



# COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

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

## Mark Your Calendar



### October

- 4 Giant Pumpkin & Local Honey Contest **PG 12**
- 15 Fall Photo Contest Deadline **PG 12**
- 17 AITC Project Grants Applications Due **PG 6**
- 21 Cheese and Halloween Candy Pairing **PG 12**

### November

- 5 Teacher Workshop **PG 6**
- 10 Membership Monday **PG 12**
- 13 Small Business Owner Webinar **PG 12**
- 18 Holiday Wreath & Bow Making **PG 12**

### December

- 15 Membership Monday **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 ?

On page 6, Katrina talks about a fall favorite, mums! What is the official name for a mum? \*\*We just want to see how many of you can say it correctly. :)

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)

**September Winner: Karen Bingham**

**Question:** Name a Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leader (there are two) that the CCFB Foundation recently supported in the members' quest for greater agricultural leadership training through the Illinois Agricultural Leadership Program.

**Answer: Rebecca Biernacki & British Griffis**



Deb Voltz (c), CCFB Director of Membership, discusses organizational benefits and programming with new member, Kristine, during Foliage Fest.

## FOLIAGE FEST AT TED'S GREENHOUSE in Tinley Park

Plant lovers were drawn to Foliage Fest hosted by Ted's Greenhouse. There were many vendors offering succulents to purchase as well as industry experts answering questions. Farm Bureau staff were able to spend the day connecting with many existing members and registered some new members too. In addition, we were educating attendees on our many programs and benefits, including soil testing kits. Now is a great time of year to test your soil so that you can make any amendments necessary for next growing season.



## EXPERIENCE FALL

The time is ripe to experience a classic fall outing to a local pumpkin patch, apple picking, trail riding, making a fall planter, and all things spooktacular!

We want to help by making it easier for you to shop locally and support businesses in and around your community with Discover Local.

This is a MUST-HAVE resource to find diverse local food and agriculture businesses in Cook County, local farmers' markets, and more to help with fall fun experiences!

View our Discover Local at: <https://bit.ly/DiscoverLocal2025>



## 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!**

## Board Continues Charting Course for Cook CFB Future

The Cook County Farm Bureau Board of Directors continues taking steps for the organization's strong future by intentionally focusing the organization's resources on stakeholders as we grow communities within the organization.

- **For young families:** The Family Connections Community will be centered around Agriculture Literacy by providing member experiences, member-only exclusiveness, and local connections.

- **For those that love to grow things:** The Green Thumbs Community will be centered around gardening, pollinators, and urban growing for member knowledge, activities, and local connections.

- **For active seniors:** The Go-Go Seniors Community brings regular interaction, activities, community, and health for members seeking local connections.

*"Future" Continues on Page 10*

## Word of the Day

We always enjoy the opportunity to talk with our members, and we believe those who called enjoy it as well! 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. Good luck to you!

**September Winner: Paula Matzek**

September word was *Corn* and found on page 2.

**Start your search for the October word today!!!**

# New Chicago South Shore District Leader Selected



Alonzo Nevarez

Alonzo Nevarez began his career with COUNTRY Financial 12 years ago as an Insurance Agent in the Chicago South District. Four years ago, he had the opportunity to serve as a District Leader in the Aurora District, and today he's excited to return to where it all started. He looks forward to partnering with the agents in the Chicago South Shore District, helping them grow their businesses by sharing what he has learned as an agent and from other outstanding District Leaders across the company. He believes this district has tremendous potential, and his goal is to support his agents in achieving All American recognition.

While work is an important priority, he also enjoys quality time with his family, especially sharing meals with them. They are all foodies. Outside of work, you can often find him in the garden or tackling new DIY projects around the house.

## RENEW NOW

Scan below to renew your ccfb membership



[www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)

## HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN SEPTEMBER

- ▶ **Advocated for agriculture and the continuation of farming within Cook County at various meetings throughout the month.**
- ▶ **Held an Intro to Organic Candle Making event where participants crafted their own custom candles and were taught techniques for getting the best life and safe burning out of their candles.**
- ▶ **Continued to bring mental health awareness to our farmer members by providing "Strength Over Silence" giveaway bags.**
- ▶ **Sponsored Farm Crawl BINGO allowing members to crawl participating member ag locations and play Bingo as they Discover Local.**



### 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...**

- Renee Bradley, Janet Lence, Leah Walton, and other members for sending us such nice notes this past month about what we are doing!
- The many members who participated in Farm Crawl Bingo to check out and support farm operations/ businesses throughout the Cook County area.
- Our Voting and Associate members who have renewed their memberships this year!
- The members (and those who joined as members) who stopped at our booth during the Foliage Fest at Ted's Greenhouse on September 13. Loved catching up!
- The Team members and staff who wrapped up a great year of programs and activities. We can't wait to see what you bring this next year!
- Farmers, greenhouse producers, specialty growers and all that support these important parts of local agriculture for providing food, fiber, fuel and fun for society.

### Co-Operator

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# Downwind

by **BOB ROHRER**, CCFB MANAGER



## “Community”

The “rural” community. The “African American” community. The “Christian” community. The “Latino” community. The “Farm” community. The “business” community. The “LGBTQ” community. The “Deaf” community. And so on...

**Bob Rohrer**

We hear the word “community” frequently. In the news. On social media. In daily conversations.

I am a fan of the little known “one-arm human” community. My community is concerned about important issues: one-arm paper hangers, magic tricks with nothing up our sleeves, unused left/right-handed gloves. Yes, it’s a small community, like my hometown.

**What traits make up a community?** Obviously, connections such as purpose, geography, interests, or circumstances but there seems to be more. Common beliefs, give-and-take communications, mutual support, and shared values build those connections.

People need to be understood, supported, and connected. Community can fill those needs. Community is not just a feel-good buzz word.

Cook County Farm Bureau is not made up of “a single community”. Members join and participate in the organization for diverse, varied, and widespread reasons.

Rather, like the many neighborhoods that make up the city of Chicago, your Cook County Farm Bureau is made up of a series of smaller “communities” that collectively make up the “whole” of the organization.

The original community of Cook County Farm Bureau, created in 1920, was local farmers involved in production farming and agriculture. It continues to exist today. Since 1920, additional communities within CCFB have been established, evolved, and grown.

**Recognizing the importance of communities, the Board of Directors and staff are intentionally working to better serve and cater to certain communities found within the bounds of the Cook County Farm Bureau membership including:**

- Our existing and future farmer members, landowners, specialty growers, and urban/innovative producers community
- The green thumb community
- The go-go seniors community
- The family connections community

**And we will limit the common community problems caused by...**

- The dog barking incessantly next door (its bark is allegedly worse than its bite).
- The neighbor mowing the lawn early morning Sunday (the sun is up, you know).
- That rock-throwing kid down the street (we know he means well).
- Stay off my grass (Says the neighborhood).
- The neighborhood knuckleheads (just like having fun with those practical jokes).

