



# COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

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

## Mark Your Calendar



### July

- 9 Summer Ag Institute Day 2 **PG 6**
- 15 YL Advocacy Training **PG 5**
- 21 Membership Monday **PG 12**
- 29 YL District Discussion Meet **PG 8**

### August

- 15 Summer Photo Contest Deadline
- August - September** Farm Crawl **PG 10**

### September

- 16 Intro to Candle Making **PG 12**
- 24-26 Leaders to Washington

### October

- 1 Fall Barn Quilt Workshop **PG 12**
- 4 Giant Pumpkin, Dessert, Carving, Honey Contest **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



**Which Ag in the Classroom presenter just retired after teaching over 50,000 students about agriculture?**

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)

**June Winners: Keith & Wanda Bruinsma**

**Question:** What is the Cook County Farm Bureau Google review rating?

**Answer: 4.5**

## Cook County Teachers Attend Summer Ag Institute



On June 17, 11 teachers attended Day 1 of Cook County Farm Bureau's Summer Ag Institute. The educators toured Route 66 by trolley, ate at the Billy Goat Tavern, saw Lake Michigan and the Chicago River on a Wendella lake and river architecture tour, and received a guided tour of the McCormick Bridgehouse Museum.

Day 2 of SAI will be held July 9 at the Cook County Farm Bureau, and registration is still open. Email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org) for more information.

**The 11 educators that attended SAI Day 1 posed for a group photo at the start of Route 66, which is located across the street from the Art Institute of Chicago.**

## Over 24,000 Cook County Students Received Agricultural Education This School Year

Cook County Farm Bureau's Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) Program brought agricultural education to 24,129 students in 1,075 classrooms in 208 schools during the 2024-2025 school year.

Presenters taught Cook County students about Illinois' crops, livestock, and soil, how food travels from farm to table, USDA's MyPlate, specialty crops, keeping warm with agriculture, and agricultural careers.

Teachers gave the following feedback about our AITC program:

- We would do this every year-so great!!! It is better than some paid outside of school field trips!

- This program benefits our students/curriculum because it correlates with our economy, jobs

related to agriculture, and provides the students with a variety of knowledge about the state in which they live.

- It was beneficial to my students as it connected to our social studies, math, and science curriculum and taught them more information. Students also got to have hands-on activities and physical visuals, which helps students to understand more. The short video clips were very engaging as well where students learned how corn can be an ingredient in many different things.

- One of the key takeaways from the presentation is that Illinois is consistently a top producer of corn and soybeans, which are crucial for global food, feed, and fuel. It is a state

pride and shows importance in Illinois' economy.

- The presentation is important because it helps our students understand the different career opportunities within Illinois. Many students may not realize the different roles in agriculture which is beyond traditional farming, from agricultural technology and research to marketing and logistics.

- This is beneficial to my students because many of my students do not know where our food comes from and how it gets to us. This introduces the students to new career paths they didn't know existed.

**Thank you AITC presenters, educators, and students for making this school year so successful and educational!**

## Word of the Day

During Member Appreciation Week we introduced a "Word of the Day" feature. We enjoyed the opportunity to talk with our members, and we believed those who called enjoyed it as well!

In June's issue, we started "Word of the Day" and will continue to do so each month. You will have to continue to read the Co-Operator carefully to find the word and the date to call in as it will be in a different spot each month.

We look forward to continuing these calls. It was a lot of fun! Good luck to you!

**June Winner: Allen Krueger**



**AITC presenters gathered to celebrate the end of the 2024-2025 school year. Pictured, standing from left: Sarah Koukol, Barbara Bhojraj, Mike Galassini, Betsy Yager, Kathy Lesser, Jim Bloomstrand, and Wayne Kolweier. Pictured, seated: Director of Agricultural Literacy Katrina Milton and AITC Assistant Jill Drover.**



## Cook CFB Sponsors Wagner Farm Stock Show

President Janet McCabe addresses the crowd during historic Wagner Farm's Annual Stock Show and Dairy Festival. Historic Wagner Farm's Stock Show and Dairy Festival celebrates National Dairy Month with an exciting event for the whole family that's a true bucolic experience. Activities included dairy demos and hands-on activities. During the Stock Show, 4-H and FFA participants showcased their steers, lambs, hogs, and dairy cows in a fun competition.

## Agricultural Employee and Employer Resources

Illinois Job Link is a robust, dynamic, and comprehensive web-based workforce development system for agricultural job seekers, employers, training providers, and workforce professionals. For job seekers, it features job matching, resume creation, and career management tools. For employers, it features job order creation, resume matching, employer assistance, and resources. Resources are provided at no cost. Visit [IllinoisJobLink.com](http://IllinoisJobLink.com) to find your next agricultural job or employee.

## 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...

- Long time Farm Bureau Member Richard Mielcarz...thank you for sending in your Ag Adventures Word Search no matter what!
- Long time staff member, Melanie Senne, for her 17 years of Farm Bureau service and for efforts to assist us in our smooth accounting transition for Farm Bureau, Foundation and PAC.
- All of our Ag in the Classroom presenters who taught students throughout the 24 – 25 school year in the classroom about farming and farmers.
- AITC Presenter extraordinaire, Jim Bloomstrand, for 25 years of classroom presentations, helping today's youth understand why farming and in agriculture is crucial.
- The members of the Governmental Affairs Committee who met via Zoom to discuss proposed policy changes prior to the June Board of Directors meeting.
- All of our members buying soil test kits, Raging Waves tickets, discount movie tickets and other benefits throughout the month.
- All of our members who call us on a regular basis, responding to the Question of the Month and Word of the Day. We love talking with you!

## HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN JUNE

- ▶ Provided members summer fun options with discounted tickets to Raging Waves.
- ▶ Engaged with zoogoers during a pollinator program at Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago.
- ▶ Engaged with members virtually to learn about programs and benefits during Membership Monday.
- ▶ Provided Educator Professional Development with a visit to Chicago as part of our Route 66 theme.



## Co-Operator

Published Monthly

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## FARM FRESH FUNDS



Want a \$20 Farm Fresh Funds voucher redeemable to one of our area greenhouses, garden centers, farm stands or other farm businesses?

Encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to join the Cook County Farm Bureau as an associate, farmer, or professional member.

If they join, you will receive \$20 in fresh funds! Call our office at 708-354-3276 to let us know that you referred a member.

Individuals can join the Cook County Farm Bureau by going to [www.myifb.org](http://www.myifb.org) or use the QR Code.





# Downwind

by **BOB ROHRER, CCFB MANAGER**

## “Counting Our Blessings (Instead of Sheep)”

Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney, in the Irving Berlin classic, *White Christmas*, famously sang, “When I’m worried and I can’t sleep...I count my blessings instead of sheep. And I fall asleep counting my blessings.”

