



COOK COUNTY GO-OPERATOR

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

Mark Your Calendar



June

23 Annual Pollinator Event at Lincoln Park Zoo

27 Niles Township Pollinator Garden Grand Opening

July

15 DIY Summer Barn Quilt Workshop **PG 12**

15 Photo Contest Deadline **PG 10**

31 Honey Bee Gardens Farm Event **PG 12**

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

Question of the Month ?

Which US Highway that runs right by the Farm Bureau's front door is celebrating its 100-year anniversary this summer?

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

May Winner: Debra McCauley

Question: What is the name of the new Cook County Farm Bureau staff member who focuses on Governmental Affairs and Engagement for the organization?

Answer: Mary Ann Martinez

Word of the Month



Because we enjoy talking with our members, we are changing things up a little bit. Somewhere in each edition of the *Co-Operator* there will be a Word of the Month. We promise it won't be too hard to find!

Call in any **Tuesday** during the month of **June** with the Word of the Month and you will be entered to win that month's prize. We look forward to your call. Good luck!

May Winner: Mari Kay Benes

May word was *Rhubarb* found on Page 4.

Local Food Pantry Garden Flourishes



Schaumburg Food Pantry Garden

is a community garden serving Hanover Park and Schaumburg Food Pantries. Located on a church lot in Schaumburg, the garden is a volunteer-ran food production garden, averaging 3,000 lbs of food production in the last 2 years. The garden is also home to educational programs to local residents, is a designated local Monarch Waystation pollinator garden, and is home to a large compost system. Funds received from the Urban Garden Grant will be used for fruit trees, potato seeds, seedlings, plant starters, onion sets, fertilizer, and supplies. **For more garden photos, go to Page 9.**

Pollinator Event Coming Soon at Lincoln Park Zoo

JUNE 23, 10 AM – 1 PM

CCFB Members who visit our event booth between 10 AM – 1 PM will receive a **SPECIAL GIFT!**

Join the Cook County Farm Bureau at the Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago to celebrate Pollinator Week on Tuesday, June 23, 2026. The all-ages event takes place 10 a.m.- 1 p.m. at the zoo, offering pollinator themed activities, crafts, information, and free giveaways. Partners joining us at the zoo include Cook DuPage Beekeepers Association, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Chicago, North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District, Ask a Farmer: Zeldenrust Farms, Global Gardens, and Cook County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom. The event is free. We hope to see you there!



Why Retain Your Associate or Voting Membership?

The Cook County Farm Bureau is an amazing value. At just \$20 annually for Associate Members and only \$45 for Voting Members, is it really a difficult decision?

Check out some of our value propositions for Members.

- “We **Even** Answer the Phone”. Call the office and “we actually answer the phone.” Yes, we are real people! Go ahead – try us!
- There is an App for that (saving members big bucks): the Farm Bureau Membership Benefit Hub App (formerly Abenity App).
- Your membership gives you access to the IAA Credit Union for great services, great service, and great member benefits. Like a small-town bank but better and your mobile phone is a branch office!

Need more reasons WHY to renew your membership?

- Where else will you hear/read about the latest in food and farm news?
- Where else will you receive access

to the great experiences and events that have made us famous?

- Ag Literacy for you and your family. We bring it every day!
- ILFB Partners magazine, a great benefit on farming, facts, and travel across the state
- But wait, there's more! Check out www.cookcfb.org.

And do you really have the time and energy to shift through and act on layers of legislation and political actions in Washington, Springfield, and Cook County for better farm and food policy?

The value proposition remains huge! **We like to say that the membership is dirt cheap, the value is not.**

If you are interested in renewing today: call 708-354-FARM (3276); use the QR code; or online at: <https://www.myifb.org> to pay using your FB member number (found on front page by your address). If you recently renewed, we sincerely thank you for your support!



Who Says There Is No Agriculture Located in Cook County?

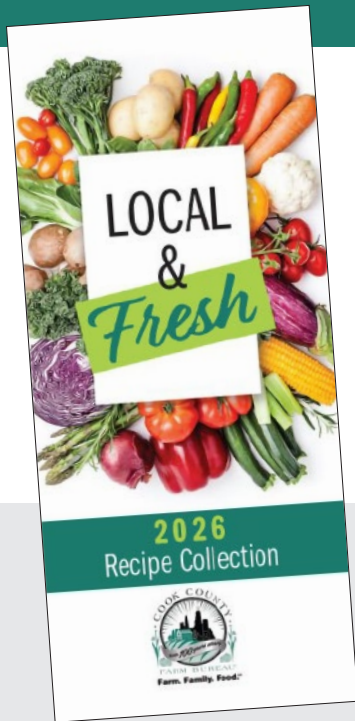


CHECK OUT THE DATA & INFO AT:

<https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/resources/ag-resources/profile/growing-cook-county-where-agriculture-meets-innovation-and-impact>

And check out the great video of area farmers in action in May through our Social Media channel...

2026 Recipe Collection is Here



This year's booklet is full of great recipes calling for the season's best of local produce. Be sure to visit a Farm Bureau member Ag location and pick up the freshest, finest local produce area farmers have to offer to make these great recipes.

To receive a copy of the **2026 Recipe Collection** booklet, please email your contact info to ccfb@cookcfb.org, call the CCFB at 708-354-3276, or visit a participating member farmstand or Ag business this spring, summer, or fall.

HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED MEMBERS IN MAY

- ▶ **Created a "Discover Local" guide featuring local greenhouses, garden centers, farms, etc. for members to find all of their outdoor needs this spring and summer.**
- ▶ **Connected with members and nonmembers by partnering with Green Thumb in a Box, to offer a Grow Fresh Anywhere Container Vegetable Gardening Workshop in Chicago's Washington Park community.**
- ▶ **Assisted homeowners with gardening questions via the Master Gardener Help Desk email at the Farm Bureau.**



Discounts to Tailgate N' Tallboys

IFB is partnering with COUNTRY to celebrate agriculture at the Home | Tailgate N' Tallboys music festival, taking place June 18–21 at the Interstate Center in Bloomington. This year's lineup features Zach Top, Treaty Oak Revival, Jessie Murph, The Red Clay Strays, and many other artists.

Members can buy discounted tickets by entering the discount code COUNTRY at checkout when purchasing tickets (not valid on previously purchased tickets).

<https://tailgatentallboys.com/#tickets>

The partnership provides an opportunity to celebrate our shared history, maintain a visible and collaborative presence at a community event, and engage with current and prospective members.

Gratitude Journal

Each month, there are people that go out of their way to lend a hand to help with our cause in many ways, both big and small. We appreciate it greatly!

The Cook County Farm Bureau thanks...

- The hundreds of members who participated in the Cook County Farm Bureau Member Appreciation Week held April 20-24. We appreciate the opportunity to serve you.
- Board member Gerry Kopping for his role in the Ask a Farmer segment during Member Appreciation Week.
- Member Julie Michaels for sending us such a nice note.
- New member David Nova and his interest in the Rural Illinois Medical Student Assistance Program offered through the Illinois Farm Bureau.
- Young Leaders members Blake Lanphier, Jennifer Miller, and Carmen Trotta for their willingness to lead the Team and for all Young Leaders for their continued involvement and growth.
- Various farm markets, greenhouses and stands throughout Cook County for being open for our staff site visits this spring. It is great to connect with all our farmer members!

Welcome All Members!

