bureau®.

This policy was later incorporated into federal Farm Bureau policy providing Farm Bureaus across the country with the opportunity to engage in conversations to address food access.

#### The policy includes support for:

- Incentives, including but not limited to, offering tax credits or breaks to grocery stores in underserved areas.
- Policy development to support grocery stores and neighborhood-based farmers' markets.
- Simplifying the process for permitting and launching grocery stores.

- Increasing the use of third-party and digital platforms for all approved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retailers providing that benefits are not used for service fees or delivery charges. Increasing SNAP approved food sales outlets.

- Farmer cooperatives to provide services such as crop marketing, distribution, guidance on partnering with food banks, and farmer training.

- The aggregation of farm products and partners to connect institutions, municipalities, school districts, hospitals, community-based organization, government agencies, and other groups to provide produce to families living in food deserts.

- Farms connecting directly with food banks, food recovery organizations, and other distributing nonprofits.

This policy enabled Cook County Farm

Bureau to support Commissioner Donna Miller's ordinances #22-5345 and #23-1644 to provide incentives to and retain grocery stores located in food deserts within Cook County. It also enabled Farm Bureau to engage in conversations regarding Representative Mary Beth Canty's House Bill 3554 which would provide food access grants to renovate grocery stores located in food deserts.

The availability of healthy and nutritious food is a concern not only for farms and the Farm Bureau, but for all citizens.

To learn more about Farm Bureau's policy not only on food access but on a variety of issues impacting Cook County, visit <https://cookcfb.org/ccfb/policy-and-action/urban-agriculture>.

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

## Farmer Members Share Their Thoughts

Cook County Farm Bureau members voiced their thoughts and opinions on upcoming policy issues as the Governmental Affairs Committee continues their efforts to bring forward timely and pertinent policy issues. Earlier this year, committee members embarked on discussions regarding food waste as members indicated how they felt about liability protections for donors, tax incentives for food recovery and donation, and expansion of food recovery programs. Committee members will vet the issue and will create draft language.

Farm Bureau members also expressed their thoughts on regenerative agriculture. Regenerative agriculture is a conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, increasing biodiversity, and strengthening the health and vitality of farm soil.

Over 90 percent of members responding to the survey felt that Farm Bureau policy should include a definition of the term regenerative agriculture. In addition, 39 percent of members view regenerative agriculture as an opportunity for agriculture and believe that Farm Bureau should provide member and farmer education in the area.

Using policy as a guide, Cook County Farm Bureau advocates on multiple issues. Members responding to the survey indicated that Farm Bureau should concentrate its efforts on urban agriculture opportunities, private property rights, and zoning and building issues.

**Members interested in providing additional thoughts or comments are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn via email at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).**

## The Property Tax Cycle

Originally published in LINK July/August 2022.

Unlike many other states that tax both real and personal property, Illinois only applies a property tax to real property.

- **Real property:** Property not intended to be moved. This is the land itself and all things permanently attached, including houses and buildings.
- **Personal property:** Property not permanently attached to the land. This property can be moved and is subject to ownership. Examples include farm equipment, crops in storage, livestock, vehicles, computers, and furniture. Personal property has not always been exempt from taxation in Illinois. Many can still remember paying property taxes on their personal properties. Prior to the late 1970s, Illinois taxed both real and personal property. That changed under the 1970 Illinois Constitution, which eliminated personal property taxation by 1979.

## Resolution

Continued from Page 1

#### The resolution provides the following:

- Agriculture includes the growing, raising, and harvesting of crops for both human and animal consumption as well as the raising of livestock;
- Cook County is home to more than 12,000 acres of farmland;
- Agriculture contributes nearly \$20 million to Cook County economy;
- Over four percent of Cook County's total workforce is employed in an agricultural-related job including food handling and processing;
- Cook County agriculture includes vegetable, floriculture, grain, nursery, and row crop production as well as livestock;
- Cook County's agricultural landscape includes horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys;
- According to the United States Department of Agriculture 2017 Census of Agriculture, Cook County is ranked second in the state for equine production with a sales volume of over \$1.5 million;
- Cook County ranks twelfth in the state for nursery, greenhouse, floriculture, and sod production;
- Cook County is home to numerous examples of urban agriculture including the raising, cultivation, processing, marketing, and distribution of food in urban and suburban settings; and
- Urban agriculture generally involves outdoor and indoor vertical production, indoor warehouse farms, greenhouses, rooftop farms, hydroponic, and aquaponic facilities.