When it comes to counting sheep, Cook County is home to some. The most recent ag census in 2022 reported a paltry 110 sheep and lambs in Cook County. I venture to say the census takers failed to count those sheep hiding behind the hills and trees of several golf courses, behind the main terminals of O’Hare Airport and behind subdivisions of a few southside farms.

Not being a census taker, I have no need to count sheep.

Not even to fall asleep. More specifically, there is no need for me to count sheep:

- On the couch at 8 p.m.
- In my office after a big lunch (shhh, don’t tell the board)
- During date night at Drury Lane (shhh, don’t tell my wife)

On the other hand, I may need to start counting sheep at 3 a.m., following the unfortunate nature’s call, when my brain, believing it is its own master, clicks into high gear by problem-solving issues.

Doctor Bing’s advice for 3 a.m. brain insomnia? Take a sleeping pill called “Count my Blessings”. I read the label of the sleeping pill “Count

my Blessings”, and learned it contains the following non-opioid but addictive ingredients:

- **Blessings called Members:** Cook County Farm Bureau is so very fortunate to have many members. Committed members. Dedicated members. Loving members. Members that volunteer. Members that “bleed” Cook County Farm Bureau.

*Example: We received a note from member Richard as he completed his June word search from his hospital bed.*

- **Blessings called AITC Contractors:** We had our 8 Ag in the Classroom presenters wrap up the school year after teaching 24,000 kids about why farmers are important and how agriculture touches their lives every day.

*Example: AITC presenter contractor Jim Bloomstrand, who recently announced his retirement, has been a true blessing for the past 25 years*

*teaching over 50,000 students alone.*

- **Blessings called Volunteers:** We have a wonderful group of members that give their time, energy, and expertise for the betterment of members and the organization.

*Example: In the final days of the May Illinois General Assembly, we had our Farm Bureau Legislative action contact team activate to contact many of the area legislators in support of the Family Farm Preservation Act.*

- **Blessings called COUNTRY® Financial agents:** Scattered throughout the county, we have a great group of agents serving members and non-members alike.

*Example: COUNTRY® Financial agent Karen Kavalas and her husband Peter (former agent) stopped into the office to catch up. During the conversation, they said such nice things about us and our membership connections.*

- **Blessings called Staff:** Cook County Farm Bureau staff are dedicated to connecting with members and helping to solve problems and provide solutions for members seeking successful businesses.

*Example: Debbie (Director of Membership), fresh from her spring visits out to farmstands and greenhouses, shared with me the positive comments, stories, and updates our*

*members provide her with during these important check-ins and listening opportunities.*

- **Blessings called Donors:** CCFB Foundation’s scholarship program and ag literacy support programming continues to expand thanks to many generous contributors, large and small.

*Example: Upon the recent passing of a long-time and cherished member and supporter, the family kindly named the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation as the memorial beneficiary for family and friends.*

- **Farmers as blessings:** We enjoy some of the best, healthiest, freshest, most affordable food products in the world.

*Example: Local farmers are out in Cook County doing what they do best – Planting. Growing. Caring. And Delivering. For you.*

Sometimes, we take our blessings for granted (like Cook County sheep counting, I guess). We are blessed you help us fulfill our purpose, goals, and objectives as an organization.

**When I’m worried and I can’t sleep...I count my blessings instead of sheep. And I fall asleep counting my blessings.**

Thank you for your membership blessings!

## Recipes of the Month

### Mike’s Beef Pot Pie

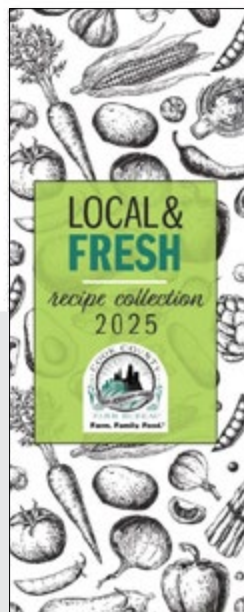
Mike O’Brien, Argo Summit

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 c potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 c sweet corn
- 2 c carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 ½ c green peas
- 1 ½ c green beans, chopped
- 1 c celery, diced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2-3 garlic cloves, diced
- 3 T beef base or Bullion
- 1 c cold water
- 4 T corn starch
- 2 T black pepper
- 2 T fennel seed
- 2 oz olive oil
- 2 oz soy sauce
- 2 oz Worcestershire Sauce
- 6 9-inch pie shells, deep dish; makes 3 pies

#### DIRECTIONS:

Mix together soy, Worcestershire, black pepper, and fennel and marinate beef shanks for a few hours or overnight. Braise beef in olive oil in cast iron skillet until well browned, save drippings. Remove from pan and cool. Filling: sauté onions, garlic, and all vegetables in saved drippings until tender. Mix cold water and corn starch, add to filling and heat until thickened and add beef base or bullion and mix well. Cut braised beef shanks from bone, dice well, and add to filling mix. Fill three 9-inch pie shells with mixture and top off with other pie shells, crimp edges to seal. Bake fresh in 350° oven for about 1 hour. If pies are frozen, bake in 425° oven for about 1 hour.



## Mike O’Brien Wins CCFB Recipe Contributor Raffle

2025 Recipe contributor, Mike O’Brien, is the winner of our Farm Fund\$ drawing. Funds can be used to purchase FRESH local produce from a participating CCFB member business.

Mike’s Pot Pie recipe is the July featured recipe – connect with a local member farmstand for the freshest ingredients to use in recreating recipes like Mike’s!

### 2025 Recipe Collection is Available!

To receive a copy of the 2025 Recipe Collection Booklet, call 708-354-3276, email: [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org), or register from the MyIFB member center account.

# Smart Strategies to Avoid Common Financial Mistakes

By Jennifer Killian, IAA Credit Union Marketing Manager

Managing your finances can sometimes feel overwhelming, but avoiding common money mistakes is simpler than you might think. With a bit of planning and awareness, you can sidestep pitfalls that often catch people off guard. Here are some of the most frequent financial missteps—and how to avoid them.



Jennifer Killian

## Buying More House Than You Can Afford

Just because you're approved for a large mortgage doesn't mean you need to use it all. Overspending on a home can strain your finances.

### Keep these tips in mind:

- Keep your monthly housing costs—such as mortgage, property taxes, insurance, and HOA fees—below 28% of your gross income.

- Avoid private mortgage insurance (PMI) by making a 20% down payment.
- Save 3–6 months of expenses for emergencies before buying.

You may also explore programs such as the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago Downpayment Plus® Program to reduce upfront costs. Our Loan Officers are available to provide guidance regarding housing costs.

## Neglecting to Invest

Investing is essential for building a retirement fund—savings accounts alone won't keep up with inflation or market growth. Start small:

- Begin with small, regular contributions to your workplace 401(k) or IRA.
- Direct deposit into investment accounts to make saving automatic.