You receive the *Co-Operator* because you are a Cook County Farm Bureau member. If you are a farm operator, owner, or urban producer, you benefit from a local, state, and national organization committed to agriculture and your way of life.

If you work in the field of agriculture, your membership is helping to support the various areas of agriculture and agribusiness that start at the farm and end at the table.

If you do not have direct ties to farming, your membership helps promote local farms and farming, encourages wise use of our limited natural resources, and helps preserve farmland and our agricultural heritage.

All members have access to 302,000 membership benefits, information, and helpful tools that enhance your membership value and experience.

Thank you for your membership!

Co-Operator

Published Monthly

Cook County Farm Bureau

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Downwind

by **BOB ROHRER, CCFB MANAGER**



“Get Your Kicks”

My favorite rendition of “Get your Kicks on Route 66” came from Natalie Cole’s *Unforgettable* Album. The song, of course, has been recorded by many artists from the original Bobby Troup to Nat King Cole and Bing Crosby to the Rolling Stones. (Do you have the Route 66 songs stuck repeating in your head now?)

Did you know that U.S. Highway 66 is celebrating its **100-year anniversary this summer?**

Did you also know that the Cook County Farm Bureau building in Countryside is located along historic Route 66 (also known in the area as Joliet Road)? With that in mind, we put up some Route 66 posters in the hallway of the Farm Bureau building that connect the famous road right outside our front door with Illinois Agriculture.

When I was reading Joanie

Steirs’ column this month about U. S. Route 66 and some of her childhood vacation memories, it led me down the wormhole of memories around my childhood trips on Illinois rural highways.

Growing up about 80 miles to the west of the famous highway, the Rohrer versions of the family trucksters (Grand Torino, Ford LTD, pickup trucks, and later the

Oldsmobile Delta 88) did not cruise Rt. 66 frequently. However, the trips we took on similar highways provided similar views, landscapes, and Americana. Farms. Small towns. Vintage roadside attractions.

Dad, the Farmer, was a tough one to nail down for a vacation. The mantra was work. work. work. until we reached the Sunday day of rest. That philosophy was ingrained by his farmer parents. So...The majority of my so called “vacations” in childhood were road trips to spend holidays or summer break time at my grandparents’ farms. Dad and Mom had a well-deserved vacation from me and my siblings.

We would jump into the family truckster, not buckle up, and travel Illinois Highway Route 97 to my Grandpa and Grandma Rohrer’s farm. As an alternative vacation, we would take a road trip to my Grandma Nott’s farm down Illinois Route 78 another 20 miles further south.

These cleverly called vacations were actually disguised work. work. work. at a new location. Looking back, both sets of grandparents gave me bonus farm work and life experiences that were so valuable and can never be duplicated.

Those car rides on the life highways of Illinois were full of parental wisdom and guidance such as “stop picking on your brothers” and “stop kicking your sister’s seat”. Mom attempted to distract us by having us play the letter game: searching for letters chronologically A to Z

on road signs, billboards, and businesses. We knew that we had to get the letter Q by the time we hit the town Maquon or else there would be no Qs to be found the rest of the trip. Through the moving car windows, we saw farms, small towns, and rural America.

One time, while driving, we kept hearing the muffled sound of the cat meowing. Dad finally stopped the car to open the hood and the meowing grew louder. One of our barn cats had decided to take a ride with us under the hood next to the engine. No amount of coaxing could cause that cat to come out. Finally, Dad said, “fine” in a way that wasn’t fine and we continued driving on our way to grandma’s farm. That trip cured that cat from joyriding, being permanently relocated to my grandmother’s house.

Many times, on a Sunday afternoon, Dad (the Farmer) and Mom piled all us kids into the truckster and we would just go for a drive (mini-vacation?). I didn’t think it was strange at the time but now I know, we just wasted gas to drive around the country to look at and comment on other farmers’ crops, buildings, livestock, and pastures in the area. Entertainment was pretty simple back in the day.

When created 100 plus years ago, American highways like Route 66 were used to transport people to their destinations quickly. Those same non-interstate highways now are viewed more as “Life in the slow lane” and “Roads less traveled”. My heart misses that type of traveling.

Happy 100th birthday, U.S. Route 66!



Soil Testing Kits Available This Spring

ADDITIONAL SAVINGS FOR MEMBERS!

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.**

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:

Soil Test Kit:
1 sample: \$30
2 sample kit: \$40
3 sample kit: \$60

Soil plus Lead Test Kit: \$58
1 sample Lead Only Test Kit: \$47

**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>.*

**Additional member-only savings – ask us how!*

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.

Soil kits are available for purchase at the Cook County Farm Bureau by calling 708-354-3276, using a credit card at no additional charge; cash or check accepted when purchasing from the office, Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Recipe of the Month

Balsamic ROASTED BEETS

University of IL Extension



DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425°. Wash hands with soap and warm water. Spray a large baking sheet with cooking oil. Set aside. Wash and peel beets. Cut into 1-in cubes. Toss beets with 1 T olive oil and 1/2 t salt. Spread beets evenly onto a baking dish. Bake beets for 15-20 minutes.

While beets are baking, combine in a small bowl balsamic vinegar and honey. Remove beets from the oven. Stir. Then bake for an additional 10 minutes, or until beets feel soft to the touch.

Then remove beets from the oven and add the honey/vinegar mixture to the beets. Stir until all the beets are evenly coated. Return beets to the oven for the

INGREDIENTS

- 3 beets medium peeled & diced (about 3 c)
- 1 T balsamic vinegar
- 1 T olive oil
- 1 T honey or pure maple syrup
- 1/2 t salt

final 10 minutes baking period, stirring after 5 minutes. Roast until the balsamic/honey mixture coats the beets and is no longer runny.

Remove from the oven and serve warm or store and serve with your favorite salads.



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Highlights from Cook CFB Member Appreciation Week



We kicked off Member Appreciation Week with our Horticulture Event at the Farm Bureau. Nancy Kreith, Horticulture Educator from the University of Illinois Extension showed our members & guests ways to garden in small spaces. Dr. Leilah Seigel, Community Health Extension Educator, showed our guests how to use plants for healing.



We had some CCFB members drop by to have "Coffee with Bob". Board Vice-President, Gerry Kopping also joined in.



On April 27, we hosted a Natural Soap Making class. Soapy Roads of Lombard helped our attendees with making their own melt & pour soap bars. Attendees got to choose their favorite scents, colors, and molds.



We held an Earth Day Party! This event featured fun hands-on activities and participants learned about seed germination, vermicomposting, and pollination.



We held our first ever BINGO event on Thursday, April 23! We gave away prizes and everyone had a great time along with the staff! We hope to have another BINGO event in the near future and we will keep our members posted.

CCFB Photo Contest

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

The deadline for seasonal photos is **July 15**. The winning photos will be posted in the August *Co-Operator*.

Example Categories:

Planting Vegetables, Planting Flowers, Farmers' Markets, Horseback Riding, and More!

Prizes: There will be 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.

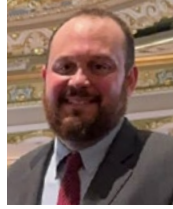
The contest is open to all members in good standing.

Go to <https://bit.ly/4etwEqw> 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.

Lanphier Re-Elected as Chair of the Young Leaders Team

At the conclusion of the April meeting of the Young Leaders Team, the following leadership elections took place.