To see the complete language visit <https://cookcfb.org/ccfb/policy-and-action/legislative-priorities>.

A tremendous thank you to commissioners for their support of this resolution and agriculture in Cook County!

## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATES ELIGIBLE FOR YEAR END PRIZE

Every day, politicians and regulators in Washington, D.C., Springfield, or your local community make decisions that impact you and your family.

In today's world, your voice can be easily drowned out by other interest groups. We need you to speak out and advocate to protect your interests. That's where our grass-roots advocacy program, FB ACT, comes in to play. With the world at your fingertips, we make being an advocate for Cook County Farm Bureau®, the easiest thing you'll do all day.

As a thank you to active FB ACT members, we are giving away one Picnic Time® Gardner Seat and Tools. This lightweight and portable seat includes a sturdy steel frame along with five steel gardening tools including a garden fork, weeder, broad face trowel, hand rake, and narrow face trowel as well as a storage tote that detaches from the seat.

**Timeframe: March 1- September 1, 2023**

To be eligible, individuals must:

1. Be a member in good standing of Cook County Farm Bureau®.
2. Be a FBACT member. To join text 'FARM' to 52886.
3. Respond to at least one legislative action request. You will receive an entry for each action request you respond to.

**The winner will be announced in the October Co-Operator!**

**If you have any questions please contact Bona Heinsohn at (708) 354-3276.**



## 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.



**\*MARGARET LYCZKO** has been named Financial Rep of the month for February 2023. Her office is located at 5750 Old Orchard Rd., Ste 550, in Skokie, IL. Her phone number is 773-427-2851. Margaret has been a Financial Representative since February 2011.

*Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager*



**\*KATHY SPIEWAK** has been named Financial Rep of the month for February 2023. Her office is located at 11 W. Wise Rd., in Schaumburg IL. Her phone number is 847-716-1010. Kathy has been a Financial Representative since February 2007.

*Chicago Northwest, 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.*

## Get Involved with Cook County Farm Bureau

### Join a Team or Program

A great way to get the most out of your membership is to be involved with Cook County Farm Bureau®.

**Farm Bureau Teams:** Meet four times a year to plan programs and events.

**Ag Literacy:** This team directs and approves agricultural literacy activities for teachers, students, administrators, and parents within Cook County schools and communities.

**Commodities and Marketing:** This team develops and supports programs to promote a more profitable Cook County agriculture industry, assist members in increasing marketability, and provides farm businesses with tools for successful businesses.

**Governmental Affairs:** This team surfaces and develops policy and to provide reliable,

accurate, and common-sense information to elected officials and their staffs in order to build a dialogue between the organization and policy makers.

**Member Relations:** This team supports and develops member benefits, recruitment, communications, incentive activities, services, and appreciation events.

**Public Relations:** This team enhances consumers' understanding of modern agriculture and to improve the visibility of the presence of local agriculture and the Farm Bureau organization.

**Young Leaders:** This group provides opportunities and leadership growth for members ages 18 to 35 who are interested in farming and agricultural related involvement.

**Additional volunteer opportunities:** Volunteer on a limited

basis and even from your home.

**Episodic Volunteer:** Individuals interested in plugging into and supporting the mission of the Farm Bureau. Examples include helping the day of programs, task forces, advisory panels, etc.

**Brief Engagement Volunteer:** Individuals are interested in helping the Farm Bureau achieve specific, time sensitive goals. Examples include grant review or scholarship committee members.

**Repeat Brief Engagement Volunteer:** Individuals interested in helping Farm Bureau achieve specific goals over a longer period of time. Examples include Speakers Bureau and Farm Shadows.

**Sign up here:**  
<https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/q1lmu-wff1h8nh7j/>

## Cook County Farm Bureau Photo Contest



We are holding this contest to obtain usable and appropriate photos that accurately portray today's agriculture in Cook County. Get your camera and capture moments by showcasing your best photos depicting agriculture in Spring, Summer, and Fall. Win a cash prize or Farm Fresh Funds\*!

Send in your photos – selfies, pictures of others, landscape, etc. – for each season by the deadline date. Winning photos will be posted in the following Co-Operator.

### Example Categories:

- 1) **Spring:** Planting Vegetables, Planting Flowers, Farmers' Markets
- 2) **Summer:** Horseback Riding, Farmers' Markets, Fun with Animals
- 3) **Fall:** Pumpkin/Apple Picking, Hayrides

### Prizes:

Each season will have three winners.