Even modest investments grow through compounding over time, setting you up for a comfortable retirement.

## Paying for Unused Subscriptions

Unused subscriptions can quietly drain your budget. Take the following steps:

- Review your accounts to identify all subscription charges.
- Cancel anything you don't use regularly.
- Redirect those savings toward paying off debt, building emergency funds, or investing.

## Overlooking Your Credit Report

Regularly checking your credit report is crucial for protecting your financial health:

- You're entitled to one free report annually from each credit bureau.
- Review your report for errors and dispute any inaccuracies.
- Correcting errors can significantly improve your credit score.

IAA Credit Union offers members access to My Credit Score, where you can monitor your credit score and report online, anytime.

## How IAA Credit Union Can Help

At IAA Credit Union, we're committed to helping you succeed financially. Our wide range of services are designed to support your financial goals, such as:

- **Home Loans:** Competitive rates and personalized guidance from our loan officers.
- **Retirement Accounts:** Investment options to grow your retirement savings.
- **Emergency Savings Solutions:** High-yield accounts to build a safety net.
- **Financial Education Resources:** Tools and tips to help you avoid common mistakes.

Let us help you navigate these challenges and achieve your financial goals with confidence.

Visit [www.iaacu.org](http://www.iaacu.org) for more information

*Originally published by SavvyMoney Blogs on March 4, 2025, adapted by IAACU.*

# Congratulations to the SPRING photo contest winners:

## Cook County Farm Bureau Photo Contest SUMMER PHOTOS

Get your camera and capture moments by showcasing your best photos depicting the theme of Agriculture in the Summer. Send in your photos – selfies, pictures of others, landscape, etc. The deadline for Summer photos is **August 15**. The winning photos will be posted in the September *Co-Operator*.

### Example Categories for Summer:

Horseback Riding, Farmers' Markets, Fun with Animals, and More!

### 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://bit.ly/4jyhUWV> to submit entries.

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



### 2nd Place:

"Painted Lady Butterfly enjoying a Globe amaranth" By: Claudia Guerrero-Yopez



### 3rd Place:

"First ripe strawberry picking" By: Wanda Bruinsma



### 1st Place:

"Planting flowers on Mother's day" By: Jenny Massie

Check out all the Spring photos at <https://cookcfb.org/membership/ccfb-photo-contest>



# Jim Bloomstrand Honored at June Board Meeting

CCFB Board Member Jim Bloomstrand, center, was honored during the June Board Meeting for his 24 years of presenting for our Agriculture in the Classroom Program. Jim has been an AITC presenter since the 2001-2002 school year. As an AITC presenter, Jim visited thousands of classrooms, and brought agricultural education to more than 50,000 students.

Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication, Jim! Enjoy retirement! Also pictured: Ag Literacy Team Chair Greg Stack, left, and Director of Agricultural Literacy Katrina Milton, right.

**STRONGER Together**  
WWW.ILFB.ORG/MENTALHEALTHWELLNESS

If you are or someone you know is struggling with daily stress, anxiety, depression, addiction or other mental health challenges, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

[ILFB.ORG/MENTALHEALTHWELLNESS](http://ILFB.ORG/MENTALHEALTHWELLNESS)

**2025 AGTECH INNOVATION SHOWCASE**

CONNECTING FARMERS, INNOVATORS, & INDUSTRY

WED **JULY 16** | 9 AM - 1 PM | UNIV. OF ILLINOIS RESEARCH PARK | CHAMPAIGN, IL

Learn more & register at: [on.ilfb.org/agtech25](http://on.ilfb.org/agtech25)

Register by July 9th

## Talking Stalk

### Farmer Suicide: The Stuenkel Family Story

In Episode 20 of Talking Stalk, RFD Radio host Rita Frazer talks with Julie Michaels and Jill Rieman about their brother, Tim Stuenkel. Stuenkel, a fifth-generation farmer and Cook County Farm Bureau® board member, took his own life just over three years ago. He was 44. His sisters bravely shared their story of finding him, and the regret and pain they carry with them still.

Stuenkel, a long-time Cook County Farm Bureau® member and board member, was active on several committees and the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation. Stuenkel was a Global Communications Marketing Manager at Spraying Systems (TeeJet Technologies). In addition, Stuenkel received his MBA from Northern Illinois University, graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in Agricultural Mechanics, and attended Rich South High School.

In the wake of Stuenkel's passing, the Cook County Farm Bureau board of directors placed a strategic focus on farmer mental health. In addition to providing mental health resources, leaders approved amending the policy book to direct Farm Bureau to provide education and resources on mental health and stress management for farmer members.

The CCFB Foundation created a Stuenkel Family Legacy Scholarship program designed for Cook County Farm Bureau members pursuing higher education with a focus on an agriculture related career in the areas of technology, education, leadership development and/or mental health.

Listen to the episode here: [farmweeknow.com/podcasts](http://farmweeknow.com/podcasts) or scan the QR code to listen now!

**Note: This episode contains details about suicide and may be sensitive to some audiences. Listener discretion is advised.**

## ATTENTION: Young Leaders Committee

### Advocacy Essentials: Skills for Effective Impact

**July 15, 2025**  
**6:00 p.m.**  
**Farm Bureau office & Zoom**

**READY TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD?**

Join us for **Advocacy Essentials: Skills for Effective Impact** and learn practical tips and tricks to connect with your legislators and make your message count. Whether you're new to advocacy or want to sharpen your skills, this session will give you the tools to speak up with confidence and impact.

- ✓ Learn how to craft your message
  - ✓ Discover the best ways to contact elected officials
  - ✓ Build relationships that drive change
- \*Your voice matters—let's make it heard!\*

Sign up by emailing Bona at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org)!

# Planting Seeds

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



**Katrina J.E. Milton**

## Making Hay & Keeping Busy

For the past month or so, if anyone asks me how I'm doing, my response has been, "Keeping busy!" With two or three work events a week, some even held on the weekend, I've been busy.

Most people think that AITC's busy season is during the school year, but summer is usually the most fast-paced time for us. We have programs, events, and workshops, as well as preparing for the next school year. I couldn't do any of what I do without the help of AITC Assistant Jill Drover, who helps me brainstorm, plan, prepare, organize, and execute all aspects of our programming. She's a vital part of our AITC program, and she helps make sure everything is ready and a little less hectic as program preparations are underway.

We've been busy wrapping up our Agriculture in the Classroom program for 2024-2025. We had a near-record school year, bringing agricultural education to 24,129 students in 1,075 classrooms at 208 schools. We attended more Career Days at middle and high schools than ever before, and we had great turnouts for our two third grade Ag Day field trips, Ag Leadership Academy for FFA students, and Farm Shadow Program for high school students. We also held two virtual teacher workshops via Zoom, an in-school teacher institute workshop, and two days of Summer Ag Institute for educators.