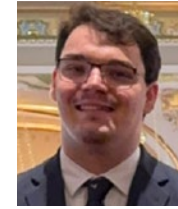


Blake Lanphier retains the Chair responsibilities, a position he has held since 2022. Blake serves as the farm manager of Wagner Farm in Glenview. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in animal sciences from Iowa State University and is pursuing his masters in Integrated Resource Management. Blake is a 2020 graduate of the two-year agricultural educational leadership experience through the Illinois Ag Leadership Program. He provides support and program assistance for the Glenview 4-H club which is one of the largest in Cook County. Blake, his wife, and their daughter also have a fresh cut flower business. Blake was named to the Cook County Farm Bureau board of directors in 2024. He is a past IFB Discussion Meet participant and state Excellence in Agriculture award runner-up. Blake is a Voting member of the CCFB.



Jennifer Miller was elected to the open position of Vice-Chair of the Team. Miller is wrapping up her Doctor of Medicine Dentistry Degree from Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville. She has helped lead the Young Leaders in developing the hygiene drive for Food Checkout Day to benefit area food pantries and competed in the Illinois Farm Bureau Discussion Meet. She has been a scholarship recipient from the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation as she seeks to serve dental needs in rural communities. Miller began her involvement in Cook County Farm Bureau early in her youth, attending the giant pumpkin contest

with her father and entering pumpkins as a part of the youth division. Her family participated in agriculture with the sizable garden within her subdivision.



Carmen Trotta was elected to the position of Secretary/Recorder, replacing Doug Yunker. Trotta is an agricultural teacher, most recently at Peotone High school and is an FFA advisor. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He majored in Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications with a minor in Agribusiness Management. He attended the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences. He has been involved in the Young Leaders hygiene drive and leadership pipeline efforts.

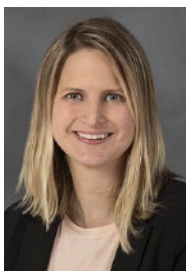


Young leader, **Doug Yunker**, served as the Secretary/Recorder for the group since 2022 after volunteering to step up in that role. Doug is nearing the age 35 threshold for the group and did not seek re-election. Doug and his family are a part of Yunker Farms, a 4th generation family farm in Northeastern Illinois. Yunker Farms grows conventional and organic corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay. Doug previously served as Chairman of the Young Leaders and is one of the original members of the Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leaders group that began in 2012.

Cook County Farm Bureau Members aged 18-35 who may be interested in participating in the Young Leaders Team or activities are encouraged to contact Blake Lanphier, CCFB Young Leaders Team Chair, lanphierisualum@gmail.com or Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager, brohrer@cookcfb.org.



Celebrate Homeownership Month: Upgrades That Add Value



Jennifer Killian

June is National Homeownership Month, making it a great time to think about upgrades that help you enjoy your space now while adding value over time.

If you're planning improvements, it helps to focus first on projects with the strongest resale potential, then consider other updates that can still improve appeal and function. Here's a practical look at which home improvement projects tend to offer the best return.

Update Your Kitchen

Updating your kitchen remains one of the smartest interior improvements you can make, and it does not require a full gut renovation. Smaller upgrades such as refreshed cabinets, new countertops, updated fixtures, and improved storage can make a noticeable difference. Major kitchen remodels typically recoup about 38% to 50% of their cost, while minor remodels can return as much as 96%.

Update The Flooring

Flooring is another upgrade buyers notice right away. If your home already has hardwood, refinishing it can be a cost-effective way to refresh the look of the space. For homeowners

considering new flooring, the current market estimates suggest hardwood or similar premium flooring projects often cost about \$8,000 to \$15,000 and can add roughly \$5,600 to \$10,500 in resale value, depending on the home and market. The key is choosing durable, timeless finishes that help the home feel clean, updated, and move-in ready.

Replace Doors

Replacing exterior doors is a simple way to improve curb appeal and boost resale value. Nationally, a steel entry door replacement recoups about 216% of its cost, while a garage door replacement can return around 268%. If your doors or windows look dated or worn, replacing them can also improve energy efficiency, comfort, and the impression that your home is well maintained. As with any project, set a realistic budget and prioritize the upgrades that best match your timeline and goals.

Interior Paint

A fresh coat of interior paint is one of the most affordable ways to improve a home's appearance and can deliver an estimated 107% return. To get the best results, the work needs to be done cleanly and professionally, which may make hiring a painter worthwhile.

If you prefer to do it yourself, a careful paint job can still save money and add value. Clean wall preparation, well-

chosen colors, and crisp edging all help maximize the return.

Bathroom Remodel

Bathroom updates can also pay off, especially when the space looks dated or poorly maintained. The good news is that you do not always need a full remodel to make an impact. Simple improvements like updated fixtures, fresh finishes, improved lighting, or a new showerhead can make the room feel cleaner and more current while helping appeal to future buyers.

Other Home Improvements with Strong ROI

Once you've completed the highest-impact upgrades, exterior and cosmetic improvements can also strengthen resale appeal. They may not deliver the same return as a kitchen update, new flooring, or replacement doors, but they can still be worthwhile based on your home's condition and local market.

- **Siding:** Replacing siding can add meaningful value, especially when the current exterior is worn. Stone veneer is expensive often averaging \$87,500 to \$125,000 but can deliver an ROI of about 153% or more. Lower-cost materials such as vinyl typically recoup around 80% of the cost at resale.

- **Roofing:** Roof replacement returns vary by material. A metal roof

averages about \$11,800 and typically recoups 60% to 70% of its cost. Asphalt shingles usually return about 57%, partly because they tend to have a shorter lifespan.

- **New or renovated deck:** Building or updating a deck can return roughly 68% to 83% of the cost. Wood decks generally cost more but may deliver a higher ROI, while composite decks still tend to recover more than half of the investment.

Ways To Finance Repairs

If you're ready to tackle repairs or renovations but need flexibility, a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) may be worth discussing with a mortgage expert. A HELOC gives you access to a borrowing limit you can draw from as needed, and you typically only pay interest on the amount you use. Because rates are often adjustable, monthly payments can change over time, so it's best suited for homeowners who want a flexible funding option for emergencies or longer-term projects completed in stages.



Planting Seeds

"Summer Fun"



Katrina J.E. Milton

When I was driving to work recently, I heard on the radio that the sales of hacky sacks were up. That's not a sentence I thought that I'd be writing in 2026!

Hacky sacks, the small, round bags filled with plastic pellets or sand that are kicked into the air, were popular in the 1980s and 90s. Hacky sacks

remind me of the fun I had decades ago as a child, along with yo-yos, sticky hands, slap bracelets, and Pogs.

Retailers have reported an 800% to 1,000% increase in orders of hacky sacks within a single week, causing widespread stock shortages. The "footbag" craze has returned, in part due to popularity on TikTok and Instagram, as a screen-free social activity to do in groups.

I love that younger generations are returning to hands-on, screenless activities. Being offscreen and

"touching grass" is becoming more and more popular.

Summer is the perfect time to get outdoors and enjoy Mother Nature. From hiking through forest preserves, visiting a zoo, and swimming in Lake Michigan, there's lots to do in Cook County this summer.

I would recommend doing something agricultural: take a horseback riding class at a nearby equestrian center, visit a greenhouse and shop for a plant, visit a farmer's market or farmstand, or create a summer garden either in your backyard or in container pots, growing heat-loving plants like cucumbers, zucchini, peppers, and tomatoes.