We are going to serve all our members to the best of our ability. We hope that you will continue challenging us to do so. I mean it so much that I wrote a pledge...

## Cook County Farm Bureau Pledge

**We pledge to...**

- ✓ Represent and support all types of agriculture and farm production.
  - ✓ Continue our member-driven grassroots policy development to implement locally as well as the state and national level.
  - ✓ Seek and provide high quality benefits and services that save members money, improve members’ lifestyles, and provide enjoyable, rich experiences.
  - ✓ Provide members with quality, common sense, and timely communications and resources.
  - ✓ Offer an expansive world of rewarding communities and relationships.
  - ✓ Answer the phone and serve member needs.
- Do you feel a sense of peace and tranquility now?  
**Your community is here to support you!**

## CALLING ALL YOUNG AG ENTHUSIASTS! (AGES 18-35)

Whether you grow it, teach it, sell it, or just love it — if agriculture is your thing, the Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leaders Committee is the place for you!

### WHY JOIN?

#### GROW YOURSELF

Stay in the know with insider ag updates through The Co-Operator, events, and conferences

Boost your personal and professional skills

Sharpen your communication, leadership, and advocacy game

#### LEAD WITH PURPOSE

Be a voice for agriculture and help shape ag policy

Make a real impact through community service and giving back

#### HAVE FUN

Connect with fellow young ag leaders across the county, state, and country

Enjoy social events like cookouts, networking nights, and ag adventures

Take part in awesome contests and competitions

### READY TO JUMP IN?

Join a vibrant group of ag-minded leaders who are passionate, driven, and ready to make a difference- and have fun doing it.

Message Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org) to learn more or to join.

## Recipe of the Month

Lynn Rine, Glenview

### Pumpkin Sour Cream COFFEE CAKE



#### INGREDIENTS

##### Streusel Topping:

- 2 c all-purpose flour
- 1 1/3 c sugar
- 1 1/2 t cinnamon
- 3/4 c butter, softened (1 1/2 sticks)

##### Pumpkin Coffee Cake:

- 3 c all-purpose flour
- 1 T pumpkin pie spice
- 1 1/2 t baking soda
- 1 t baking powder
- 1/2 t salt
- 3/4 c butter, softened
- 2 c sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 T vanilla
- 1 can pumpkin puree (15 oz can) or fresh pumpkin
- 1/3 c sour cream
- 1 c milk

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease a 9 x 13-inch cake pan. Set aside.
2. Start by making the streusel topping: in a medium bowl whisk together flour, sugar, and cinnamon. Add softened butter and stir with a fork until crumbly. Set aside.
3. Mix flour, pumpkin spice, baking soda, baking powder, and salt in a medium bowl. Set aside.
4. In a large bowl/stand mixer, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs until smooth, then stir in vanilla, pumpkin, and sour cream. Beat in flour mixture alternating with milk, until batter is well combined. Pour batter into prepared 9 x 13 cake pan. Top with the streusel topping. Spread evenly and gently press onto the top of the cake with your hands.
5. Bake for 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes clean. Serve warm or at room temperature.



### 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.

# 5 Ways to Boost Your Credit Score Starting Now

Originally published by SavvyMoney, adapted by IAA Credit Union



Jennifer Killian

Finding yourself denied a loan for a home, vehicle, or another important purchase can feel

discouraging. But even if you're facing less than ideal interest rates or a blemished credit history, there are still practical steps you can take to strengthen your financial standing.

Fortunately, rebuilding your credit score is possible though it may require patience and commitment, the results are well worth the effort. If you're ready to make positive changes, consider these effective strategies for boosting your credit score, starting today:

## 1 Get Your Credit Report and Dig In

IAA Credit Union members have access to a free credit report and score at any time through My Credit Score. Checking your credit information does not affect your score. It is recommended to request a credit report from bureaus such as Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion regularly to verify that there are no errors in individual reports. Individuals are entitled to one free copy of their credit report each week. Review your credit report thoroughly, as about 20% contain errors. Report any inaccuracies you find, since mistakes can lower your score. The Federal Trade Commission has seen a rise in consumer-reported credit report errors.

## 2 Automate to Avoid Late Fees

Your credit score is largely based on your payment history, which accounts for about 40%. Scores range from 300 to 850; the higher the better. Here's the thing: Even one late payment on a credit card can lower your score by as much as 100 points. That's huge. That's why it's so important to pay your bills on time, or even early, every single due date.

To make timely payments easier, consider setting up automatic bill pay through your bank's online services this simple step can help ensure you never miss a due date. If you prefer a hands-on approach, use electronic calendar alerts on your phone, tablet, or computer to remind you a few days in advance. For those who favor traditional methods, marking your paper calendar with a brightly colored reminder or leaving a note in a prominent spot, like your bathroom mirror, can serve as an effective prompt. Choose the strategy that best fits your routine and stick with it consistent, on-time payments are a cornerstone of a strong credit score.

## 3 Pay Down Debt

Lenders prefer to see manageable balances on credit cards, as excessive debt may be concerning. Consider the following strategies:

- Reduce outstanding balances whenever possible.
- Avoid fully utilizing your available credit limit.

Holding a balance that exceeds 30% of your total credit limit

can negatively impact lender perceptions. Ideally, maintain utilization between 10% and 30% of the credit available to you.

## 4 Use It or Lose It

If you don't use a credit card for over six months, your issuer might close the account, which could lower your credit score especially if it's your oldest card. To keep it active, make a small monthly purchase and pay it off right away.

## 5 Consider a Secured Credit Card

If an application for a traditional credit card is declined due to a low credit score or lack of credit history, an alternative is to consider a secured credit card. With this type of card, the cardholder provides a deposit to the financial institution, which typically serves as the credit limit. After a period of responsible use and payment, often between 18 and 24 months some secured cards may be converted to standard credit cards.

### What's Next

By adopting these practical habits, you'll be well on your way to building and maintaining a healthy credit profile. Whether you're just starting out or looking to strengthen your financial footing, consistency and awareness are key. Remember, your credit journey is a marathon not a sprint and every smart decision brings you closer to your financial goals.