During the summer, our AITC program is busy helping with pollinator events at Lincoln Park Zoo and Brookfield Zoo, Historic Wagner Farm's Livestock Show, and park district events. We host programs at libraries and summer camps. You can also find us handing out bookmarks at the Bud Billiken Parade.

I keep my events – and my life – organized by color coding the calendar on my desk. Different types of events have a different color, and every event has a short description on the date. For example, in-school AITC events are red, library events are

purple, booth or table events are green, teacher workshops are blue, and hard deadlines are black. Personal events, such as music in the park with friends and birthdays have a shiny metallic star. I joke that when my calendar starts looking like a rainbow, I know that I have a lot going on.

Although I'm busy, I wouldn't have it any other way. I love having events to attend, places to go to, and people to meet. I thrive when I know I have something in my calendar the next week to plan and prepare for. There's an old saying: "Make hay while the sun shines." It's a reminder to get things done while you can, while the weather is good, because you never know what's around the corner.

While the weather is good and school is out of session, our AITC program is going to be making hay. Hopefully, we'll get to see you at one of our many events this summer, where you can say hello to 2025 AITC Summer Intern Libby Heenan. I also encourage you to get out and about, enjoy the summer weather, and make some hay of your own.

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



**CATCH UP WITH US THIS SUMMER**

Library Programs

Teacher Workshop

Park District Programs

And MORE!

*click Here*



## AITC Welcomes Summer Intern

**2025 AITC Summer Intern Libby Heenan reads the book "Nacho's Nachos: The Story Behind the World's Favorite Snack" by Sandra Nickel during a library program held June 13 at Richton Park Public Library.**

Cook County's Agriculture in the Classroom Program welcomes its summer intern, Libby Heenan. Libby, originally from Chicago, grew up in the Mt. Greenwood neighborhood. She went to The Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, and there she was able to discover her passion for agriculture and education by getting involved with their FFA and animal science programs. Now she is going to be a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, studying agricultural education. At school, she's involved in the Sigma Alpha sorority, UNL Figure 8 Racing Club, and plays multiple intramural sports throughout the year. Libby is excited to apply her passion and experience this summer as an intern with the Cook County Farm Bureau.

**Become an Ag in the Classroom Presenter**

Cook County Farm Bureau is seeking independent contractors for its AITC Program. Individuals will provide virtual and in-person ag literacy programs during the school year based on demand and contractor availability.

Teaching experience and knowledge of agriculture/horticulture is recommended.

For more information, email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org).

# AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



## Fun Facts About Hay

Hay is dried grass or legumes used to feed animals such as horses, cows, goats, and rabbits. Types of hay include alfalfa, Timothy, Bermuda, and orchard. Hay has also been used as bedding for humans and livestock.

Hay can be cut multiple times a year, but the summer months are usually the best for harvesting hay. The first cut typically happens in May or early June, and a second cut may be possible in late June or July.



- Hay can be baled into many different shapes, including haystacks and round or square bales. Round bales can weigh over 1,000 pounds.
- Wet hay can catch fire. If baled before it's dry enough, hay can ferment and heat up, leading to spontaneous combustion.
- There's a world record for the largest hay bale sculpture. Hay is often made into fun shapes, including animals and tractors, for fairs.

- Hay is for horses! Horses eat about 15 to 25 pounds of hay per day.
- The saying "needle in a haystack" describes something that is very difficult or even impossible to find. It's a comparison to the act of searching for a small, easily hidden item (a needle) within a large, untidy pile of hay (a haystack).

### Illinois grows a lot of hay:

- About 280,000 acres of Illinois land are used to bale grass hay.
- About 200,000 acres of Illinois land are used to bale alfalfa.
- Illinois produces 1.2 billion tons of hay products per year.



## Craft Corner HUNGRY FARM ANIMAL PUPPETS



### Make a hungry hay-eating farm animal!

Follow along with this YouTube video:  
<https://bit.ly/HungryFarmAnimalPuppetCraft>

OR USE THIS QR CODE:



## July Word Search

Last Month's Winner:  
Tim Maloney

Alfalfa	L	W	S	H	Y	W	P	B	O	T	A	W	X	N	W
Animal	F	A	S	Z	G	Y	A	H	C	D	R	Y	M	I	Q
Bales	P	E	F	E	C	Q	S	V	K	Y	S	R	Q	S	H
Bedding	L	G	E	H	S	U	Y	C	U	H	I	V	Y	J	B
Dry	S	V	P	D	M	R	O	W	A	S	R	E	Q	E	O
Feed	A	U	L	M	N	T	O	R	G	E	K	O	O	T	R
Grass	J	Z	E	A	S	D	V	H	R	M	I	H	U	P	S
Harvest	P	R	Y	E	M	E	W	S	A	U	C	R	Z	N	G
Hay	X	B	V	C	S	I	D	E	S	G	T	R	O	N	D
Horses	S	I	O	T	B	K	N	L	S	E	P	H	I	S	F
Legumes	L	N	E	E	D	L	E	A	J	L	J	D	H	Q	H
Livestock	G	X	T	R	T	K	W	B	N	J	D	E	F	U	J
Needle	O	Y	N	S	E	N	G	K	Y	E	J	P	K	A	K
Round	A	F	L	A	F	L	A	L	B	O	F	U	T	R	Y
Square	K	H	G	X	E	R	D	Z	W	O	N	V	K	E	M
Summer															

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Choose Your Prize Preference for If You Win:  
If a choice is not made, movie tickets will be sent

Beggar's Pizza Gift Card     3 Movie Tickets  
 Delta Sonic Car Wash    (Choose one option only)

Located on front of paper

### Choose Your Prize: Word Search

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

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

\*\*AMC Yellow tickets not valid in California, New York, & New Jersey.

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

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

FAX TO: 708-579-6056

EMAIL TO: FBcooperator@gmail.com

Complete and submit an entry every month all in 2025 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!**

# At The Farm Gate

by Joanie Stiers



## Fun with Resources on the Farm

We can hike the woods, kayak the river, hop hay bales and fish for hours. But top on their list for farm fun? Digging a hole.

When my cousins' kids visit the farm, the No. 1 request is to find "Farmer Doug" who will stabilize his backhoe in a harmless, remote space on the farm. My dad acts as a driver's education instructor as they use the bucket with hydraulic thumb to dig, dump and even grab a tire and smash an old piece of metal that he staged in their big kid sandbox. Oh, the delight in digging.

No matter the dwelling, we hold the power to make our own fun where we reside. Certainly, the farm has plenty of natural and man-made resources to amplify the options. My teenage son takes his friends tent camping beyond the Southeast Field. They play Airsoft in the Moody Timber. He buckles up in a utility vehicle to ride trails with cousins, and the farmstead provides some challenging games of hide and seek.