What is great about all of the ideas I listed above – and the hacky sack – is that you can do them all alone but doing them with others makes it more fun. Planting veggies

alone can be tough work, and eating a salad and pasta made from fresh cherry tomatoes that you grew yourself is much more enjoyable when you enjoy the meal with family and friends.

This summer, get out and explore! You don't have to drive a car or go far away from home to have a summer adventure. Pick out a good book (look at our summer reading challenge for book recommendations), plant some seeds, or spend time out and about enjoying the warm weather.

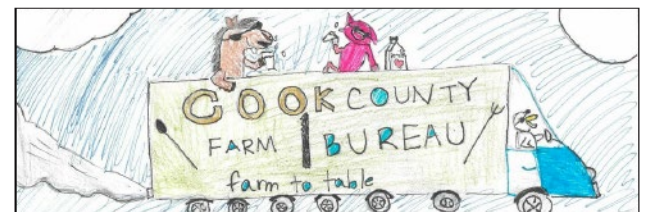
You can see our Agriculture in the Classroom Program at upcoming events around

Cook County. We will attend multiple events this summer with booths that feature ag education, fun hands-on activities, arts and crafts, handouts, and giveaways. Stop by and say hi at Historic Wagner Farm's Livestock Fair from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, June 13, and at Lincoln Park Zoo's Pollinator Day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, June 23.

If all of the ideas I mentioned aren't your idea of fun, don't worry – I heard that hacky sacks are cool again! Enjoy your summer, whatever you decide to do!



2026 Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation Bookmark Contest Winning Designs THEME: "THE ROUTE FROM FARM TO TABLE"



RUNNER UP:

JoJo from Mark Sheridan Academy Chicago



RUNNER UP:

Amira from North Elementary Franklin Park



RUNNER UP:

Lizeth from Passow Elementary Chicago



FIRST PLACE: Avery from Fairview Elementary Mount Prospect

Summer Reading for All Ages JUNE THEME: DAIRY

Complete this month's Summer Reading Challenge for a chance to win a \$10 gift card!

Link: bit.ly/JuneSummerReadingChallenge



Book Recommendations for June:

YOUNG READERS

Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck's Ice Cream Wish by Viola Butler

A boy named Chuck wishes for endless ice cream and is taken to a dairy farm by his Dairy Godmother to learn where it comes from.

YOUNG ADULT READERS

The Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls Wilder*

The first book in "The Little House on the Prairie" book series introduces the Ingalls family and the challenges they face living in a log cabin in 1870s Wisconsin.

*Read the book before the new 8-episode show drops July 9 on Netflix!

ADULT READERS

Meditations with Cows: What I've Learned from Daisy, the Dairy Cow Who Changed My Life by Shreve Stockton

A memoir that blends personal stories of ranch life in Wyoming and explores the themes of human-animal bonds, sustainable agriculture, and finding peace through connection with nature, all centered around the author's relationship with a dairy cow named Daisy.



Scan the QR code to watch a video with all of this year's bookmark designs

Become an Ag in the Classroom Presenter

Cook County Farm Bureau is seeking independent contractors for its AITC Program.

Individuals will provide in-person ag literacy programs throughout Cook County during the school year based on demand.

Teaching experience and knowledge of agriculture/horticulture is recommended.

For more information, email aitc@cookcfb.org

AGRICULTURE ADVENTURES FOR FAMILIES



Did you know that June is National Dairy Month?
It's the perfect time to celebrate all things dairy!

WHAT IS DAIRY? Dairy includes milk and the food products produced from or containing the milk of mammals, such as cheese, butter, yogurt, and ice cream.

WHAT IS MILK? According to the USDA and FDA, milk is "the lacteal secretion, practically free from colostrum, obtained by the complete milking of one or more healthy cows (or other hooved animals)." Soy milk, almond milk, rice milk, oat milk, and coconut milk are not "milk;" they are juices created from dairy-free plant alternatives to milk.



WHAT IS PASTEURIZATION?

Pasteurization was invented by French chemist and microbiologist Louis Pasteur in 1864 as a way to prevent beer and wine from souring. **Pasteurization is a preservation process that reduces harmful pathogens** (such as Salmonella and E. coli) and extends product shelf life. The process involves heating the product to a specific temperature for a set time, followed by cooling. Items commonly pasteurized include milk and dairy products, fruit and vegetable juices, beer, wine, and eggs.

Enjoy this recipe from Cook County Farm Bureau's Local & Fresh 2026 Recipe Collection!

Roasted German Extra Hardy Garlic BUTTER

Honey Bee Gardens Farm



INGREDIENTS

- 2 heads German Extra Hardy Garlic
- 1 T fresh herbs (parsley, rosemary, or thyme)
- 1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, softened
- Pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400F. Slice the tops off garlic heads, drizzle with olive oil, wrap in foil, and roast for 30 to 40 minutes until soft and golden. Squeeze roasted garlic cloves into a bowl, mash, and mix with softened butter, herbs, and salt. Spread on fresh bread, melt over veggies, or use to finish meats and fish.

NOTE:

German Extra Hardy garlic scapes are ready in late spring, and bulbs are harvested mid-July. Get them fresh at the farm!

FUN FACTS

ABOUT Dairy



- The most common ice cream flavor is **vanilla**.
- It takes about **10 pounds** of milk to make 1 pound of cheese.
- **Mozzarella** is the top-selling cheese variety in the U.S.
- Only female cows who have given birth to a calf recently produce milk. On average, they give **6 to 8 gallons** of milk per day.
- **Pule cheese**, a donkey milk produced in Serbia, is the world's most expensive cheese, costing approximately **\$600-\$1,300** per pound.
- In 1542, **King Francis I of France** was reportedly cured of a severe stomach ailment by a doctor from the Ottoman Empire after eating yogurt.

June Word Search

May Winner: Rolf Moan

Butter	W	P	E	L	E	B	C	L	I	W	D	V	W	Y	G
Calf	Z	C	M	S	U	S	E	Z	O	J	G	Y	R	V	A
Cheese	R	J	O	T	O	F	E	A	W	G	R	I	V	A	L
Cows	J	I	T	X	Z	T	Y	E	T	S	A	Q	M	Q	L
Dairy	C	E	P	G	T	O	C	P	H	D	L	I	B	C	O
Drink	R	S	O	A	G	R	C	A	G	C	F	L	A	C	N
Eat	M	A	O	U	T	D	S	E	L	M	B	Z	V	U	S
Gallon	T	F	R	D	S	H	W	P	F	T	J	J	S	W	H
Goat	T	T	Y	I	N	R	O	R	V	X	O	P	M	K	E
Ice Cream	R	P	D	U	K	F	C	G	D	R	I	N	K	L	E
Lactose	D	K	W	U	Q	V	J	O	E	W	U	V	W	I	P
Milk	M	A	E	R	C	E	C	I	S	N	D	Z	G	M	W
Pasteurized	M	T	P	M	F	C	K	Z	F	Q	S	P	S	Q	M
Pathogens	C	S	C	L	H	A	C	G	H	U	J	G	B	B	X
Sheep	P	A	S	T	E	U	R	I	Z	E	D	I	T	O	S
Yogurt															

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 (Two 10-min Interior Cleaning ONLY, NO WASH) 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 2026 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!**



Roads, Rivers & Rails Transportation Carries Crops, Vacation Memories

Dad would pack the car better than an elite gamer playing Tetris, preparing to start our road trip the next day. Well, barely the next. We'd commonly leave at 2 a.m. for a vacation of sightseeing, tourist stops, hotel swimming pools and almost always an amusement park. Mom disliked air travel, and Dad liked getting up early, so we stayed on the ground and made good time while normal humans slept. For a few hours, the interstate felt like our gravel road: seldom traveled.

