



Cook County Farming: What's it all about?

If you like to eat, then you need farmers. Farmers grow healthy, nutritious food including fruits, vegetables, and grains like corn, soybeans, and wheat. They also raise animals.

Cook County farmers are committed to caring for their land and animals in order to grow and raise safe and healthy food for their families and for yours. Some farmers specialized in organic while others use the latest technology and farming practices, including biotechnology. This diversity gives consumers the choice of what to feed their families.

Many farmers grow corn, soybeans, and wheat. Using modern tools and technology, farmers grow more grain per acre while ensuring a stable, reliable supply of food, feed, fuel, and fiber. Today each farmer feeds 232 people. In 1960, a single farmer fed only 25 people.

Many farmers specialize in local foods. Consumers can often find local produce at area farmers markets, grocery stores, and roadside stands.



Almost a third of the food we eat is the result of honey bee population.



Horses dot Cook County's landscape. They along with bees, alpacas, beef cattle are the most common livestock animals in Cook County.

What's Growing Out There?



Yes, its corn, but it's not the sweet corn you munch as corn on the cob. Much of the corn growing in farm fields is dent corn, which is different from sweet corn. Sweet corn is harvested earlier while the kernels are soft, and the plants are green. This field with yellow tassels won't be ready to harvest until the leaves and stems turn brown. Dent corn, upper left, is used to make ethanol. Illinois is the third largest producer of ethanol in the nation. The corn is also used for animal feed and human food products.



A combine harvests soft red winter wheat in the summer. Wheat grown in Illinois is not used in yeast bread, but it is an ingredient in cereals, cakes, cookies, and pretzels, pastries, pancakes, crackers, ice cream cones and many other foods. Most of the states, wheat is grown in the southern half of Illinois. After the wheat is harvested, farmers bale the remaining stems for straw that is used primarily for animal bedding. Some bales of straw are sold for fall decorations and landscaping purposes as a ground cover. Many times, after the wheat is harvested, a second crop, such as soybeans, can be planted and harvested in the fall.



A greenhouse is a building where all types of plants can be grown. Greenhouses vary in size from a small garden shed to the size of several football fields. Farmers grow a variety of plants including herbs, vegetables, flowers, and cactus in greenhouses. Many greenhouses have heating, cooling, and lighting systems that can be controlled by a computer. Greenhouses enable farmers to grow year-round because they allow farmers to control the temperature.



A soybean field is a common sight across the state. Soybeans grow about waist high and turn brown and drop their leaves then ready for harvest. The pale yellow beans are formed in fuzzy pods. The ones shown upper right are ready for harvest. Soybeans are used to make oil, protein and biodiesel. Illinois ranks fourth in the nation for biodiesel production. Soybeans also place nitrogen back into the soil, reducing the application of fertilizer the following year.



A round bale of hay lies in a field awaiting storage. Farmers make hay from grass, clover, alfalfa and other plants. The farmer, upper left, is cutting alfalfa, which will be allowed to dry before it is baled. Hay is fed to animals. Clover and alfalfa put nitrogen back into the soil, reducing the application of fertilizer the following year.



Over 500 Cook County acres are dedicated to growing vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers, sweet corn, and pumpkins. Vegetables are grown on traditional and urban farms.

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IN AND AROUND COOK COUNTY AGRICULTURE



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FARM BUREAU TO HOST STAFF EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS & STAFF JUNE 13

Cook County elected officials and their staff members are invited to join the Farm Bureau for an exploration of agricultural businesses in northern Cook County! On **Thursday, June 13** the Cook County Staff Exchange Program will travel to the western suburbs for an exploration of agricultural businesses and local farmers.

Agenda

8:30 a.m.	Depart Rolling Meadows
9:00 a.m.	Tate & Lyle, Schaumburg
11:30 a.m.	To be determined
1:00 p.m.	Return to drop-off location

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The Corner of Clark and Randolph is a publication of the Cook County Farm Bureau® Governmental Affairs Department.

With locations in 30 countries and a 150-year-old history, Tate & Lyle is a leading supplier of food and beverage ingredients including sweeteners, texturants, fibers, and starches. The company owns 13 grain elevators throughout the Midwest and processes over 1.4 million acres of corn every year for their ingredients.

For additional information contact Bona Heinsohn at (708) 354-3276 or via email at bona@cookfb.org.