## IFB Quick Takes

Illinois Farm Bureau is looking for members to attend the 2025 Agricultural Marketing Summit November 12-14 in Indianapolis. The summit offers opportunities for networking and learning about new business strategies that can improve the performance of farms and businesses. Participants will find resources for direct marketing for farmers and food businesses, agribusiness with value-added products and technical assistance providers. Farm Bureau members interested in attending this year should apply online before October 14. Illinois Farm Bureau will pay for in-person conference registration, lodging and travel. For more information, contact Jolene Neuhauser at 309-557-3286 or [jneuhauser@ifb.org](mailto:jneuhauser@ifb.org)

With farmers facing unprecedented challenges in weed management, IFB is partnering with Southern Illinois University to share a series of informational articles and videos about Integrated Weed Management hosted by Karla Gage, associate professor of weed science and plant biology in the Schools of Agricultural Sciences and Biological Sciences. In order for IFB members to have a readily available and easy access to this whole series, the presentations, radio interviews, and videos will be available for IFB's Members at [myifb.org](http://myifb.org)

Visit <https://ilsustainableag.org/findtool/> for financial opportunities available for adopting conservation practices.

AM Best, an independent insurance rating agency, affirmed A+ (Superior) financial strength ratings for COUNTRY Financial Property/Cassler group and COUNTRY Life Insurance company. It has also affirmed stable outlooks for both companies. The A+ (Superior) rating generally indicates a superior ability to meet ongoing obligations and is based on profitable operating earnings, strong risk – assessed capitalization, and favorable geographic and product line diversification.

The average price of beef and veal in the US increased 9.2% in July compared to last year, up to a record of nearly 9 dollars per pound. The price spike, which occurred at the end of the summer grilling season, continues a trend of rising beef prices driven by his freaking cattle herd and persistent consumer demand. There's little price relief in sight headed One pr this fall, which could give consumers incentive to consider purchasing more budget friendly options such as pork and chicken. One protein option that has struggled, is plant-based meat innovator Beyond Meat. The company is reportedly headed to Chapter 11 bankruptcy amid declining sales and rising competition for that niche market. Beyond Meat sales declined 20% in the second quarter compared to the previous year.

## MENTAL HEALTH CARE PACKAGE

Cook County Farm Bureau in partnership with Illinois Farm Bureau and COUNTRY Financial is bringing mental health awareness to our farmer members by providing "Strength Over Silence" giveaway bags. These bags include stress balls, bracelets, hot/cold packs and resources available to Illinois farmers.

Mental health and substance abuse resources are available at the County Farm Bureau office and during events.

Additional resources are also available at <https://cookcfb.org/ccfb/ccfb-in-action/farmer-mental-health>

## INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Cook County Farm Bureau is dedicated to bridging the gap between farmers and our urban neighbors.

Our volunteers enable us to share the importance of agriculture with consumers, youth, members, legislators, and the general public. Our volunteers enable us to achieve our mission.

**CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING TODAY**

Contact:  
Bona Heinsohn  
[bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org)



# Eden Place Farms – Cook County Farm Bureau Quick Visit

Check out member ag location Eden Place Farms located at 4911 S. Shield Ave, Chicago. This three-acre urban farm and learning center in Chicago's Fuller Park Community is a full-time grower of specialty products, produce, and more. Having been around for over 30 years, it is home to an onsite apiary, chickens, farm market store, has a CSA and offers event space. Hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. More info at 312-296-7339 and online at <http://www.edenplacefarms.org>.



Eden Place Farms offers both traditional row and raised bed growing and a home for their chickens!



Founder Michael T Howard takes a moment to be photographed in their school house designed farmstand.

## Garden Grant Visits 2025

**Chicago Roots Garden, NFP**, located in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood, is a not-for-profit garden started in 2024 to grow organic produce and herbs in raised garden beds for its south side residents. A pollinator garden featuring native plants was also created to attract bees and butterflies to benefit their crops and ecosystem. Chicago Roots Garden hopes to increase the residents' access to fresh organic produce/herbs and cultivate a community, offering growing classes, education, and access. Grant funds were used for herb plantings, fruit bushes, and strawberry plants.



Garden Coordinators, Brittany & Christal accept the CCFB Garden Grant signage (l, rt).



Coordinators show off the beautiful fruit trees and bushes reaping bountiful yields for the community.

## What is Ag in the Classroom?

One of the main questions our Ag in the Classroom (AITC) Program receives is what exactly our program is all about. In short, AITC offers free, hands-on programs that teach students about agriculture. Cook County Farm Bureau (CCFB)'s AITC Program was created in 1986. Since then, our presenters have given 28,758 presentations to 683,120 students (we keep track of every presentation and every student we see, so our statistics are as accurate as possible!).

Our program's ag literacy mission is "To expand students' awareness and appreciation for the importance of agriculture everywhere." That mission includes teaching students about ag topics that are relevant to their everyday lives: the food supply chain from farm to table, nutrition and healthy eating, Illinois' soil and the importance of sustainability, agricultural careers, specialty crops through the seasons, the many ways ag keeps us warm, such as cotton, wool, and hot cocoa, and more. Every presentation includes hands-on activities, pre- and post-work, including vocabulary lists, Kahoot!, quizzes, and ag-accurate book recommendations.

AITC extends outside of the classroom as well with the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation. We offer Farm Shadow Programs, helping middle and high school students gain insight into potential ag careers through classroom presentations and field trips. We host an Ag Leadership Academy field trip for FFA students each year, showcasing local agriculture and ag production. We celebrate

National Ag Day by hosting free field trips to a working farm, where third grade students rotate through stations to learn about crops and livestock. We select an Outstanding in Their Field Ag Student of the Month, as well as an AITC Teacher of the Year, recognizing contributions to agriculture. We offer a bookmark art contest every school year, and the bookmarks are distributed to AITC classrooms. We attend Career Days with booths and presentations, teaching students of all ages about ag career opportunities. According to the USDA, in 2022, 10.4% of U.S. employment was in the agricultural and food sector, with 22.1 workers on farms and in restaurants, grocery stores, food processing, distribution, and retail.

CCFB's AITC Program also has resources available to teachers, including free microgreens and soil kits, PDCH workshops, summer professional development opportunities (Summer Ag Institute), Illinois AITC's Ag Mags and lesson plans, and a library of books to borrow. We offer a Spring Mini Grant to help teachers fund ag projects in the classroom. We also host classes and programs and public libraries, zoos, and events throughout Cook County, bringing ag education to all residents of Cook County.

Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Program is more than teaching about farming. It's dispelling the myths that chocolate milk comes from brown cows, that working in agriculture is wearing jean overalls in a cornfield, and that ag is only in rural areas. According to the 2022 Census



Fourth grade students from Rhodes School District 84.5 learn about corn and soybeans while playing the Grain Game during an Intro to Illinois Ag presentation, part of Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Program.

of Agriculture, Cook County has 154 farms and 10,281 acres of farmland. Horticulture makes up our county's largest market value of ag products sold, followed by grains. We rank #1 in the state for sales of horses, ponies, mules, burros, and donkeys. We have hydroponics, aquaculture, greenhouses, and indoor growing facilities. We have pollinators, including bees and Monarch butterflies. We even have an ag high school, the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences. There is agriculture in Cook County, not only the growing of crops and the raising of livestock, but also the movements of goods and services with highways and interstates, two international airports, railways, Lake Michigan, and rivers.

Cook County is the most populous

county in Illinois and the second-most-populous county in the U.S., after Los Angeles County, California. Everyone is connected to agriculture, whether it's through the food we eat, clothes we wear, or fuel in our vehicles. In 1900, 40% of the U.S. population lived on a farm; today, that number is less than 2%. With a population generations removed from the farm, yet still eating, wearing clothes, and being transported, Agriculture in the Classroom is more important now than ever before.

For more information about our AITC Program, visit [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org) or email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org). To request AITC, visit [bit.ly/AITCplease](http://bit.ly/AITCplease) for elementary schools and [bit.ly/AITCpleaseHS](http://bit.ly/AITCpleaseHS) for high schools.

# Planting Seeds



## "Mum's the Word"

Every fall, my mom bought mums to place by our front door. I always loved the autumn colors and small blossoms, whose petals remind me of tiny fireworks.

**Katrina J.E. Milton**

Unfortunately, the mums at our front door never lived for long. They looked pretty for about a month, then browned and died.

I only recently learned the reason why: mums are meant to be planted in the spring, giving their roots time to grow and establish in the soil before the winter. Mums are actually quite delicate, and they usually don't survive a fall planting or small containers. Hardy mums may outlast the season's first frost, but they are often short-lived. They are also very hard to pronounce, the official name for "mum" flowers is Chrysanthemum.

The fragility of mums and the colorful leaves remind us change is beautiful, and it's one reason why I love fall. Pumpkins, apples, the harvest, mums: the things I love the most about fall are all related to agriculture!

Fall is also one of the busiest times of the year for farmers. Farmers not only harvest their crops, such as corn and soybeans, but they also prepare for winter. They plant cover crops, including rye, clover, and radishes, to protect soil over the cold months. Hoop houses, or plastic or fabric covers arched over pipes, wires, or frames, allow farmers to grow year-round and extend their growing season. Farmers rush to harvest and prepare before the onset of frost and snow.

Fall is a great time of the year to celebrate. It's a time to decorate your home with pumpkins and leaves, express gratitude for food, and relax after months of labor. Celebrating fall is a way to embrace change and look forward to new beginnings – and a chance to sip a pumpkin spice latte before winter!

Teachers, if you are interested in learning more about connecting winter holidays, including spices, candles, and Christmas tree farms, to your curriculum, attend our upcoming free virtual PDCH workshop from 4 to 6 p.m. on November 5. Email me at [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org) to register.

I hope you have a festive and fun fall, whether you love being outdoors or cozying up inside.



A photo of mums for sale taken during the 2023 Cook County Farm Bureau Farm Crawl.

Find time to celebrate the season's traditions – and enjoy the mums' bright colors while they last!

For more information about chrysanthemums, read Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom's new Farm Bites about the colorful flower. **Scan the QR code for more:**



*Katrina Milton, Director of Ag Literacy Katrina can be reached at [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org).*



Call the office on October 16th with the word of the day, "PUMPKIN"

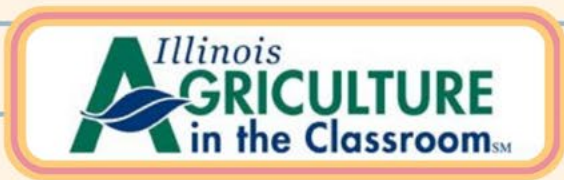
# Book & Projects Grants

Are you an educator interested in applying for Illinois Ag in the Classroom's Book or Project Grants? Attend a one-hour virtual webinar for tips and tricks, ideas, and inspiration in filling out your grant application!

For more information visit: [bit.ly/4oPWDLQ](https://bit.ly/4oPWDLQ)



Grant applications due **October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



## CHECK THE STANDARDS BOXES with Ag in the Classroom

From Language Arts to Science, Agriculture in the Classroom checks the boxes for **ISBE Standards** with all of our free, one-hour presentations

List of Standards [bit.ly/ISBEstandards](https://bit.ly/ISBEstandards)

Contact Us

(708) 354-3276

[aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org)



## CELEBRATE WINTER HOLIDAYS WITH AITC

### Cook County Farm Bureau Virtual Teacher Workshop Earn 2 PDCH

Explore holiday foods, spices, tree farms, candle wax, and poinsettias! This workshop includes a farmer guest speaker, lesson plans, and more.

**Wednesday, November 5th, 2025 4-6PM via Zoom.**

Participation is free, registration required email Jill to reserve your spot: [aitc2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc2@cookcfb.org).

# AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



## Pony Bead Pumpkins Craft

### MATERIALS:

- 4 **orange** pipe cleaners
- 1 **brown** pipe cleaner
- 1 **green** pipe cleaner
- **orange** pony beads

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Take two orange pipe cleaners and make an "X." Twist them around each other in the middle.
2. Attach the other two pipe cleaners in the same manner.
3. String pony beads onto each pipe cleaner. Leave about an inch on the end of each one without beads on it.
4. Bring all of the ends together and twist them to form the pumpkin's stem.
5. Wrap your brown pipe cleaner around the stem and cut off the excess.



6. Bend the pipe cleaners to form a pumpkin shape.
7. Wrap the green pipe cleaner around the base of the stem to make the vines. Cut off the excess.
8. Curl the ends of the green pipe cleaner with a pen or pencil.

### PUMPKIN PUN

What do you get if you eat too much pumpkin pie?  
"Autumn-y ache!"

Craft from: [www.cutesycrafts.com/2013/09/kiddie-crafts-pony-bead-pumpkins.html](http://www.cutesycrafts.com/2013/09/kiddie-crafts-pony-bead-pumpkins.html)

## FUN FACTS

### About Pumpkins

- Each pumpkin contains about **500 seeds**.
- Morton, Illinois is considered the "Pumpkin Capital of the World." Morton is home to Libby's, the producer of **85%** of the world's canned pumpkin.
- Over **1.5 billion pounds** of pumpkins are grown every year in the U.S. About **40%** of the pumpkins produced in the U.S. are grown in Illinois.
- The word "pumpkin" comes from the ancient Greek word **πέπων**, or "pepon," which translates to "large melon." From there, the word evolved into "pompon" in French and "pumpion" in English.
- Pumpkins originated in **Central America**.
- Pumpkins are **90% water** and will float.