We were a classic farm family on a road trip vacation, packing our farmer tans, Dad's sun-deprived legs, emergency tools and a CB radio in the Chevrolet Celebrity (great for traffic reports from truckers). We watched the sunrise, drove through implement dealership parking lots and assessed strangers' crops from the windshield. My brother and I packed the floorboards with games and the seats with pillows. Mom provided doses of grape Dramamine and, at one time, the luxury of a mini-TV powered by the cigarette lighter.

Route 66 celebrates its 100th anniversary this year with festivities in eight states, including Illinois, home to 300 miles of the Mother Road. The timing feels right to reflect on Illinois' competitive access to roads, rivers and rails that collectively move people, products and services. Illinois' system of interstates ranks third in the nation. Our rail, the second largest. Our rivers are unmatched in a state literally shaped by water, awarding Illinois the largest and most important inland river system in the United States.

Widely underappreciated in our everyday thinking, these modes of transportation influence our daily lives, the hidden link that connects us and the world to vehicle fuel, toilet paper, computers, fresh beef and out-of-season strawberries – a sprawling list of needed and wanted goods and services that fill our homes, schools and businesses. Illinois' transportation network and central position helps agriculture remain the No. 1 industry in Illinois. Roads, rivers and rails give farms access to domestic end users and export markets for crops and livestock, delivering food, feed, fuel and clothing to places most of us never stop to consider.

Hard wired to farm time, my family woke before the hotel breakfast. On a three-generation family trip to Disney, we were the first in line – every park, every day – theoretically earning what felt like our own FastPass advantage. We started the road trip home slightly less anxious and in the daylight but felt mentally recharged when we crossed back into the Land of Lincoln.

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



Cook CFB Google Reviews

Google reviews have become increasingly important for businesses and can influence customer decisions in both positive and negative ways. For Cook County Farm Bureau, Google reviews are important to our organization as members consider renewing their membership or joining for the first time.

Members that wish to leave a review are encouraged to do so. In order to leave a review, simply Google "Cook County Farm Bureau" and leave a review on the Cook County Farm Bureau Google page. If you have received quality membership service, information, benefits, or support, please let the world know. If you have been disappointed in any of the forementioned, you can also let the world know.

Our goal is to earn a 5-star rating from as many members as possible. Let us know how we are doing.

Family Farm, and Food Bytes

New Market Opportunities Open For Giant Miscanthus

(Hannah Spangler, FarmWeek)

Miscanthus, a tall, warm season perennial grass, is emerging as a locally sourced fiber for composite building materials, offering Illinois farmers a potential new income stream along with soil and water quality benefits. Once established, the perennial crop regrows from underground rhizomes and generally requires fewer inputs than annual crops. Miscanthus closes canopy early, helping suppress weeds, and returns nutrients to the soil before harvest.



The primary market for miscanthus currently is livestock bedding for the poultry industry. Miscanthus is also being developed into a range of higher value products, including biomass fuel used for heat and electricity, compostable packaging, fiber used in pet food, and molded, compostable tableware such as forks, spoons and plates.

Bayer, BP Scaling Camelina as Biofuels Crop

(FarmWeekNow)

Camelina has a promising lower-carbon intensity for renewable fuel, offering flexibility to grow in both spring and winter, and requires lower inputs, according to the press release. Camelina is winter hardy, offering pod shatter resistance and drought tolerant characteristics allowing it to be grown on idle or fallow land, or in-between traditional main crop rotations, allowing farmers to avoid potential competition with food production.



Bayer and BP have entered a long-term strategic alliance to jointly scale the crop camelina, under the brand name newgold. Bayer has already introduced newgold camelina in the Northern Plains of the U.S. and Southern Saskatchewan and Southern Alberta regions of Canada.

Cash Rent, Leasing Expectations Outlined for 2027

(Juo-han Tsay and Gary Schnitkey, U of I)

– According to results from Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers' (ISPFMRA) annual survey, cash rents on professional managed farmland held strong in 2026 and are anticipated to maintain the strength into 2027. Even though farmland price expectations have softened, the rental market remains strong.

As for the agricultural economy, a majority of agricultural managers anticipate the farm economy will either maintain its current trajectory or become better conditions in 2026. Specifically, 48% of respondents expect economic conditions in 2026 to closely mirror those experienced in 2025 while 33% forecast an improvement in the agricultural business climate.

This cautious optimism translates directly into the outlook for the 2027 leasing. According to recent survey data, industry professionals predominantly anticipate sustained rate stability or slight growth. A significant 67% of farm managers expect 2027 cash rental rates to remain unchanged from 2026 levels while 9% of respondents anticipate further rate escalations. In contrast, 24% of respondents project a potential softening with expectations that 2027 rates will fall below the 2026 baselines.

See full article at the University of Illinois farmdoc website, farmdocdaily.illinois.edu.

Researchers Map Tillage Trends From Space

(Hannah Spangler, FarmWeek)

Conservation tillage practices such as no-till and strip tillage play a key role in soil health and resilience. But understanding where, when and how often those practices are used across the Corn Belt has been a challenge. Researchers at the University of Illinois are taking a unique approach with satellite imagery and machine learning to better track tillage practices in the Midwest.

Results showed conservation tillage has increased gradually across the Midwest over the past two decades, but adoption patterns vary by crop and region. In Illinois and southern Michigan, conventional tillage has slightly increased, while reduced tillage has slightly declined in corn systems over the past two decades. In soybean systems, the shift has been less pronounced, but trends generally moved toward greater use of reduced tillage.

IDOA Offers Free Agrichemical Container Recycling

(Illinois Department of Agriculture)

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) encourages farmers and agrichemical facilities to take part in a free agrichemical container recycling program. Beginning in the middle of July and continuing into August, sites throughout the state will collect containers that are recycled to make shipping pallets. Metal and household pesticide containers are not eligible for the recycling program. Collection sites will accept only high-density polyethylene and No. 2 plastic agrichemical containers that are clean and dry.

G. Phillips and Sons, LLC is offering services to pick up mini-bulk and intermediate bulk containers throughout the year. Call 678-232-6047 to learn more about their container collection service.

The program is a cooperative venture between IDOA, Agriculture Container Recycling Council, GROWMARK, Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association, G. Phillips and Sons, Illinois Farm Bureau and University of Illinois Extension.

To obtain a free brochure about the program, including single-day collection locations to be held around the state July 16 to Aug. 5, call IDOA toll free at 800-641-3934.

In Cook County Area Candy News:

According to the Sun-Times, The Candy Hall of Fame Experience will be coming to N. Michigan Ave. in summer 2027.

According to Kellanova, Mars plans to invest \$100M to expand Chicago headquarters, creating a number of new jobs.



About Family, Farm, and Food Bytes: This is a collection of articles gathered from Illinois Farm Bureau FarmWeek, FarmWeekNow, and other trusted media sources and is designed to keep you informed as a member and leader within the Cook County Farm Bureau® organization. We thank the FarmWeek staff for their reporting skills and talents. The articles summarized above are not intended to represent Cook County Farm Bureau policy or positions, but rather to provide members an idea of what is being reported regionally, nationally, and globally.