Straw in the barn satisfies the climbers and outdoor rows of round bales the jumpers. We hunt for deer, raccoons and morel mushrooms in the appropriate season. The snowmobile and sleds surface when the snowfall exceeds 2 inches. My daughter finds peace for

homework and reflections on the farm near the river bridge, and in the warm months, she frequently picks wildflowers in ditches and woodland areas.

On a slow-paced day, we sit on the porch smelling the smoker transform our farm-raised beef chuck roast into the most flavorful pulled beef and question why anyone besides neighbors would want to drive our dusty gravel road. Then again, we realize our routine farm chores deliver someone else's fun. Relatives who visit love to feed the cattle, so Dad makes piles of grain around the utility vehicle for an up-close encounter. They gather eggs from our chicken house, harvest vegetables from Mom's garden and ride in the combine and tractors in the fall or the planters in the spring while we work.

We take vacations away from the farm and immensely enjoy them, but it never crosses my mind to make travel plans on a Labor Day break or other long weekends. Rather, those extended days provide the gift of time to enjoy being at home and on the farm.

**About the author:** Joanie Stiers farms with her family in Knox County, where they raise corn, soybeans, hay, beef cattle, backyard chickens and farmkids.

# Soil Testing Kits Available From CCFB

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.

**Soil Test includes soil pH, Potassium, Phosphorous, Calcium, Magnesium, Organic Matter, and Cat Ion Exchange Capacity.**

Members will receive emailed 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.

**Complete kit includes:**

- Step by step instructions on how to sample soil
- Sample bag and form
- Convenient pre-paid shipping box and label via USPS
- U of I Extension Master Gardener Info Form and pre-paid envelope

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

**1 sample Soil Test Kit: \$32 | 2 sample kit: \$42**  
**3 sample kit: \$65**

**1 sample Soil plus Lead Test Kit: \$60**

**1 sample Lead Only Test Kit: \$49**

*\*Pricing subject to change \*\*Non-member pricing available \*\*\* Additional kit pricing available online at <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/-events-and-programs/programs-and-events/profile/soil-testing>.*

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 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

# Purdue Offers Hydroponic Crop Production Workshop

A Hydroponic crop production workshop for home and commercial growers, organized by Purdue University's Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, will be held July 12.

Participants will learn about hydroponic crop production, how to manage environmental conditions and considerations for small-scale and commercial-scale production. Krishna Nemali, associate professor of horticulture and the controlled environment agriculture Extension specialist at Purdue, will lead the workshop.

"The workshop will provide both classroom-style and experiential learning opportunities to participants," Nemali said. "The hands-on activities take place in one of our greenhouses that showcases different hydroponic production systems and vegetable crops. Both sessions are highly discussion-oriented and provide many opportunities for interaction among participants and trainers."

The workshop will run from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. July 12 at the Purdue Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture classroom and greenhouse complex at 625 Agricultural Mall Drive, West Lafayette, Indiana.

Registration costs \$60 per person, with a limit of 40 attendees. Parking is free and lunch and snacks will be provided. **Attendees can register and learn more at Hydroponic Crop Production Workshop. For additional information, contact Lori Jolly-Brown at [ljollybr@purdue.edu](mailto:ljollybr@purdue.edu).**

**ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU MEMBERS RECEIVE \$500 EXCLUSIVE CASH REWARD**  
on an Eligible New Ford Truck<sup>1</sup> or Ford Blue Advantage™ Certified Used Vehicle<sup>2</sup>.  
Visit [FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau](http://FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau) today for complete offer details!



2025  
YOUNG  
LEADER

# DISCUSSION MEET

**Topics for District Discussion Meets:**

**There are numerous resources available to support seamless farm and ranch succession planning. How can Farm Bureau help increase understanding, access and utilization of tools and resources that help facilitate the smooth transition of land and capital from one generation to the next?**

**Urban sprawl presents significant challenges for farmers, impacting access to land and resources. We see that 1.9 million acres of agricultural land are lost to development each year. How can Farm Bureau help promote responsible growth in communities while mitigating the loss of farms, ranches, and the agrarian way of life?**

Districts	Date	Location	Orientation Time	Contest Starting Time
1	Thurs. July 24	DeKalb County FB, Sycamore	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
2	Mon. August 4	Stephenson County FB, Freeport	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
3	Wed. August 13	Henry County FB, Cambridge	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
4	Tues. July 29	LaSalle County FB, Ottawa	5:30 PM	6:00 PM
5 & 6	Tues. July 29	Schaefer Pioneer Seed, Mazon	5:30 PM	6:00 PM
7 & 8	Tues. August 5	Tazewell County FB, Pekin	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
9	Tues. August 5	Brown County FB, Mount Sterling	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
10	Tues. July 29	Cass-Morgan County FB, Jacksonville	6:30 PM	7:00 PM
11 & 12	Tues. July 29	Champaign County FB, Champaign	5:30 PM	6:00 PM
13 & 17	Tues. August 5	Edwards County FB, Albion	5:30 PM	6:00 PM
14	Thurs. August 7	Fayette County FB, Vandalia	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
15 & 16	Wed. August 6	Madison County FB, Edwardsville	6:00 PM	6:30 PM
18	Thurs. July 10	Massac County FB, Metropolis	7:00 PM	7:30 PM

Contact your county Farm Bureau<sup>®</sup> for eligibility and contest information.

# Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure

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



## It's Our Starting Line. Our Arena. And How Well We Play Is up to Me.

Bona Heinsohn

Nearly five years ago, a ball of mane and tail bounced his way into our lives. Our veterinarian referred to him as "old-fashioned". He is on the shorter side. Stocky. Thick. And fluffy.

Pizzazz Me Only "Makoa" is technically a registered American Paint Horse. He's the grandson of By Invitation Only, the American Quarter Horse Association's all-time leading sire of point earners. And a great-grandson of Zippo Pine Bar, one of the most prolific pleasure horse sires in history. Most paint horses are flashy. Eye-catching. And colorful. Makoa is solid. A light chestnut complete with a white splotch on his side.

This ball of mane and tail is the younger brother no one asked for. He lives in a cloud of mischief. He opens gates. Almost cleanly soars over fences. Runs

from falling leaves. And tears through the pasture until coming to a sliding stop just in time to avoid touching the electric fence. A space cadet.

Less than a year ago, our space cadet returned to the barrel arena. His time reflected a nearly two-year hiatus from racing. It also reflected the rustiness of his jockey.

Like his jockey, his eyes were not looking ahead to the next barrel. His rate point was a little off, sending him a little wide. And his lines between barrels definitely needed a little caffeine. But he went into the arena without a fuss and went to work. We hunted for barrels.