## October Word Search

Last Month's Winner:  
**Claudia Siboda**

Canned	M	S	N	I	L	L	I	N	O	I	S	R	U	I	C
Float	P	D	R	Q	E	N	O	V	Z	D	I	W	J	X	Y
Grow	A	E	D	Z	L	T	I	E	S	W	Q	J	I	Z	S
Illinois	W	E	D	V	R	Y	P	K	J	E	D	G	T	M	G
Large	R	S	N	O	P	E	Q	F	P	X	U	M	A	M	W
Libbys	Q	S	M	G	C	V	M	S	V	M	H	E	O	Q	Y
Leaves	O	Q	I	P	R	G	E	S	V	P	U	D	L	V	L
Melon	X	R	W	O	R	O	T	Z	X	V	X	P	F	L	A
Morton	W	F	N	U	I	E	W	D	E	N	N	A	C	A	V
Orange	T	F	W	N	M	O	T	P	H	H	D	X	M	R	R
Pie	O	A	K	D	V	D	R	A	W	S	Q	E	J	G	C
Pounds	J	J	M	S	Y	Y	O	A	W	M	L	H	P	E	Z
Pumpkin	S	E	V	A	E	L	N	Z	N	O	K	C	L	W	E
Seeds	B	X	Y	K	F	K	B	L	N	G	X	M	Q	I	S
Stem	X	Y	G	L	I	B	B	Y	S	C	E	I	P	X	K
Water															

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!**

# Monarch Butterfly Raised and Released by CCFB's Ag in the Classroom Program

This summer, members of Cook County's Ag in the Classroom Program, including Director of Ag Literacy Katrina Milton, AITC Assistant Jill Drover, and AITC Summer Intern Elizabeth "Libby" Heenan, helped raise and release a Monarch butterfly from an egg.

Illinois Farm Bureau has been actively involved in conservation planning efforts surrounding the Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) and other pollinators in Illinois for several years. Since 2020, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has listed the Monarch butterfly as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. Monarch butterflies are the official state insect of Illinois.

On Aug. 5, a Monarch butterfly egg was found on a milkweed plant's leaf in the Cook County Farm Bureau's pollinator garden. A caterpillar hatched from the egg on August 8 and spent the next few weeks eating the leaves of the milkweed plant. Monarch butterfly caterpillars only eat milkweed leaves, which is why growing the plant is crucial to the survival of the species. On August 29, the caterpillar began to hang upside down in a "J" shape, and on the 31st, the caterpillar formed a green chrysalis around its body. The butterfly remained in its chrysalis until September 13, when it emerged and crawled out from its chrysalis, which had turned black.

After a few hours, once the butterfly's wings had dried and it could freely open and close them, it was determined that the butterfly was female. A Monarch butterfly's sex can be determined by looking at their wings.



The female Monarch butterfly that was raised by Cook County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom Program flies over the Farm Bureau's pollinator garden after being released on September 15.

Male Monarch butterflies have small black dots on their hindwings, which are pheromone scent glands, also called androconia. Since the butterfly did not have those black dots, it was female.

After feeding on peach slices and nectar for two days, the Monarch butterfly was released back into

the pollinator garden on September 15.

The butterfly that was released is likely of the generation that will fly to Mexico, where Monarchs overwinter in oyamel fir trees. Her children and grandchildren will return north in the spring.

## At The Farm Gate

by Joanie Stiers



## Volunteers Keep Villages Vibrant

In a display of small-town spirit difficult to match, about 150 volunteers from our community annually collaborate to deliver a service event that uses homemade, wholesome fun to celebrate agriculture. Children eagerly anticipate the arrival of the Ag Day Festival like Christmas morning, while generations of families gather to enjoy an event that radiates small-town charm and the spirit of service. Admission and ride tickets do not exist. All the activities are free, provided by FFA and 4-H families and supporting groups and donors – from the bale climb and beloved farm chore course to the corn maze, apple peeling and barnyard animal tent. Breakfast is complimentary, slices of homemade pie are offered for donation, and lunch sales help offset festival costs.

The vitality of a rural village is found in its people, and volunteerism gives our town its heartbeat. Unlike cities with quick access to resources and paid staff, our community relies on volunteers as firefighters and first responders. The church pianist, youth sports coaches, and the committee that dresses up downtown for the holidays all serve without pay. Lacking a taxpayer-funded park district, volunteers largely manage our three parks. Volunteers plan community events. And it was skilled volunteers who donated their time and equipment to build the only two playgrounds in town: the school and the park.

In fact, a sign at the entrance to town recognized the latter, a two-story barn playground that in recent years won the Governor's Cup, the state's top honor for volunteerism. That sign epitomizes our belief in instilling an ethic of service in the next generation and teaching them self-sufficiency, a quality often romanticized in media yet lived out daily in our rural life.

Volunteers lead the local 4-H club and Girl Scout troop, the FFA Alumni, parent-teacher group and economic development interests. Our community's Christians volunteer to serve 500 turkey dinners every fall to raise funds for the church's mission projects. Philanthropists revived downtown buildings, bringing a food pantry and restaurant to town. And local leaders founded a community fund designed to build endowed wealth to provide ongoing financial support for area projects.

Many of us hold side gigs as part-time volunteers because we desire to make a difference. But, mentoring youth, reviving storefronts, planning community celebrations, fighting fires and filling the sanctuary with hymns on Sunday ensures that small towns can thrive.

**About the author:** Joanie Stiers farms with her brother and parents in West-Central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans and hay, raise beef cattle and operate side businesses related to the family operation.

## Cook County Co-Operator Statement of Ownership: 2025

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**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

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(1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3841 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies)	5,384	3,663
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(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)		
c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))	25,556	14,115
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(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841		
(2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841		
(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail®)	74	90
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		
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\*If you are claiming electronic copies, go to line 16 on page 3. If you are not claiming electronic copies, skip to line 17 on page 3.

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 2 of 4)

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE® (All Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications)**

**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

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I certify that 95% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

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 Signature: *Robert A. Rohrer*  
 Title:   
 Date: 9-4-2025

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 3 of 4) PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy on www.usps.com

# Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure



**Bona Heinsohn**

## Cook County Farm Bureau's Efforts in Environmental Stewardship

For over five years, Cook County Farm Bureau has been engaged in projects and conversations related to environmental stewardship. Most notably, these projects have been related to pollinator habitat enhancement and nutrient loss reduction.