- 1st place:** \$100 cash
- 2nd place:** \$40 Farm Fresh Funds\*
- 3rd place:** \$25 Farm Fresh Funds\*

All participating photos will be featured on our website and social media.

The contest is open to all members in good standing. Go to <https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/s13cpmua0qg2hmn/> to submit entries.

*\* Farm Bureau Farm Fresh Funds are funds that can be redeemed at local farm stands, greenhouses, and garden centers just as you would use cash.*

## Other "Stuff" from the World of Agriculture

### Illinois Farm to School Network

Bring the Farm to School Training Event at Haymarket Pub and Brewery in Chicago:

- In-person April 19, 2023, 11 am - 2:30 pm, 737 W. Randolph St., Chicago
- Experts from the National Center for Appropriate Technology will share education with Illinois farmers to learn to become a school vendor, develop an understanding of purchase orders, packaging, and becoming wholesale ready.
- This event will also provide an open space discussion session about the difficulties and successes of growing for, and selling to, schools.

11:00-12:30 Farm to School Training: Are You Ready to Sell?

12:30-1:30 Lunch (provided)

1:30-2:30 Open Space Discussion

Register to attend: <https://form.jotform.com/230516342649153>



### Soil Testing Kits Available This Spring

Cook County Farm Bureau offers both members and non-members an opportunity to test their garden or lawn soil by purchasing a soil testing kit. Soil, in its natural state, is rarely fertile enough for the best growth of plants. Usually, it is necessary to supplement the earth's store of plant nutrients before we can obtain the most vigorous lawn, the most abundant and brilliant flowers, the most aesthetically satisfying trees/shrubs, and the greatest yield of tasty and nutritious vegetables or crops. Test your soil pH, potassium, phosphorous, and other key elements to begin the soil improvement process.

Complete kit guidelines and instructions, as well as mailing information, included in the test kit. Members will receive test results and basic recommendations typically within two weeks, with more extensive test interpretation provided by the partnering volunteer Master Gardener Unit with the University of IL Extension South Suburban Horticulture Team.



### Farm Bureau Soil Test Kit discounted member pricing:

- 1 sample Soil Test Kit: **\$28** | 2 sample kit: **\$36** | 3 sample kit: **\$55**
- 1 sample Soil & Lead Test Kit: **\$55** | 1 sample Lead Only Test Kit: **\$46**

*Non-member pricing also available and pricing subject to change. Soil Kits are available for purchase at the Cook County Farm Bureau by calling 708-354-3276, using a Visa, MasterCard, or Discover at no additional charge, or stop by the office to purchase, Mon-Fri 8:00 am - 4:30 pm.*

# CLASSIFIED ADS

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

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

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

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

## FOR SALE

Sears large car top carrier, \$125. **Call Ron at (773) 229-9123.**

3 floor model power tools. 14-inch wood cutting band saw 1/2 hp, Tru-drill drill press 3/4 hp 12 speed 5/8 chuck, tilting arbor table saw 10 in 1/2 hp. \$150, each manual included. 1 Kenmore ironer (mangle), 1 Amana original radar range, 1 Philco B&W T.V 1950'S, \$100, each. All items in good working order. **Text at (708) 280-8820 or email triden@att.net.**

Farmall cub 193 plow includes coulter adjusting lever and (dog bone) \$200 obo. **Call Bob for details at (708) 774-5817.**

Model A original style, 3x champions spark plugs, never used box of 8. \$200 obo. **Call Bob for details at (708) 774-5817.**

Anatolian Shepherd Puppies for Sale. Litter of 8 (5 male and 3 female). Loyal, protective, loving, family and working dog breed mother and father are both purebred and AKC Pedigreed. Asking \$1000 for each. Please contact Jennifer at **(630) 202-9014** or [familyofgreiss@gmail.com](mailto:familyofgreiss@gmail.com). See [www.cookfb.org](http://www.cookfb.org) for photos.