Since returning after the hiatus, he's run nine races. And as I sit writing this column, he's scheduled to run three more later in June. Of those nine races, seven were in his home arena. An arena he's trained in for nearly a year. An arena he's very comfortable in. Also the very same arena, he won his first series buckle in.

Those races in unfamiliar arenas have been mixed. In early June, he laid down a smokin' solid time and landed a couple of spots out of the money. His May race was rough. Nerves. Lack of confidence. And

inexperience were all on display as he refused to go to the third barrel. As we came out of the arena, a fellow rider looked at me and said, "Well. At least you lived."

Um. We did more than just live. More than just survive. We took nearly two years off from the sport and returned. We not only returned but we're consistently beating our old times and creating new "personal bests." We're consistently running clean patterns. And perhaps most importantly we're happy.

Instead of viewing that race as a "Well, at least you lived" moment. It's our starting line. Our arena. And how well we play is up to my favorite space cadet and me.

Two weeks after that race, we went back. He went into the arena without fuss. He had a great line between barrels two and three. And nearly took the paint off of barrel three. Is there still work to be done? Absolutely. Is there progress being made every step of the way? Absolutely.

For our space cadet, each race will be a great time to take a moment to be proud of just how far he's come.

# Home Rule, Dillon's Rule and What It Means for You

Originally published in LINK April 2025

In Illinois, municipal governments derive their power from, and operate under, two different "rules" that dictate the extent of their governing authority: home rule and Dillon's Rule.

The general difference is whether a municipal government has broad, self-governing powers (home rule) or if it must strictly adhere to state-delegated authority (Dillon's Rule). Understanding these two rules is critical to understanding the extent of your local municipalities' ability to address a wide range of issues.

Dillon's Rule is named after Iowa Supreme Court Justice, John F. Dillon who, in an 1868 court ruling, strictly defined the power of local governments. This rule essentially maintains that local governments are a creation of the state and therefore cannot do anything unless expressly authorized by the state.

Home rule flips Dillon's Rule on

its head. Where Dillon's Rule prohibits local governments from doing anything unless authorized by the state, home rule allows counties and municipalities to govern themselves in any manner unless prohibited by the state.

**Home Rule in Illinois**  
Prior to 1971, all Illinois municipalities operated under Dillon's Rule. With the growth of our state, delegates to the Illinois Constitutional Convention recognized a need to allow units of local government to attend to their affairs without the express permission of the state and included a home rule provision in the Illinois Constitution of 1970. This provision, which took effect on July 1, 1971, automatically granted home rule status to 60 municipalities with a population of more than 25,000.

**How Do Municipalities Achieve Home Rule Status?**  
Per the State Constitution, municipalities can achieve

home rule status in one of two ways: 1) automatically when their recorded population reaches 25,001 or more, or 2) by a majority vote of their citizens via local referenda.

As of the time of this writing, there are 224 municipalities that have home rule status. The smallest home rule municipality is the Village of Muddy in Saline County (population 61) while the largest is the City of Chicago with a population of more than 2.7 million. The remaining 1,070 cities, villages and towns are subject to Dillon's Rule. Only one county, Cook County, has home rule status. Other counties have tried to gain home rule status via referenda but failed to gain voter support.

**Home Rule and You**  
So, what does home rule

mean for you? It would be nearly impossible to list the many ways that municipal governments can use their home rule powers to "regulate for the protection of the public health, safety, morals and welfare, to license; to tax; and to incur debt" as provided in the state constitution.

If you live in or near a home rule municipality, you should be aware that these communities have broader and more flexible authority over a variety of areas, including local finances, business and occupational licensing, building, zoning, sanitation, civil disturbances and certain criminal offenses.

While this authority gives municipal governments control over their own affairs, enabling them to create ordinances

tailored to their specific needs and providing greater flexibility in terms of taxation and revenue generation, it can also lead to inconsistent regulations between municipalities and confusion for residents.

It is important to note that Illinois Farm Bureau policy does not take a position on Dillon's Rule or home rule. Instead, one point under our policy on Local Government (Policy 110) states that "We support the principle of strong local government."

Therefore, our state policy leaves room for county Farm Bureaus to engage with their units of government and membership if this question of local control is proposed at either the county or municipal level.

## Legislative Session Adjournment and Estate Taxes

The Illinois General Assembly, late, in the final hour, passed the \$55.2 billion state budget and later adjourned the Spring Legislative Session. This budget was an increase of \$2.1 billion over last year's \$53.1 billion budget. This budget included \$1.02 billion in tax increases and fund sweeps.

Unfortunately, the Family Farm Preservation Act was not included in this year's budget. Cook County Farm Bureau would like to sincerely thank all members who contacted their legislators in response to the action request at the end of May. Your voices were heard, and Farm Bureau had widespread bipartisan support. However, ultimately, the estate tax reform initiative wasn't included in the final budget.

Additionally, thank our partners in agriculture: Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois Beef Association,

Illinois Grain and Feed Association, Illinois Pork Producers Association, and the Illinois Milk Producers Association for their support throughout the session.

In the last 10 days of the session, the Illinois Soybean Association submitted to the General Assembly and lobbied for their own estate tax proposal, which was not shared with the rest of agriculture. Farm Bureau strongly opposed this proposal, as it may have granted some farmers minimal relief, while simultaneously increasing estate taxes on many other farmers. In the years to come, Farm Bureau believes most farm estates would've seen estate tax go up under this alternate proposal.

This last-minute proposal caused chaos and confusion among legislators and left them asking, "Which

estate bill was supported by 'agriculture?'" Farm Bureau spent the final days of the session intervening and clarifying our full-fledged support for the Family Farm Preservation Act, while also stressing that the alternate proposal was not good for agriculture, nor backed by most of agriculture.

Overall, the budget included proposal included tax increases from three major "buckets" of funding:

- Additional "sin taxes" on tobacco and vape uses and sports wagering taxes;
- New taxes on Pharmacy Benefits Managers; and
- Reimplementation of the "Throwback/Throw-out Rule" that Illinois previously abolished in 2022.

The budget now goes to the Governor's desk.

## CUSTOM CULINARY

### Pork BBQ Spice



Shop Local





\$14.00

**Stop into the Cook County Farm Bureau to purchase a bottle today!**

*Since 1946*  
[www.customculinary.com](http://www.customculinary.com)

Check out this year's July 4th Cookout Costs at <https://www.fb.org/topic/fourth-of-july>.

# DISCOVER LOCAL



CO-OPERATOR PULL-OUT SECTION 2025

Join Cook County Farm Bureau® in supporting agricultural and member Ag businesses:



Visit Cook County Farm Bureau® member greenhouses, garden centers, and farms for all your outdoor needs this spring! Their vegetable and flower plantings, trees, shrubs, lawn, landscape materials, grills, and garden décor await you!

Farm Stands are also open for the freshest in season produce and herbs ...get out and discover local! To assist, we have a listing of participating member businesses and producers in the Cook County area, waiting to serve you.