### Pollinator Habitat Enhancement Efforts

For the past four years, Cook County Farm Bureau® has been engaged in efforts to preserve, protect, and expand pollinator habitat. In 2021, Farm Bureau installed a community-facing pollinator garden in Countryside. The garden features purple coneflower, swamp milkweed, cosmos, butterfly weed, and zinnia.

In addition to the creation of a pollinator garden at the Farm Bureau office, Cook CFB has been working in partnership with Lee County Farm Bureau, Illinois Farm Bureau, and Niles Township to convert wasted green space owned by Niles Township into a pollinator rain garden. This garden will increase pollinator habitat in northern Cook County.

This project is the result of relationships built through Farm Bureau's Adopt-a-Legislator® program. The Adopt-a-Legislator program matches urban legislators with downstate county

Farm Bureaus in an effort to build relationships and expand individuals' knowledge. State Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz, a Cook County legislator who is "adopted" by Lee CFB and brought the project forward.

Cook CFB has increased public awareness of pollinators and their importance to agriculture through education initiatives. These initiatives illustrate how Illinois farmers support and protect pollinators.

- Low-cost pollinator seeds to Farm Bureau members.
- Education and promotion events held in partnership with Lincoln Park Zoo and Brookfield Zoo.
- Education and promotion of farmers' contributions to pollinator habitats through social media and Farm Bureau's member-only publication, Co-Operator.

In 2026, Cook CFB plans to partner with Global Gardens Chicago (GGC) to install pollinator education signs near a new pollinator space. The Chicago Park District has already purchased and planted trees and has budgeted for pollinator plants. In addition to the signs, the garden and partners will host a pollinator community event.

### Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy

Mississippi River Basin states have received guidance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency since the mid-2000s to develop state-led plans to reduce nutrient loads discharged into rivers and ultimately the Mississippi River. Based

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

on federal guidance, Illinois launched a statewide Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, which was developed by numerous partners, including state agencies, extension services, and a multi-stakeholder group.

Illinois Farm Bureau developed the Nutrient Stewardship Grant Program, which Cook CFB has utilized to develop locally led projects to support the reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus loss. These initiatives illustrate avenues farmers are taking to investigate nutrient reuse and to share knowledge and best practices.

- Research by the Margenot group at the University of Illinois has established that struvite – a slow-release, recycled fertilizer – is a viable phosphorus source for specialty crops, including vegetables. Struvite can meet crop needs while offering a 'double dipping' of phosphorus loss reductions. This research utilizes non-wastewater derived struvite.
- To foster further collaboration and the sharing of knowledge, Farm Bureau and partners hosted Field Days to discuss nutrient loss reduction research results, practical nutrient management strategies, and plasticulture practices in vegetable production. Attendees were able to connect with experts, explore on-farm research, and see sustainable practices in action.

In 2026, Cook CFB will continue these efforts. Members interested in learning more about Farm Bureau's environmental stewardship efforts are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

## Farm Bureau Leaders Forward Resolutions to State Delegates

Members of the Resolutions Committee forwarded the following resolutions to Illinois Farm Bureau® delegates. The resolutions submitted by Cook County Farm Bureau include:

### Disposal of Waste

At this time, there are no federal standards that define or regulate bioplastics, biodegradable, or compostable products. U.S. manufacturers can choose to follow voluntary industry standards developed by the American Standards Testing Materials (ASTM) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), but not all do. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has developed a voluntary standard certifying the content of biobased products called BioPreferred. Still, manufacturers are not required to verify or disclose the amount of plant-based materials contained in their products.

The lack of federal standards for defining and regulating bioplastics not only encourages greenwashing but also creates significant waste management challenges.

Cook CFB's resolution provides that Farm Bureau supports research into and the development of federal standards for bioplastics, biodegradable, and compostable materials.

### Involvement of Members in Farm Bureau

Younger volunteers and members are critical to the success of Farm Bureau going forward. In 2024, Cook CFB approved "Future Forward" a plan designed to engage younger agricultural enthusiasts like Foundation scholarship recipients, Young Leaders, and new members in volunteer and leadership opportunities within the Farm Bureau. In an effort to encourage other county farm bureaus to create similar paths for engagement, Cook CFB submitted a resolution supporting young member engagement.

The resolution supports county farm bureaus creating a pathway to engage younger members in county activities, volunteer opportunities, and leadership.

Members are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org) with any questions or comments regarding the resolutions.



## Congressman Schneider Visits with Constituents

Congressman Brad Scheidier visited with farmers from Cook, Lake, and McHenry County Farm Bureaus during a recent visit to a Lake County farm. Farmers discussed the importance of a Farm Bill, trade, and market certainty during the visit. Cook County Farm Bureau leader Blake Lanphier and staff Bona Heinsohn attended the meeting.



## Cook County Leaders Discuss the Importance of Young People in Agriculture with Congressman

Blake Lanphier, Young Leader Committee Chair and member of the Board of Directors, discusses the importance of engaging and involving young people in agriculture during a recent visit with Congressman Brad Schneider (pictured right). As the farming community continues to age, it is imperative to provide avenues into agriculture and opportunities for mentorship to those individuals interested in pursuing agricultural opportunities. Cook County Farm Bureau continues to engage agriculturalists ages 18-35 through the Young Leader Committee, which is open to anyone with an interest in agriculture. To learn more, contact Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

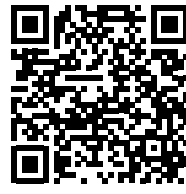


## Cook County Legislator Visits with Adopted and Home CFBs

Representative Nabeela Syed, Palatine, hosted Cook and Henry County Farm Bureaus for a tour of her northwest legislative district. Farm Bureau members visited with Citizens for Conservation before touring Harper College. Attendees are pictured at the Flint Creek Savannah Preserve.



# Cook CFB Foundation Annual Report Available



The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation 2024-2025 Annual Report is now available on our website. Please visit this link to view or scan the QR code:

<https://cookcfb.org/foundation-/about-the-foundation>

## Future Continued from Page 1

• **For those involved in Farming/Agriculture:** The Voting Member Community focuses on policy development, issue resolution, lobbying and problem solving for existing and future farmer members, landowners, specialty growers, and urban/innovative producers.

These intentional efforts to serve Cook County Farm Bureau members in a more complete, immersive way will complement the organization's consistent focus on serving farmers, urban growers, greenhouse producers, specialty crop growers, landowners, and those seeking to successfully enter the world of agriculture.

The organization continues its Future Forward initiative that was approved in 2024 and provides a leadership pathway and growth plan for young agriculturalists and members. The plan is a strategy to recruit, train, engage, and develop younger individuals with an interest in farming and agriculture for enhanced industry involvement in the future.