Edison Disc Phonograph H-19 for sale. Works well and includes 35 disc records and 2 playing heads. \$300 OBO. **Contact Diane at (708) 297-4579.**

Electric Roster Oven for \$40. Electric Roster Oven for \$40. Life Size Teddy Bears. Two available, \$20 each. Bread Maker, \$25. Twin Box Spring, \$50. Army Style Folding Twin Bed, \$100. Daily News Outdoor Thermometer, \$200. **Contact Paul at (708) 826-0000.**

## 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.**

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

## WANTED

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

Wanted 1972 older cars, Truck/Parts unfinished projects, and 1967/69 Camaros. **Call (708) 439-9770.**

Wanted LP Rocks & Roll Albums records. **Call John (708) 860-9562.** Pre 1971 Baseball cards. **Call Gary (708) 363-4559 or email [bbnut123@msn.com](mailto:bbnut123@msn.com).**

Wanted to buy old balloon tire bicycles, also banana seat with high rise handlebar bikes, also pedal cars, and old toys. **Call James (708) 361-8230.**

## FARM JOBS

Farm Sales Coordinator (Part-Time with Benefits) with Historic Wagner Farm, Glenview Park District. This position responsible for supporting the farm operation through sales, marketing, record-keeping and coordination of field operations. Contact Blake Lanphier at 224-521-2191 for more information. **Apply online at [www.GlenviewParks.org](http://www.GlenviewParks.org)**

Program Staff (Part-Time) with Historic Wagner Farm, Glenview Park District. This position it will be responsible for providing agricultural and historic programming to school groups, tours, events, site programming and general visitors at Wagner Farm. Contact Kendra Strubhart 847-657-1506 for more information. **Apply online at [www.GlenviewParks.org](http://www.GlenviewParks.org)**

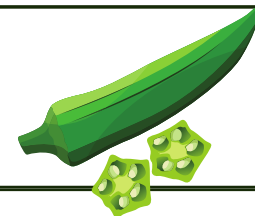
## ABC'S OF FOOD

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

This month



**OKRA**



Green okra is a member of the mallow family along with cotton, cocoa and hibiscus.

**They're cooked like vegetables, the pods are actually fruits.**

Okra has multiple alternate names such as okro, ochro, gumbo, bhindi, quimbombó, or ladies' fingers.

This plant is particularly famous in the Southern regions of the United States, where it's a thickening agent for the much-loved gumbo.

**THE OKRA PLANT HAS EDIBLE SEED PODS.**



**When cut in cross-sections, the fruits are pentagonal in shape.**

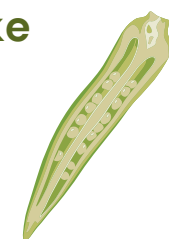
90%

Raw okra is 90% made up of water and is low in calories.

**Vitamin B - Okra contains 4 of the 8 B vitamins, which all affect our energy metabolism.**



The fruits have hairlike structures on their skins resembling the fuzz of peaches.



Next month...Passion Fruit



## A LESSON IN BEEKEEPING

Since 2012, Beekeeping training has been an important program hosted at the Cook County Farm Bureau. March 2023, Illinois Bee Rescue trainers, Pete (pictured) and Kim, did an amazing job of educating and training future beekeepers.

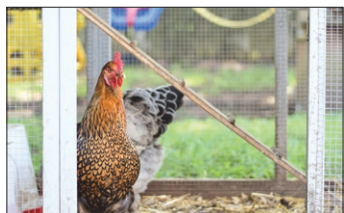
# Programs, Workshops and Webinars

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



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

## Intro to Backyard Chickens... Urban Style at The Feed Store



Thinking about raising chickens in your yard? We are offering 2 sessions with Q & A at The Feed Store to hear from owner/experts Brooke and Blaire, as they educate us on all things chickens. Topics will include starting baby chicks and selection, general chicken care and management, housing and coop options, nutrition, feed, and health management, safety against predators and protection for raising chickens, open Q & A and see, touch and feel real baby chickens. The Feed Store in its 75th year, carries food for a variety of animals, plus cages, bedding, feeders & more.

**DATE:** Thursday, April 27, 2023 **TIME:** 10:00 am and 4:00 pm

**LOCATION:** The Feed Store | 5408 S Harlem Ave, Summit IL

**FEE:** Free! **IN-PERSON:** 20 max registrations per session

**REGISTRATION:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).

## DIY Barn Quilt Painting Workshop



Learn about the history of barn quilts and paint your own design during this 2-hour make-and-take workshop. A barn quilt is a piece of wood, painted in simple geometric patterns to resemble a quilting block, that is hung on the exterior of a building. During this beginner-level class, you will paint a 12x12 barn quilt design on wood to hang indoors. Barn quilts make a creative, personalized gift for Mother's Day, Father's Day, anniversaries, birthdays, or to keep yourself.