**Discover Local at: <http://bit.ly/4jRhKKE>.**



Member businesses offering additional discounts to CCFB members include Goebbert's Farm and Garden Center in South Barrington, Ted's Greenhouse in Tinley Park, Teegan Compost, Grainger, John Deere, Harvard Products, and more. Check our website for details and restrictions at:

<https://cookcfb.org/membership/member-resources/member-benefits/profile/home-business-and-agriculture>

## Cook CFB to host Farm Crawl BINGO

**Runs From August 1 to September 13, 2025**

Play and fill our BINGO Farm Crawl 2025 Card by visiting participating Cook County Farm Bureau member Farms, Farmstands, Greenhouses, Garden Centers, and Agri-businesses during our self-guided BINGO Farm Crawl and qualify for our BINGO ca\$h prize raffle. BINGO Cards submitted to the CCFB office will be entered into a drawing for the chance at top ca\$h and other small prizes.

Farm Crawl BINGO is free, offering diverse agri-locations to visit starting August 1 to

September 13, 2025, allowing ample time to crawl our many locations in and around the county. Crawlers use the BINGO Farm Crawl card to record visits which will provide BINGO details, locations, times, and special crawl offers.

### How do I get the BINGO card?

- Downloadable BINGO Card: <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated-/events-and-programs/programs-and-events/profile/farm-crawl>
- Email [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org) for one to be emailed
- Mail: call the CCFB and we will mail



- BINGO locations will have a limited supply of BINGO cards
- Stop by the CCFB and pick up one

**Available late July**

## COOK COUNTY Agents of the Month

The Agent of the Month program is designed by COUNTRY® Financial District Leaders 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 District Leaders with the Agent of the Month designation.



### JOSEPH VOVES

has been named Agent of the Month for May 2025 by Cary Tate, District Leader. Joe's office is located at 10522 S. Cicero Ave, Ste 407, Oak Lawn, IL. His phone number is 708-425-1527. Joe has been an Agent with COUNTRY® Financial

since April 2011.

**Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, District Leader**



### MAGGIE LYCZKO

has been named Agent of the Month for May 2025 by Vicki Nygren, District Leader. Maggie's office is located at 9211 Waukegan Rd, Unit A, Morton Grove, IL. Her phone number is 773-427-2964. Maggie has been an agent with COUNTRY® Financial

since February 2011.

**Chicago North Agency, Vicki Nygren, District Leader**



### ALEX SWISTUN

We would like to highlight Alex Swistun for the month of May 2025, by Kevin Gomes, District Leader. Alex's office is located at 4200 W Euclid Ave, Ste C, Rolling Meadows, IL. His phone number is 847-427-8280. Alex has been a Financial

Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since March 2002.

**Chicago Northwest Agency, Kevin Gomes, District Leader**

*\*Indicates that this COUNTRY® Agent is a CCFB Certified Agent. The Cook County Farm Bureau Certified Agent Program is designed to strengthen the partnership and relationship shared by COUNTRY® Financial.*



## A Century of Trust

In 1925, a group of Illinois farmers came together to provide fire and lightning insurance, helping to ensure their farms and crops would be protected. Over the next century, COUNTRY Financial® grew to offer a diverse range of personal and business insurance products, as well as retirement and investment services.

Over the next 100 years, our insurance will do more to protect you and your loved ones, so you can enjoy the moments that make your life full.

COUNTRY Financial® is the marketing name for the COUNTRY Financial family of affiliated companies (collectively, COUNTRY), which include COUNTRY Life Insurance Company®, COUNTRY Mutual Insurance Company®, and their respective subsidiaries, located in Bloomington, IL. 0125-043CP



**Cook County Farm Bureau congratulates Country Financial and its family of companies for 100 years of service to members and clients, building trust, earning business and remaining client centric.**

# CLASSIFIED ADS

All ads that we receive for the Co-Operator are also listed on our website at [cookcfb.org/stay-updated/classified-ads](http://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/classified-ads). 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 month's 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

18 position ladder, 16 ft, asking \$100. **Call 708-654-2010**. Picture available online.

I RIDE electric scooter new. Asking \$950, paid \$1,300. Weight 32 lbs. (base), length 38", width 19.25". **Call 708-654-2010**. Pictures available online.

Two metal three drawer office type filing cabinets: (1) 36"L x 18"D x 39"H, (2) 42"L x 18"D x 39"H. Both in very good condition. Pick up in Arlington Heights only. \$25.00 each. **Call Ron 847-577-6613**

Two cemetery lots in Mount Vernon Memorial Estates in Lemont, IL. Valued at \$4,300 each. Selling for \$3,000 each. **Call John 708-478-0282** and leave a message.

Grumman canoe, 17', beautiful aluminum. **Call 708-895-2713**

2003 Harley Davidson Anniversary silver and black, low miles, heritage, many extras. **Call 708-895-2713**

Harley Davidson Motorcycle 2005 883 model, blue. Kept under flannel sheets, never washed, less than 1000 miles. Clean - cherry - cannot tell from new. \$5,000. **Call 708-784-1949**

Oak dining table set. Table 48" to 70: (2 leaves) with 6 chairs. Pictures available online. \$185 cash only. **Call Mike 847-910-5745**.

Weber Grill. Performer charcoal grill in red. Never used. Garage kept. 2014 or 2015 year. Smoker attachment still in box. Cover still in box. Ace price \$580 + \$160 for smoker. Asking \$300 total. **Call 708-784-1949**.

Crosby radio cathedral cd (cr32cd). Photo available online. \$55 cash only. **Call Mike 847-910-5745**.

## FOR RENT

Modern brick ranch in Worth. Three bedrooms, two baths with den and attached two car garage. All appliances included with central air. **Call 708-670-2118**.

## WANTED

Wanted 5 ft blow mold Santa, with or without light. **Call 708-439-9770**.





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

I buy vintage sports cards and non-sports items. **Call or text John 773-213-4024**

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

## ABC'S OF SPICES

We already gave you the ABC's of Food but the Cook County Farm Bureau also loves spices... All types of spices with all types of flavors. In this feature, we will be highlighting different types of spices, from A to Z. If you'd like a full list of the ABC's of Food, contact the CCFB office.

<b>This month "M"</b>	<b>MINT</b> 
Mint is an aromatic herb that can grow anywhere from 10 to 120 centimeters tall, depending on the variety.	<b>Mint's name is derived from ancient Greek mythology.</b>
One of the most called upon herbs for its soothing properties, mint is used extensively in medicine, aromatherapy, beauty products, and food flavoring.	Spearmint and peppermint are two of the most popular and widely available commercial cultivars.
	<b>MINT IS TYPICALLY PRUNED TO PREVENT FLOWERING.</b> 
	<b>Mint can be used fresh or dried in sweet and savory applications.</b>
<b>Mint is native to the Mediterranean basin.</b>	Mint is available year-round, with a peak season in the summer.
	The main organic compound that gives mint its distinctive smell and cooling taste sensation is menthol.