**Members who wish to participate in or have questions about these Communities/groups or other aspects of the Cook County Farm Bureau can call 708-354-3276 or email [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org).**

## Cook County Releases Preliminary Budget Estimates

The projected gap for fiscal year 2026 across Cook County's General and Health Enterprise Funds is expected to be \$211.4 million. This represents a decrease from last year's \$218.2 million gap.

For the fiscal year 2025 year-end, Cook County projects positive net results of \$145.1 million in the General Fund. Factors contributing to this include:

- National trends of longer hiring timeframes
- Increasing payroll expense
- Savings while higher-than-anticipated sales tax revenue from closing an out-of-state sales tax loophole

In fiscal year 2026, the General Fund is expected to have a budget gap of \$102.6 million. Revenues are expected to increase minimally by \$78.6 million driven primarily by projected increases in Sales and Personal Property Replacement Tax revenues. Expenses are forecasted to increase by \$181.2 million due to scheduled increases in personnel

costs and rising health care costs.

Even though year-end revenues are expected to be \$61.8 million higher than budgeted, Cook County's hospital system projects a \$15.0 million gap for the fiscal year 2025 year-end. The Health Enterprise Fund is expected to have a budget gap of \$108.8 million.

Later in October, President Toni Preckwinkle will release her proposed Executive Budget Recommendation. Throughout the fall, the Finance Committee will review the budget and hear from various county officials concerning their offices. The public will also have the opportunity to provide comments during several public hearings. Budget approval will occur prior to December 1.

Cook County Farm Bureau will monitor the budget and provide comments throughout the process. Members with questions or ideas are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

## Fall Family Fun

**CCFB has discounted tickets to these fall fun events!**



**CCFB Price \$29.99**

Savings of \$9.00

Open Saturdays & Sundays thru October 26th

Fall Festival includes: Amusement Park & Petting Zoo, Pumpkin Patches, Fall-Only Attractions and Fall Themed Menus

## ADVENTURELAND



**HALLOWEEN LIKE YOU'VE NEVER SEEN!**

**ENJOY THIS EXCLUSIVE OFFER**

Experience our annual Phantom Fall Fest event. Thrill all day on your favorite rides, then fright all night with even more horror around every corner. Hang on to your friends through more fog, more freaks, more FX – with five haunted houses.



## Save on tickets to Six Flags Fright Fest

Purchase tickets online through the Member Benefits Platform/Abenity App.

Members can save on E-Tickets to Six Flags Parks Nationwide. Prices vary by date.

## Be sure to also visit our Member Businesses for Fall Fun Events!



### Big John's Farm Market & Greenhouse

7705 W 159th Ave, Lowell IN 46356 | 219-690-1503  
Pumpkin Patch & Fall Fun Open Daily! Hayrides, giant slide, corn maze, farm animals & more! Plus fresh donuts made daily and the season's best produce.



### Goebbert's Farm & Garden Center

40 W. Higgins Rd South Barrington | 847-428-6727  
Fall Festival runs through October 31st. Don't miss our famous Fall Festival, packed with exciting Attractions that the whole family will love: Apple Cider, Candy Apples, Pies & Donuts, Fall Produce, General Store, Fall Festival Attractions.



**The Children's Farm** 12700 Southwest Highway, Palos Park | 708-361-3650  
Pumpkin Playland Day runs through October 26th, Friday & Saturday, 10a-4p

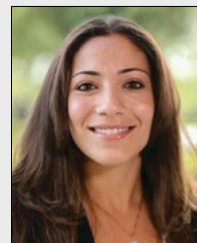


### Historic Wagner Farm

1510 Wagner Rd Glenview | 847-657-1506  
Fall Sales & Autumn Roasts & Rides – Oct. 10 & 17  
Time Slots: 5:15 p.m. • 5:45 p.m. • 6:15 p.m. • 6:45 p.m.  
Roast marshmallows, build the perfect s'more and then hop aboard a tractor-drawn wagon for a scenic ride through the pasture. Fee: \$12 per person. Children 2 & under are free. Pick out your perfect pumpkin and shop cornstalks, gourds, straw bales and other fall favorites.

## 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.



### NADIA ABUEID

has been named Agent of the Month for September 2025. Nadia's office is located at 12130 S. Harlem Ave Unit A, Palos Heights, IL. Her phone number is 708-995-0233. Nadia has been a Financial Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since December 2019. **Orland Park Agency, Sharon Stemke, District Leader**



### MARGARET JURA

has been named Agent of the Month for September 2025. Margaret's office is located at 6136 N Milwaukee Ave, Suite F, Chicago, IL. Her phone number is 773-631-9107. Margaret has been an agent with COUNTRY® Financial since January 2008. **Chicago North Agency, Vicki Nygren, District Leader**



### TINO RAMIREZ

has been named Agent of the Month for September 2025. Tino's office is located at 830 E. Higgins Rd Ste 111A, Schaumburg, IL. His phone number is 847-891-3937. Tino has been a Financial Representative with COUNTRY® Financial since September 2017. **Chicago Northwest Agency, Matt Huonder, 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.*

**Have questions? Call us at 708-354-3276 or visit us online at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)**

## 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.

Dining/Kitchen table 61" long x 41" wide. Dark oak. Comes with 2 leaves, 6 chairs with pads. \$100. Picture available online. **Call Chet 815-838-4764** Lockport.

End table medium oak 27" long x 21" wide x 22" high. Comes with lamp 34" high with gold color base that has 22" circle base \$50. Picture available online. **Call Chet 815-838-4764** Lockport

Entertainment center 76" high x 8' wide x 18 1/2" deep. Medium oak. Has storage space on each side with glass doors. \$100. Good condition. Picture available online. **Call Chet 815-838-4764** Lockport

Typewriters: Royal antique \$50, Royal electric \$30, Royal manual \$30, Smith Corona electric \$30. **Call Chet 815-838-4764** Lockport

2006 Chrysler 300, 6 cyl 4 door. 122,000 miles. Runs good, 20+ MPG. Needs ball joints. \$2,500 OBO. **Call Dave 708-932-2112.**