TO SIGN-UP

COMPLETE

The response card on Page 2 and return to the Farm Bureau office.

VISIT

<https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/z4txdop07hzv3s/>.

DEADLINE

June 1, 2019

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Contact Bona Heinsohn or Kelli McSherry at (708) 354-3276

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AWARDS

COOK COUNTY FARM
BUREAU® EXISTS
‘TO SERVE ALL
MEMBERS OF THE
COOK COUNTY FARM
BUREAU® WITH
MEANINGFUL AND
BENEFICIAL
PROGRAMS THAT
REFLECT OUR
AGRICULTURAL
HERITAGE.’



COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU®
County Staff Exchange Program
June 13, 2019

ATTENDANCE RESPONSE CARD

Please indicate what you are planning to attend:

- ☐ Full Tour
☐ Tate & Lyle
☐ TBD

Name: _____ **Office:** _____

Work Address: _____ **City:** _____

Work phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Cell phone: _____

Emergency contact: _____

Phone number: _____ **Relationship:** _____

Please indicate if you are not riding the bus with the group ☐

PHOTO RELEASE FORM

I, _____ hereby grant to the Cook County Farm Bureau® the right to use and publish photographs taken of me or in which I may be included, for any Cook County Farm Bureau® publications, Illinois Farm Bureau® publications, electronic reproduction (website, social media), and/or promotional materials or any other purpose in any manner or medium.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

**LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN FARM
BUREAU'S 'FOOD PANTRY CHALLENGE'**

Cook County Farm Bureau® will be donating \$1,750 to Cook County food pantries. We'd like to help food pantries provide healthy food for the families in their community.

This summer Cook County Farm Bureau will be hosting a "Food Pantry Challenge" on Facebook. Throughout the summer, families will vote on Facebook for their favorite food pantry. The Facebook polls (five in all) will be boosted to families in the pantries' service areas. After 10 days, the pantry that receives the most votes will receive a donation for \$350. The second-place pantry will receive a donation for \$150.

Interested food pantries are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at 708-354-3276 or via email at bona@cookcfb.org for additional information.

**FARM BUREAU PROVIDES COMMENTS ON PROPOSED
CLEAN WATER RULES**

Cook County Farm Bureau sent the following comments to the Federal Registrar regarding the proposed Clean Water rules:

To Whom it May Concern:

The proposed Clean Water rules offer common-sense regulations that protect and improve water quality on our nation's farms and ranches.

In 2015, the proposed Waters of the U.S. rule had more to do with land than water.

- It was a land-grab that created confusion and uncertainty for regulators and farmers, ranchers and others who depend on their ability to work the land.
- It imposed enormous regulatory road blocks and costs for simply moving dirt in low spots on the landscape.
- The rule's definition of "tributary" was so broad that it even included landscape features *invisible* to the human eye.

The rule was challenged in multiple courts by all sides (31 states and 53 non-state parties, including environmental groups, state and local governments, farmers, landowners, developers, businesses, and recreation groups). Challengers raised numerous substantive and procedural defects in the rule, including that it imposed burdensome regulatory uncertainty. The proposed Waters of the U.S. rule was withdrawn, and the proposed Clean Water rules replace it and offer much needed clarity and specificity. Farmers should not have to hire teams of consultants and lawyers just to know if they can farm their own land.

The proposed clean water rule protects both the nation's water bodies and farmers' ability to produce food, fiber and fuel. This proposed rule would end years of uncertainty over where the jurisdiction of EPA and the Corps begins and ends. It offers a common-sense approach that protects water quality and gives Cook County farmers clear rules that they can follow.

Farmers have every incentive to leave their land, natural resources, and water in better shape for the next generation. They want to preserve their land to pass it down to their children and future generations. Many farms have been in the family for several generations.

As the county's largest general farm organization, Cook County Farm Bureau® is dedicated to bridging the gap between farmers and urban consumers. Through education programs targeting youth and their parents and programs designed to connect farmers with potential consumers, Farm Bureau members are actively engaging in conversations about food and the shared values between farmers and consumers.

Cook County Farm Bureau® appreciates your consideration of these comments. If you have any questions or we can provide any assistance, please feel free to contact our Director of Governmental Affairs, Bona Heinsohn at (708) 354-3276 or via email at bona@cookcfb.org.