

## **From the Decade 2000 Through 2010**

### 2000

- The early twenty-first century included years of tremendous membership growth, especially in associate members.
- Farm Bureau awards \$2,000 in scholarships for students pursuing an agricultural degree.
- Howard Paarlberg retires as President of the Cook County Farm Bureau® after 16 years of service as President. Under his leadership, Farm Bureau launched the roadside vegetable marketing service, Agriculture in the Classroom program, created the CCFB Foundation® and chaired the Farm Bureau's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.
- "The Farm" at the Museum of Science & Industry opens in Chicago.

### 2001

- Farm Bureau launches Food Checkout Day and a partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana® to support families calling the Chicagoland houses their temporary "home" while their child is receiving treatment.



- The Giant Pumpkin Contest is established with a winning pumpkin maxing out the scale at 186.75 pounds!
- Farm Bureau creates a "Landowners Group" to assist agricultural property owners.
- Farm Bureau names Kim Morton as the first Northeast Legislative Coordinator. This position provided additional focus and resources in the area of northeastern Illinois legislative relations.

### 2002

- Cook County Farm Bureau places first in total percentage membership gain in Illinois (110.88%).
- The Cook County Farm Bureau website launches and provides members with an additional source of news, information, and benefit access.
- Former Illinois Senator Debbie Halvorson and Illinois Representative Cynthia Soto were named "Legislator of the Year" for their outstanding voting records and efforts on pertinent agricultural issues.



Kim Morton presents Friend of Ag to Illinois Senator Barak Obama

- Renee Stranski joins the Farm Bureau team as the first summer intern.
- The Agriculture in the Classroom program expands into Chicago Public Schools fourth grade classrooms.

### 2003

- The Board of Directors approves the creation of the Public Relations Committee. In 2005, the committee integrated into the Agricultural Literacy Committee until 2013 when it became a standalone committee.
- Thanks to a net gain of 3,337 members during the 2002-2003 membership year, the Cook County Farm Bureau reached an all-time high for total members. The net gain was the highest member gain in the state.

### 2004

- Farm Bureau places second in total percentage membership gain in Illinois (114.62%).
- Ray Nykaza retires as Cook County Farm Bureau President. He is succeeded by Harry Stuenkel.
- Kathy Lesser, a current Agriculture in the Classroom presenter for Cook County Farm Bureau, is named “National AITC Teacher of the Year” in recognition of her efforts to integrate agriculture into her classroom.
- Farm Bureau names former Illinois Senator Wendell Jones “Legislator of the Year” for his efforts on agricultural issues and outstanding voting records on pertinent issues.
- Farm Bureau joins Wagner Farm in Glenview for the Dairy Breakfast, an event still enjoyed by Farm Bureau families and urban consumers.
- Agriculture in the Classroom reaches over 20,515 students during in-classroom presentations.
- Former Farm Bureau President Jim Goebbert retires from the Board of Directors after 30 years on the Board.

## 2005

- Farm Bureau transitions to a new committee structure to streamline volunteer involvement and time.
- *The Co-Operator* transitions from an eight-page black and white publication to a twelve-page full color publication.
- Happy 85<sup>th</sup> birthday Cook County Farm Bureau!

## 2006

- Illinois State Senator Susan Garrett is named “Legislator of the Year” by the Cook County Farm Bureau for her leadership on legislation to revise Illinois’ eminent domain statute.
- Glenview’s Wagner Farm, a frequent CCFB partner in ag literacy, opens its “Heritage Center” to educate the general public about agriculture.



Glenview Country Insurance agents enthusiastically volunteered at the Wagner Farm Dairy Breakfast on Saturday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. Mike Gross, Agency Manager (1) along with Bob Sitkiewicz and Mike Salerno helped out with the activities that Cook County Farm Bureau provided for the attendees of the farm breakfast. Also

## 2007

- Farm Bureau’s affiliated company, COUNTRY® Financial enters into the insurance and financial services market in the City of Chicago.
- Farm Bureau launches its first annual Family Celebration Picnic at the Children’s Farm at the Center in Palos Park.

## 2008

- Cook County Farm Bureau again places first in total percentage membership gain in Illinois (103.72%).
- Annette Schaeffer, a teacher of over 40 years, is name a finalist for Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year.

- Farm Bureau approves an organic and food labeling policy drafted by Cook County Farm Bureau.

## 2009

- Cook County Farm Bureau joins Facebook! The page now boasts over 6,400 fans.
- The E-Cooperator publication launches saving members time and saving the environment!
- Cook County Farm Bureau Political Action Committee (Cook CFB PAC) is created to endorse candidates favorable of Farm Bureau policies and positions.
- The Board of Directors overwhelmingly approve a local resolution to reduce the number of votes needed to override a Presidential veto in Cook County to a three-fifths rather than a four-fifths majority.
- Local Farm Products website is created to serve consumers interested in finding local farm products, farm stands, greenhouses, etc. The website is now fully integrated into Cook County Farm Bureau's website [cookcfb.org](http://cookcfb.org).



*On February 18, 2009 the Cook County Farm Bureau and Ronald McDonald House Charities®-Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana (RMHC®-CNI) celebrated Food Check-Out Week with a shopping spree and other events. Pictured from left to right: Captain Cornelius (Tim Stuenkel), CEO of (RMHC®-CNI) Doug Porter, President of Cook County Farm Bureau Jim Brandau, and Ronald McDonald. Please see the Ag Literacy Page (page 6) for more of the day's events.*