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 2, 2023 **TIME:** 6:00 - 8:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Cook County Farm Bureau – 6438 Joliet Rd., Countryside

**FEE:** \$20 for CCFB members, \$25 for non-members (includes materials: board, stencil, paint, apron, etc.)

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or at the online Member Center. For additional information, email Kelli at [membershpkelli@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershpkelli@cookcfb.org). Registration must be made by April 27th.

## Make a Spring Planter Workshop at Van Kalker Farms & Greenhouses



Van Kalker Farms and Greenhouses staff will lead us in creating our own Spring Flower planter filled with flowering annuals that will create a beautiful visual interest for any yard, patio or porch! Join us for this must attend spring event by registering today-class size is limited to 18.

**DATE:** Saturday, May 6, 2023 **TIME:** 9:00 am

**LOCATION:** Van Kalker Farms & Greenhouses, 1808 East Joe Orr Rd, Lynwood, IL 60411

**FEE:** \$45.00 for members and guest, includes pot, soil and all planting materials

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)

## Social Security 101: Everything You Wanted to Know

What is the future of Social Security? When are you eligible to receive retirement benefits? When should you file for Medicare? Josephine Mueller and Megan Forristall, Social Security Administration Public Affairs Specialists, will answer those questions and many more during this workshop.



**DATE:** Wednesday, May 17, 2023 **TIME:** 4:00 - 5:30 pm

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

**FEE:** No Charge **REGISTRATION:** Call the CCFB at (708) 354-3276

**COMING SOON: THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2023**

**Shaken or Stirred with Herbs... After Hours Event at Ted's Greenhouse**



# Member Appreciation Week 2023

Monday, April 17 – Friday, April 21

**You, the member, are our most valuable asset at the Cook County Farm Bureau.**

We truly appreciate our members and during our Member Appreciation Week, we want to provide some extra love to say thank you for your membership, your involvement, your interest, and your support. We know that it has been a long and difficult year for many. Thank you for partnering with us to get through it!

To show our appreciation and gratitude, members only, please enter for a chance to win great prizes, free memberships, and a daily gift basket full of fun for you!

### Daily Gift Drawing

- "Catch Some Rays & Waves": 6 Raging Waves Tickets & \$50 gas card
- "Dinner & a Movie": 2 movie tickets (AMC or Marcus) & \$100 restaurant gift card
- "Cyber Shopping On Us!": \$100 Amazon Gift Card
- "Dirt Fun": 2 free registrations for "Make a Spring Planter" & Farm Funds to shop at Van Kalker
- "DIY Time": \$50 Home Depot gift card & \$50 Michaels gift card

**Daily free paid membership for a year**  
**Daily Drawings (2 winners each day)**

- Movie Monday—2 AMC movie tickets
- Turf Tuesday—Soil kits
- Wednesday CCFB Swag Day—CCFB logo items
- Treat your car Thursday—Delta sonic car wash gift card
- Food Friday—Home Run Inn gift card

**Must be a member paid in good standing to enter.**

Entry form can be mailed to the office, faxed to **(708) 579-6056**, emailed to [fbcooperator@gmail.com](mailto:fbcooperator@gmail.com). or you can go to [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org) to enter under the Membership section. One entry per member; entries received will be submitted for a chance at all drawings and will automatically rollover to the following day's drawings, if not selected.

### Questions?

Please call us at **(708) 354-3276**.

**We wish all our members a prosperous and healthy 2023. We look forward to serving you!**

## Member Appreciation Week Entry Form

Monday, April 17 – Friday, April 21, 2023

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Member Number \_\_\_\_\_

# Master Gardener Resource Center Re-opens in April

The Cook County Farm Bureau® and the University of Illinois Extension continue to partner on a project that benefits local Farm Bureau members and the general public. Master Gardeners are available to answer questions from members and the general public related to gardening and horticulture. This program will run through mid-November of 2023.

Master Gardeners are available through the Cook County Farm Bureau by emailing [mastergardener@cookcfb.org](mailto:mastergardener@cookcfb.org) or calling the Cook County Farm Bureau at **(708) 354-3276**.

General topic areas that can be addressed include soil test recommendations, plant disease issues and treatments, horticulture related questions, pest identification and treatment, and more. Commercial related questions will be forwarded to the University of Illinois Extension professional staff.