Agricultural Legislative Happenings

FEDERAL

The Farm Bill – Passed out of the U.S. House of Representatives on April 30 by a vote of 224-200 with 209 Republicans, 14 Democrats, and one independent voting to support it. The Illinois delegation that voted for the bill were U.S. House of Representatives Darin LaHood, Mike Bost, and Mary Miller. The Farm Bill debate now moves to the U.S. Senate with hope a version will meet the Senate's 60-vote threshold.

The House's successful vote marks the farthest a farm bill has made it in Congress since the most recent reauthorization was signed into law in 2018.

Farm Bureau members locally and across the country communicated to their U.S. House of Representatives the importance of passing a farm bill in today's difficult farm economy.

Year 'round E15 fuel sales – The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Nationwide Consumer and Fuel Retailer Choice Act of 2025 (which included year-round E15 sales) by a bipartisan vote of 218-203. Legislation revising sections of the Clean Air Act to permit year-round sales of E15, a gasoline blend that contains up to 15% ethanol. Every member of the IL delegation voted for the bill! The Bill now moves to the U.S. Senate likely needing 60 votes to overcome a filibuster.

Why this is important:

This is a critical next step to increase demand for corn, lower fuel prices for consumers, help address economic challenges facing farmers, and unlock America's energy independence.

- Recent studies suggest that full E15 implementation could boost corn use in ethanol production by 2.4 billion bushels.
- E15 saves consumers between \$0.10 - \$0.25 per gallon and is approved for use in more than 95% of vehicles on the road currently.
- E15 reduces harmful emissions and helps lessen the impact of increased energy costs on consumers.

USDA Issues Second Supplemental Disaster Payment – USDA is issuing a second Supplemental Disaster Relief Program (SDRP) payment to eligible producers who have approved program applications for losses due to natural disasters in calendar years 2023 and 2024.

Additionally, USDA is extending the program deadline to give producers and FSA more time to address any program application changes that could impact payments. The original April 30 deadline has been extended to Aug. 12, 2026, for SDRP Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Initial SDRP payments were factored at 35%, but USDA is increasing the payment factor to 70%. Future SDRP payments will also be made using a 70% payment factor. For information on SDRP, please visit fsa.usda.gov/sdrp or Will/Cook FAS office for more information.

Congressional – Cook County Farm Bureau, DuPage County Farm Bureau, and Illinois Farm Bureau have cooperated in efforts to put together a farm tour visit for Congressman Sean Casten (IL-06). Cook County Farm Bureau volunteers participate on

Congressman Brad Schneider's (IL – 10) Ag Advisory Committee.

FEDERAL/STATE

Comprehensive Climate Action Plan – The Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) filed comments regarding the draft Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) on May 1, 2026. Comments focused on CCAP's aggressive targets to electrify transportation fleets and cautioned that rapidly shifting to fleet electrification could strain the state's electricity supply, particularly if grid capacity and reliability are not significantly expanded in parallel. IFB further highlighted the substantial upfront and operational costs associated with transitioning agricultural and commercial fleets to electric vehicles and pointed to potential environmental tradeoffs, including the impacts of increased mineral extraction for batteries. The comments suggested that rather than electrify the transportation section, CCAP should focus on expanding the use of renewable biofuels to reduce GHGs and better aligns with the Governor's Executive Order 06-2019. Climate strategies must protect the economic viability of farms, sustain food and fuel production, and avoid displacing emissions to regions with fewer environmental safeguards.

STATE

General Assembly: Did it adjourn on time? The 104th Illinois General Assembly was scheduled to adjourn its 2026 spring session on May 31, 2026 which includes passage of a state budget which begins July 1. Failing to adjourn by that date makes legislation more difficult to pass with a 3/5 majority vote going into effect.

And what was the fate of some of the Illinois Farm Bureau/Cook County Farm

Bureau Key Issues during this General Assembly? We will report on the results next month, including:

- Estate Tax – Family Farm Preservation
- Landowner Protections Energy Storage Systems
- School Notification of Pesticide Use
- Wetlands Protection Bill
- CO2 Pipeline Eminent Domain Repeal
- Navigable Water Bill
- Data Center Construction Requirements
- Bee and Apiaries
- University of Illinois Extension Grants
- H2A Exemption Paid Leave

For information on or to get involved in key agricultural legislative issues in the General Assembly, please contact Cook County Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276.

LOCAL

Cook County Commissioners: Cook County Farm Bureau sent a thank you note to Cook County Board of Commissioner Anaya recognizing her sponsorship of a resolution honoring the contributions of the labor movement to conservation efforts with several references to agriculture within that resolution. Cook County Farm Bureau staff are reaching out to Cook County commissioners this summer to communicate the importance of area farming and to seek ways to continue supporting agriculture in urban areas.

Annual Pollinator Event at Lincoln Park Zoo, Tuesday, June 23, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Niles Township Pollinator Garden Grand Opening, Saturday, June 27, 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

WE HAVE A *really* BIG TENT!

Top Reasons an Urban Farmer, Innovative Producer and Specialty Grower should belong to Illinois Farm Bureau®

1 Profitability!

Farm profitability and viability are top concerns for farmers everywhere, urban and rural, small and large. Farm Bureau helps members achieve financial farm sustainability for today's generation and generations of tomorrow by serving as your partner in difficult farming challenges. Outstanding supporting business services and resources are available through our affiliated companies.

2 Community!

You are not alone. When farmers come together, you find commonality in needs, concerns, and objectives. Farm Bureau provides local opportunities for networking with other farmers and access to those within the industry for support, knowledge and connections.

3 Advocacy/Protection!

Agriculture has an incredible story to tell. Farm Bureau provides a united voice for our members. We serve as your watchdog, protecting your interests and advocating for your livelihood at the local, state, and federal levels, regardless of your farm's size and type of production.

4 Marketing!

You produce great products... Now what? Farm Bureau provides access to many "tools" to help move your hard work into the shopping carts of consumers through a partnership with MarketMaker™, shop local promotions, Farm Bureau websites, social media and the educational programming you want.

5 Ag Resources You Need!

You must stay current on information to remain viable. Our members have on-demand access to the latest news, information, and staff who specialize in the hottest ag topics, including local and state regulations, taxes, zoning, water resources, and more.

6 Shared Values!

Are you tired of elected officials and others telling you what you should be worried about? Through grassroots engagement, you, your friends, and your neighbors provide the roots of the organization through policy development. All with the goal of protecting the economic well-being of agriculture and enriching the quality of farm family life.



Scan to learn more or visit www.cookcfb.org

6438 JOLIET ROAD, COUNTRYSIDE, IL 60525
708-354-3276 • CCFB@COOKCFB.ORG



Photos from Schaumburg Food Pantry Garden



Schaumburg Community Garden Coordinator Bonnie Gill with grant signage.



(Left) Garden Volunteers use grant funds to shop at CCFB member business Goebbert's Farm & Garden center in South Barrington. Garden Manager, Holly & staff are happy to assist (right).

COUNTRY Financial MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT

The following Agents/Advisors have been selected by the Country Financial District Leaders to represent their District for this month.

Orland Park Agency Sharon Stemke, District Leader

MALCOHM THURMAN AGENT



As a 15+ year member and new agency owner, I value the Cook County Farm Bureau partnership for the way it strengthens and highlights the importance of our local agriculture and the agri-industries that support it.