### WANTED

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.**

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.**

Wanted FOLD UP TABLES. **Call James 708-361-8230.**



## 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.

<p><b>This month</b> "P"</p>	<p><b>POPPY SEEDS</b></p> 
<p>Seeds from other types of poppy plants are not usually eaten but grown mostly for their beautiful flowers.</p>	<p><b>Poppy seeds are tiny, kidney-shaped seeds that come from the opium poppy plant.</b></p>
<p>Poppy seeds are often used as bird seed. When used for birds, they are usually called maw seeds.</p>	<p>They are often used whole or ground up in many foods and even pressed to get poppyseed oil.</p>
	<p><b>POPPY SEEDS CAN BE GROUND TO MAKE A SMOOTH, LESS OILY PASTE USED AS A FILLING IN PASTRIES.</b></p>
<p>Whole poppy seeds are often used as a spice or a decoration on many baked goods like poppyseed muffins, rusk, bagels (like the Montreal-style bagel), bialys, and cakes.</p>	<p><b>It takes about 3,300 poppy seeds to weigh just one gram!</b></p> 
<p><b>POPPY SEEDS ARE MADE UP OF 6% WATER, 28% CARBOHYDRATES, 42% FAT, AND 21% PROTEIN.</b></p> 	<p>Poppy seeds can also be used like sesame seeds and are sometimes added to hamburger and hot dog buns.</p>

## This Month in Cook County Agriculture

### Homewood FALL Fest:

October 11, 2025, 11:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Martin Avenue & Kroner Road

Homewood's favorite fall time festival features live entertainment, craft vendors, a pumpkin patch, children's crafts, kid-friendly activities, and scrumptious cuisine prepared by local eateries.

- Homewood's Chili Cook-Off will return this year! Bring on your best chili recipe. There will be a judging panel and people's choice.

Full Fest details at: <https://www.village.homewood.il.us/community/events/fall-fest>

### Field Days Hosted by: U of I Extension LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS AND SMALL FARMS

Cook County Unit on October 14: We Sow We Grow, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (Navigating FSA & NRCS Programs), West Pullman, Chicago. Registration and details: <https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2025-09-16-nrcs-field-day-talking-farm> Ted's Greenhouse and Foliage Guy present Foliage Fest - The Epic Plant Event.

*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.*

**Open House Chicago:** October 18 & 19, 2025 featuring Ingersoll-Blackweker House in Chicago's historic Beverly/Morgan Park neighborhood is home to a small farm.

This member location will feature two special events:

- Tips for Easy Canning and Pickling Question and Answer Session from an Amateur Canner Monica Palmer: Saturday, Oct. 18 3:00-3:45 p.m. Come learn quick tips for making canning and pickling chores easier!
- Jewelry and Fine Housewares Through the Ages: Sunday, October 19, 2-2:45 p.m.

Full details at: <https://www.architecture.org/open-house-chicago>

### Cook DuPage Beekeepers Association monthly meeting & Member Picnic

is open to all interested in beekeeping and bees. Join us at our next meeting on Saturday, October 18, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church at 300 Ardmore Avenue, Villa Park. The church has a parking lot for your convenience. We hope to see you there, but if you can't make it, you can still join virtually. We'll have giveaways for those who attend in person.

# Soil Testing Kits Available From Cook County Farm Bureau

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, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



Source: [https://kids.kiddle.co/Poppy\\_seed](https://kids.kiddle.co/Poppy_seed)

## 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)



### 25th Giant Pumpkin, Dessert, Carving, Local Honey Contest – Register Now!

Giant pumpkin growers, bakers, carvers, and beekeepers, this is the contest for you! Adult and youth (under 16 yrs) divisions. The contest is free for members and registration is required. Cash prizes are awarded in all categories.

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

**DATE:** Saturday, October 4, 2025

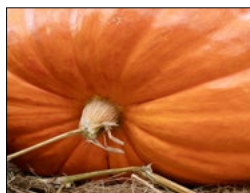
**TIME:** 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. *(9 a.m. registration/check-in)*

**REGISTRATION:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276, online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org). Registration form and full program details at: <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/upcoming-events>.

**ENTRY FEE:** Free for Members, Non-members may enter by joining CCFB.

**RULES:** Contest open to any CCFB member & dependents.

**Check in by 9:15 a.m. to be considered; must be present to win.**



### Cheese and Halloween Candy Pairing

Presented by Meredith Meder, ACS CCP

Get in the spirit of Halloween when we pair up classic trick-or-treat candy with cheese. From Kit Kats to candy corn, there's a pairing for everyone!



**LOCATION:** Cook CFB, 6438 Joliet Rd. Countryside, Lower Level Conference Room

**DATE:** Tuesday, October 21, 2025 **TIME:** 7:00-8:30 p.m.

**REGISTRATION:** Registration is required in advance by calling the FB at 708-354-3276

**FEE:** \$18 for CCFB members, \$20 for non-members

### 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, with Q&A.



**LOCATION:** Zoom; link will be emailed the Friday prior **TIME:** 4:00-4:30 p.m. with Q & A

**DATES:** Monday, November 10th & December 15th 2025

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

### Small Business Owner Webinar featuring the IAA Credit Union – 2 times available!

Cook Co. members are eligible for IAACU Membership. Every day, the IAACU strive to find the best financial solutions for each of their members. IAACU experts will discuss a range of products and services to support small and medium-sized business owners, including - COUNTRY agents – Landscapers - Construction and excavating contractors - Tradespeople (e.g., plumbers, electricians, HVAC specialists)- Auto service providers (body work, repair, maintenance, tires) - Professional offices and services (attorneys, accountants, chiropractors, MDs, dentists) - Owner-occupied commercial real estate (occupying more than 50% of the space) and commercial farmers.



**LOCATION:** Webinar Zoom link will be emailed the day prior

**DATE:** Thursday, November 13, 2025

**TIMES:** 12:00-12:30 p.m. lunch & learn OR 5:00-5:30 pm webinar

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

### Holiday Wreath & Bow Making at CCFB

#### Register Now!

Join us at the CCFB and create a real holiday wreath and bow for your home this coming season. Patrick Horcher, owner of Horchers Flower Shop & Garden Center, will lead us in creating your own creation for home. Refreshments and merriment included!



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

**DATE:** Tuesday, November 18, 2025 **TIME:** 6:00-7:30 p.m.

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

**FEE:** \$25 for CCFB members, \$30 for non-members

## CCFB Photo Contest: FALL PHOTOS

Get your camera and capture moments by showcasing your best photos depicting the theme of Agriculture in the Fall. Send in your photos – selfies, pictures of others, landscape, etc.

The deadline for Fall photos is **October 15.**

The winning photos will be posted in the November *Co-Operator*.

#### Example Categories for Fall:

Pumpkin Picking, Apple Picking, Hayrides, 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.*

## Master Gardener Resource Center Continues to Assist Members During the Fall Season

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. Since April 15, the master gardeners have been responding to answer questions from members and the general public related to gardening and horticulture. This dedicated group will continue to respond to questions through mid-November of 2025.

The master gardeners will be accessible by emailing [mastergardener@cookcfb.org](mailto:mastergardener@cookcfb.org) or by contacting 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.