Call the Office on July 16th with the Word of the Day, "GREENHOUSE"

Source: [https://specialtyproduce.com/produce/Mint\\_308.php](https://specialtyproduce.com/produce/Mint_308.php)

# This Month in Cook County Agriculture

## Nature Encounters This Summer at Salt Creek Butterfly Farm and Apiaries

Lori Harris of Salt Creek Butterfly Farm and Apiaries is offering three nature clubs this summer! The experiences that she provides are always so special and tend to sell out early, so you'll definitely want to check these out: Family Beekeeping Club, Native Illinois Butterfly Rearing Club, and Luna Love Club. These clubs are low commitment and super high reward. **Full details and info, go to <https://www.saltcreekbutterflyfarm.org/services-6-1> or call Lori Harris at 708 601-1080.**



## Save the Dates for Upcoming Urban Ag Field Days series:

**July 23:** Contemporary Farmer 4:30-6:30 PM (Bilingual Soil Health) Roscoe Village, Chicago

**August 20:** Growing Home 5-7 PM (Organic Certification Cost Share) Englewood, Chicago  
**Sept 16:** The Talking Farm 5-7 PM (Navigating FSA & NRCS Programs) Skokie

**October 14:** We Sow We Grow 4:30-6:30 PM (Navigating FSA & NRCS Programs) West Pullman

As part of Illinois Extension's Summer Technical Assistance Field Day Series, in partnership with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), we are hosting a field days focused on soil health. Chicago

## Member Exclusive NASCAR

Enjoy Illinois 300 Experience at World Wide Technology Raceway in Madison, IL on **Sunday, September 7, 2025!** This high-octane day is packed with exclusive access, premium seating, and unforgettable fan experiences. 400 tickets available, limit 5 tickets per paid membership, must be a Member in Good Standing at the time of purchase. Tickets are \$200 each (\$400 value) Here's what the day will include:

- Elevated Private Hospitality Structure
- FS1 Section Bleacher Tickets
- Gateway Garage Experience Infield Fan Zone Pass
- Live Entertainment
- Free Parking

Register via CVENT: <https://cvent.me/xB3VIZ?RefId=EnjoyIL300>



## BAPA Beverly/Morgan Park Garden Walk

BAPA will host its annual Beverly/Morgan Park Garden Walk on Sunday, July 13, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Featured gardens are located throughout the historic Chicago neighborhood. Each stop is distinctive for its style, variety of plantings, and unique beauty. Whether you're going home to a sunny or shady yard, a mature garden, or a freshly dug flower bed, you'll be inspired by the hard work, creative vision and delight shared by local gardeners.

**For information on the Beverly/Morgan Park Garden Walk visit [bapa.org/garden-walk/](http://bapa.org/garden-walk/) or email [bapa@bapa.org](mailto:bapa@bapa.org) with Garden Walk in the subject line.**

## Census of Ag: July Fresh and Local, All Around

Cook County is home to nearly 120 farmers' markets, with many popping up right in the heart of Chicago and Cook County. Whether you're in the mood for fresh produce, homemade treats, or just a stroll through a vibrant local scene, there's likely a market just around the corner.

**2022 Census of Agriculture, released on February 13, 2024. The census surveyed changes in land use and ownership, operator characteristics, production practices, and income and expenditures from 2017 to 2022.**

To promote your activity, email [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org) or call 708-354-3276 by the 15th of the month. Please include your name, the event date/time, a one-sentence description of the event, and how a reader can obtain further information in the email. We will edit submissions based on space allowances in the publication.

# 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**

## Membership Mondays 2025

Are you a member or prospective member interested in learning more about the benefits and programs a CCFB membership provides? Then join us to hear from CCFB staff who will highlight member programs, member benefits, and the website. Staff will provide demonstrations to access membership benefit discounts so members can take full advantage. An open Q&A session will follow the short staff presentation.



**LOCATION:** Zoom; link will be emailed the Friday prior

**DATE:** Monday, July 21, 2025 **TIME:** 4:00-4:30 p.m. with Q & A

**REGISTRATION:** Registration is required by emailing [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org) or call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.

## Farm Crawl Bingo *COMING SOON!*

The Cook County Farm Bureau is sponsoring its 8th member FARM CRAWL of participating member Ag locations later this summer. Our BINGO-inspired self-guided tour will offer plenty of time to visit locations, filling out the BINGO location card for our raffle entry of cash and prizes, along the way. **Go to page 10 for details.**



## Intro to Organic Candle Making

Join Soapy Roads of Lombard for a 'Clean Candle' Workshop and Candle Makery Bar where you will craft your own custom candle. Soapy Roads will provide the clean ingredients which include: phthalate-free fragrance oils blended with essential oils, organically grown soy wax base, lead-free wicks, and an 8oz fill glass vessel. Learn why cheap candles can be dangerous and techniques for getting the best life and safe burning out of your candle.



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

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 16, 2025 **TIME:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**FEE:** \$22 for Members, \$25 Non-Members

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

## DIY "Fall" Barn Quilt Painting Workshop

Learn about the history of barn quilts and paint your own FALL design during this 3-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.



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

**DATE:** Wednesday, October 1, 2025 **TIME:** 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

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

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

## 25th Giant Pumpkin, Dessert, Carving, Local Honey Contest – Save the Date

**LOCATION:** Puckerville Farms, 13332 Bell Rd, Lemont

**DATE:** Saturday, October 4, 2025 **TIME:** 9:00-11:00 a.m.



# The Answer: Yes – Yes, You can!

**The Question: Can I retain my membership even though Country Financial says I do not need a membership to access insurance.**

Members are a part of the Farm Bureau family.

Farmers are strong, resilient, faithful, generous, and hardworking. Continue to be a part of this wonderful family and community.

We have been pleasantly surprised by how many people ask us that question and we want to assure current members (even implore current members) that . . .

**We love our members and renewals**

We love serving your membership needs through humor, great information, programming, membership discounts, local farmer support, and so much more.

We even answer the phone!



**CCFB PRICE: \$29.99**  
Regular price: \$38.99



**CCFB PRICE: \$29.00**  
Regular price: \$62.99



**25% OFF ADULT & CHILD TICKETS**



**SAVE 32% ON TICKETS**



**CCFB PRICE: \$37.99**  
Regular price: \$69.99



**\$10 OFF ADULT & CHILD TICKETS**



**SAVE UP TO 30% NATIONWIDE**

For details and to purchase tickets, visit our website at: [cookcfb.org](http://cookcfb.org) and click on 'membership' and then 'membership benefits' or call us at 708-354-3276.