I also encourage both members and non-members to check out the community work through Cook County Farm Bureau, as well as the year-round savings and discounts available.

Being a local resource, educating and providing real life understanding of coverages and policy language. I've found many people to be underinsured and just a simple conversation and review can make a huge difference in the lives of my community.

As a proud parent of four—including a current Evergreen Park Mustangs Softball player and a District 231 grade schooler—my passion for the work and dedication of those who help shape the lives of our youth and community runs deep.

10522 S Cicero, Ste 407, Oak Lawn, IL 60453
Office Phone 847-258-0970
Malcohm.thurman@countryfinancial.com
with COUNTRY Financial since December 2025

Chicago North Agency Vicky Nygren, District Leader

MICHAEL BASILE FINANCIAL ADVISOR



Ever since I've started at COUNTRY Financial, I made sure to emphasize the importance of COUNTRY's relationship with the Cook County Farm Bureau and the Illinois Farm Bureau. For over 100 years, COUNTRY Financial, the Illinois Agricultural Association, the Illinois Farm Bureau, and the Cook County Farm Bureau have made sure to keep our customers as the top priority. Without our loyal clients, neither COUNTRY nor the Cook County Farm Bureau would exist, and we'll never take it for granted. This has created a culture at COUNTRY Financial in which our insureds experience top-notch customer service and an expedited claims process to get their life back to normal as fast as possible.

The insurance and financial services industry is a complex and dynamic world. My passion to help as many as I can to navigate this complicated insurance and financial planning world stems from my experience of my own parents' financial plan having gaps in it in which my siblings and I did not discover until they had both passed away. My greatest sense of fulfillment comes from sitting down with a client to educate them on what their insurance policies mean to them, help them secure their financial security goals, and making sure there is a solid transition plan in place for their heirs.

Backed by COUNTRY Financials' longtime mission to serve the community and grass roots marketing budget, I'm able to both participate and donate to causes that help uplift those in the community around me. From DePaul College Prep's funding drive to finance an on-campus gym for the students, to annual

funding appeals of animal rescue shelters, to serving Thanksgiving dinner to the homeless at a Salvation Army, I'm ready to give back to the community that has given so much to me. The resulting joy from giving back is unmatched by any other in this life.

In 1978, The Clash released the song "Jail Guitar Doors," inspired by the imprisonment of musician Wayne Kramer, founder of Detroit's legendary '60s rock band, the MC5.

In 2007 to honor Clash frontman, Joe Strummer, Billy Bragg launched a UK initiative named after the song, providing musical instruments to inmates in Her Majesty's Prisons. Two years later, in 2009, Kramer teamed up with Bragg to bring the mission to the U.S., founding Jail Guitar Doors USA — continuing the work of rehabilitation through music in American prisons. The circle is unbroken.



Please visit www.jailguitardoors.org to learn more and donate. Thank you!

5757 N. Lincoln Ave, Ste 27, Chicago, IL 60659
Office Phone 773-728-2957
Michael.basile@countryfinancial.com
with COUNTRY Financial since June 2007

WORD OF THE Month
STRAWBERRY

Where are you dreaming to be?

Mayflower Cruises & Tours offers an exclusive discount to Cook County Farm Bureau members.

Start Your Travel Planning with Mayflower!

To begin your "Life Enriching Experience" with North American Group travel, River Cruising & Small Ship Adventures, European Holidays, Railway Adventures, and so much more.

Contact **Tina Patel** at Mayflower and state you're a Cook County Farm Bureau member to receive added savings:

Discount Code: Cook County Farm Bureau member

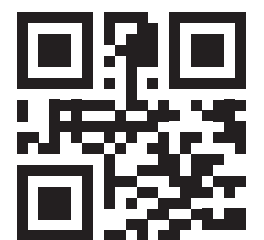
Call **Tina Patel** at 630-435-8259 or email tinap@mayflowercruisesandtours.com

Digital brochures at: <https://www.mayflowercruisesandtours.com/>

Mayflower Cruises & Tours, LLC, is a division of the Scenic Group, located in Lisle, IL.



2026 Master Member Club 2.0



Cook County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce the expansion of the Master Member Club open to all members, affiliates, and partners of the Cook County Farm Bureau. Check out the Master Member Club 2.0 to see how you can join and get a coveted jacket.

What it is: A recognition club for active Farm Bureau members and leaders who support membership growth through recruitment and retention of Ag and non-Ag members.

Eligibility

- Active Cook County Farm Bureau members in good standing
- Exclusions: CCFB, IFB, and other CFB staff

How to Join

- Earn 10 points by recruiting new members
- Voting Members (MM or PM – farming/Ag): 5 points each (2 required)
 - Associate Members (A – non-Ag): 3 points each (4 required)

How to Stay in the Club

- Earn 5 points annually
- Recruiting period: September 1 – August 31, 2026
- Program deadline: August 31, 2026

Awards & Recognition

- First-Time Inductees
- CCFB logo apparel – a coveted jacket
 - Gate sign or \$50 item
 - \$100 gift card (Amazon, Bass Pro, Target, Kohl's, Jewel-Osco, TJ Maxx, restaurants, etc.)

Easy Ways to Sign Up Members & Pay Dues

- Phone: 708-354-3276 (credit card or ACH), M-F 8-4:30 pm
- Online: www.myifb.org or scan the QR code above (list yourself in "Recommended By" field)
- In Person: Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Rd, Ste 101, Countryside, IL 60525



Questions: Contact us at 708-354-3276 or ccfb@cookcfb.org

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.

This month
"X"

XIAO MI LA PEPPER



It grows naturally in the southern Yunnan Province as a plant that lives for many years, called a perennial shrub.

It is one of the three most used peppers in China, along with the facing heaven chili and two vitex chili.



The xiao mi la pepper is one of the spiciest peppers you can easily find in places like Beijing's markets.

It also resists diseases from East Asia and can even grow in dim light and poor soil.

Besides being used fresh or dried in dishes, xiao mi la peppers are also made into flakes and powders.

ITS NAME, "XIAO MI LA," MEANS "LITTERRICE CHILI" IN CHINESE.



Because it is so spicy, xiao mi la is a key ingredient in many hot Sichuan dishes.



Xiao mi la pepper has a Scoville rating of about 75,000 units compared to a jalapeño pepper which usually has between 2,000 and 8,000 units.

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

All ads that we receive for the Co-Operator are also listed on our website at 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. 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 \$650, paid \$1,300. Weight 32 lbs. (base), length 38", width 19.25". Call 708-654-2010. Pictures available online.

Flygt Model #2610.172 commercial grade heavy duty dewatering/ditch pump. 1.3 hp, 115V, 3400 RPM. 2" discharge pump with starter and 150' of 2" discharge hose in good working condition. Asking \$475. Call or text 708-516-5695, Pictures available online.

R-22 Freon for sale. 2 - 30lb tanks. \$750 each. Call Richard 708-363-2208. Pictures available online.

Classic limited edition 2002 Jaguar XKR100 super charged with every available option. Pristine condition. 17,000 original miles. Will send pictures by phone, if interested. Contact Jim 773-581-4400.

Erte Courvoisier Cognac Collection. Will send pictures by phone, if interested. Call Jim 773-581-4400.

Dockers jacket black, size XL. Great condition. \$9. Picture available online. Call Bob 708-424-9572.

Professional osteoarthritic knee braces prescribed by orthopedic doctor. Used twice. List price \$150 each, selling for \$75 each. Pictures available online. Call Bob 708-424-9752.

FOR RENT

Apartment for rent in Blue Island, IL 60406. 2 bedroom, 1/100 square feet. Separate utilities. Call Allan 708-785-2568.

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 game systems: Atari, Nintendo, Magnavox, Odyssey, ColecoVision, Intellivision, etc. Also boomboxes wanted. Call Jim 708-361-8230

Wanted to buy BB guns, toy guns, rifles and pistols. BB, pellet and Co2. Also cap guns. Call 312-438-8628.

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

Wanted 5ft blow mold Santa, with or without light. Also, any other vintage indoor or outdoor Christmas decorations. Call 708-439-9770

Area Ag Roundup

STAR Urban Agriculture Stakeholder Survey

(Impact Magnitude and Feasibility Study)

The STAR Tool is a proven conservation evaluation tool helping farmers along their conservation journey. Success from its implementation for row crops has shown the potential for access to markets and producer reward programs. In order to expand these benefits to include urban growers, we are seeking your input as part of the development process for an Urban Ag STAR Tool. This will help ensure that the most relevant practices are included and will inform allocation of points to the final score report and STAR rating. Your input will play an important role in shaping future conservation tools for urban agriculture across Illinois and beyond.

Take the survey here: <https://forms.gle/JwzkEMFAbd8PPJd58>

Legal Training For Illinois Small Farms Webinar Schedule Continues

Illinois Extension offers a legal series to empower farmers to strengthen safeguard operations.



Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

June 9, 2026 - 5

Steps to Protect Your Farm, Legally Speaking

There is no cost to register for the series, but registration is required for all events at go.illinois.edu/FarmLegalSeries. Session begins at 6 p.m. Q & A following.

CUSTOM CULINARY Pork BBQ Spice



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\$14.00



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

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USDA Organic Certification Webinar June 12, 2026

Connect with Mark Geistlinger from Midwest Organic Services Association (MOSA), learn about the USDA organic certification, and get your questions answered!

We will cover, and not be limited to the following:

- USDA organic certification process - steps, needs, anticipated costs, timeline, etc.
- Basic requirement checklists in order to be prepared prior to applying and during transitions, audits, etc.
- How certification can alter production and management practices and approaches
- Things to be cognizant about or avoid in order to maintain a certification, like recordkeeping, communication, and reporting best practices
- Get your questions answered: grandfathering, buffer between conventional and organic planting, spaces, livestock, etc.

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/organic-basics>

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 Monday 2026

Are you a new or existing 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 with Q&A.

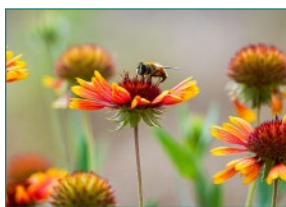


DATE: Monday, June 22, 2026
TIME: 4:00-4:30 p.m. with Q & A
LOCATION: Zoom; link will be emailed the Friday prior

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

Partnerships for Pollinator Week Event at Lincoln Park Zoo

Visit Lincoln Park Zoo to celebrate Pollinator Week with free educational activities, demonstrations, Ask a Farmer, and giveaways. Zoo attendees are invited to learn more about pollinators and agriculture's commitment to supporting them. Learn environmental practices and programs that are right for your farm, community garden, or home.



DATE: Tuesday, June 23, 2026
TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.

LOCATION: Lincoln Park Zoo, outside the Pepper Family Wildlife Center

DIY Summer Barn Quilt Painting Workshop

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



DATE: Wednesday, July 15, 2026
TIME: 5:30-8:30 p.m.

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

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

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

DISCOVER LOCAL

Join Cook County Farm Bureau® in supporting our local agricultural member businesses. Our online member listing is a great resource – easily accessible and updated with the most accurate information.

Discover local at <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/discover-local>

For a paper Discover Local listing, contact the CCFB at 708-354-3276 or email: **ccfb@cookcfb.org**.

Honey Bee Gardens Farm – CCFB Member Event

CCFB member business, Honey Bee Garden Farms has warmly invited members of the Cook County Farm Bureau to visit the farm, offering 2 free member entrances on Friday, July 31, 2026. Honey Bee Gardens Farm is a family-friendly destination offering hands-on farm experiences, seasonal events, and outdoor activities for children and adults.



Visitors can meet friendly farm animals, explore flower and vegetable gardens, attend educational programs, and enjoy special events throughout the year. Whether you're looking for things to do with kids, a weekend family outing, or a peaceful day outdoors, Honey Bee Gardens Farm is a place to slow down and reconnect with nature. Grab your kids or grandparents and head over for a fun day featuring CCFB staff will be on hand to say hello and enjoy the gardens, grounds and

DATE: Friday, July 31, 2026
TIME: Anytime, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
LOCATION: Honey Bee Gardens Farm, 8405 Kearney Rd, Downers Grove, IL 630.269.4345

MEMBER ENTRY: 2 free member entrance fees per membership only – must show CCFB Farm Bureau card or on phone. Need your card, call CCFB at 708-354-3276.

It's getting HOT, HOT, HOT and we have these COOL deals for you....



CCFB PRICE: \$37.99
Regular price: \$42.99



SAVE 32% ON TICKETS



CCFB PRICE: \$31.99
Regular price: \$39.99



THEME PARK CCFB PRICE: \$95
Regular price: \$106



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



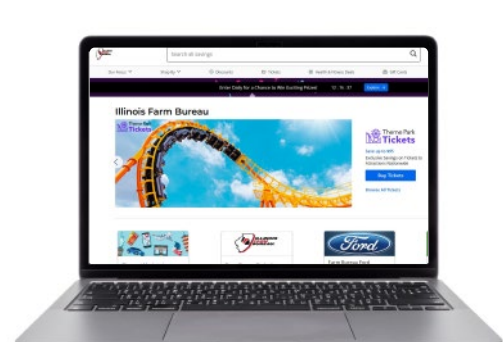
CCFB PRICE: \$55
Regular price: \$62



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Visit ilfb.benefithub.com to start saving!!!

For more details and to purchase tickets, visit our website at: cookcfb.org and click on 'membership' and then 'membership benefits' or call 708-354-3276.


DESKTOP



1. Go to **<https://ilfb.benefithub.com>**.
2. Sign in with your existing username and password or register as a new user by selecting "Don't have an account? Sign up. You will need your membership number to complete sign up."
3. Find the best deals and start saving!


MOBILE APP

ANDROID




1. Go to Google Play and search for **Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits** and install the app.
2. Once installed, you will see a log in button. Click it and sign in with your existing Benefithub account or register to create one. You will need your membership number which can be found on the front of your membership card.
3. Once logged in, you will see a welcome page, spotlight offers and a search bar to explore all the savings offered on the platform. Click on the menu button (gear icon at the bottom of the screen) to see all categories.

iPHONE



1. Go to the App Store and search for **Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits** and install the app.
2. Once installed, you will see a log in button. Click it and sign in with your existing Benefithub account or register to create one. You will need your membership number which can be found on the front of your membership card.
3. Once logged in, you will see a welcome page, spotlight offers and a search bar to explore all the savings offered on the platform. Click on the menu button (gear icon at the bottom of the screen) to see all categories.



LOOK FOR THIS ICON ON APPLE AND ANDROID!

