



Co-Operator

official publication of the Cook County Farm Bureau®

Celebrating 100 Years . . . Honoring Tradition—Leading The Future

Mission: To serve all members of the Cook County Farm Bureau® with meaningful and beneficial programs that reflect our Agricultural Heritage.

Vol. 93 No. 12

Countryside, IL 60525

www.cookcfb.org

December 2019

Mark Your Calendar

DECEMBER

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Centennial Patio Paver Pg. 2

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APRIL

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HOLD THE DATE!

100 Year Anniversary Celebration Open House
Great fun & activities for members of all ages and interests!
Saturday, March 28, 2020 • 9 AM to Noon
CCFB Building
6438 Joliet Road, Countryside IL.

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 using the Member Service Center at www.cookcfb.org.



Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliate companies were proud to sponsor the Illinois FFA BUILD Conference in Decatur, IL. Shown here are Gage Miller, Illinois FFA State President, along with attendees from The Chicago High School for Ag Sciences including Elizabeth Dattner, Emily Saldana, Zachariah Boyd, and Jack Pikulski. Through five different sessions, students learned how to BUILD their leadership, image, relationships, team, and perspective. Students also heard from two keynote speakers, participated in friendly team competitions, and attended an opportunity fair. We look forward to watching these FFA members continue to BUILD on their experiences! Cook County Farm Bureau® Foundation funded students attending from Cook County.

Question of the Month

Which United States President started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the White House lawn in 1923?

☆Bonus☆:

What page of this publication is CCFB mascot Corny Calvin “hanging out” on this month?

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# and phone number)**

November’s winner is
Dan Draus

The Cook County Farm Bureau recently received National recognition (County Activity of Excellence) from the American Farm Bureau Federation for what new program?

Answer: Food Pantry Challenge

Who We Are...

Cook County Farm Bureau is made up of many members including farmers, landowners, foodies, greenhouse operators, specialty growers, food consumers and customers of the Farm Bureau’s affiliated companies (Country Financial, Conserv FS, IAA Credit Union, etc.). We bring together many members with diverse backgrounds and food interests to support the success of local farmers and to keep agriculture present and strong in Cook County.

This Co-Operator publication is designed for members to share more about how Cook County Farm Bureau is working for local farmers and agriculture and to help our members know more about farming, food, fiber and bio-fuels. As an added value, we provide great membership deals, savings, discounts, benefits, programming and activities that reflect our agricultural heritage and members’ modern expectations.

Please enjoy reading and thank you for your support of area agriculture and your membership!

Farm Bureau Partners with Local Food Pantry for 2020 Food Checkout Day

For the past 19 years, Cook County Farm Bureau® has partnered with Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana. Through the generosity of partners Farm Bureau has donated over \$145,000 and nearly 100,000 pounds of food.

During the past 19 years, the House’s business model has transitioned, and they no longer rely on the food donations provided by Food Checkout Day. The CCFB Board continues to support RMH in other ways. For the 2020 program, Farm Bureau will partner with Together We Cope, a local food pantry serving 27 south suburban communities in four townships, Breman, Orland, Palos, and Worth. Together We Cope based in Tinley Park, serves 5,000 people monthly.

As we prepare for a new, and hopefully long term, partnership with Together We Cope, we want to ask for your support. Help us to celebrate the healthy and nutritious food local farmers grow and raise by providing food donation staples like boxed cereal, oatmeal, mac and cheese, pasta, and peanut butter or through cash donations.

All donations will go to Together We Cope and the 5,000 people who rely on their services monthly.

Evaluate Health Options Now for 2020

Just as farmers book next year’s seed, now marks the time to evaluate health coverage options that best meet medical needs and budgets in 2020.

The enrollment period for individual health insurance plans runs from Nov. 1 to Dec. 15 for coverage beginning Jan. 1, 2020.

“Don’t wait until the last minute,” said Sara Sturgeon, COUNTRY Financial health brokerage lead. “Review your current plan that you have and also shop around to different carriers and see what you can get with different options.”

Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) understands the strain that rising health care costs have put on farm families. In response, the organization continues to research options to help members with health-related needs, from more affordable insurance and prescription assistance to accessible mental health support.

Most pressing right now, individual health insurance plans require an application by Dec. 15 to secure coverage in calendar year 2020. While members can purchase this type of plan directly with carriers or through Healthcare.gov, the latter offers potential cost-share assistance.

Sturgeon said more members may qualify for assistance than they realize based on income and household size. At a minimum, she suggested

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CENTENNIAL LEGACY PATIO TO BE CREATED TO BENEFIT FOUNDATION

BUILDING A COMMEMORATIVE LEGACY PATIO IN HONOR THE FIRST 100 YEARS OF CCFB SERVICE TO MEMBERS

Creating a legacy to mark the Centennial celebration of the Cook County Farm Bureau, the Farm Bureau and Foundation are partnering to create a Commemorative Patio on the grounds of the Cook County Farm Bureau. The Commemorative Patio will be close to the east entrance of the Farm Bureau building and will feature personalized memory pavers, two park benches, a wrought iron fence, and flower boxes.

Members and Farm Bureau/Foundation supporters and partners can support the project by purchasing a paver that will be incorporated into the patio. The paver can include the member or family name, encouragement, recognition, and other well wishes.

Three sizes of paver are available and proceeds from the sale of the pavers go directly to the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation's efforts to improve and enhance agricultural literacy in Cook County. Donation for the pavers are fully deductible per IRS guidelines. Use the order form below or go to cookcfb.org/foundation to donate.

COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION BRICK ORDER FORM

4x8

Line 1
Line 2
Line 3

8x8

Line 1
Line 2
Line 3
Line 4
Line 5
Line 6

8X16 / BENCH

Line 1
Line 2
Line 3
Line 4
Line 5
Line 6

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Zip Code: _____
Email Address: _____
Credit Card#: _____
Exp: _____ Security Code: _____

4X8 BRICK - 3 LINES - 13 CHARACTERS PER LINE @ \$ 75.00 PER BRICK
8X8 BRICK - 6 LINES - 13 CHARACTERS PER LINE @ \$150.00 PER BRICK
8X16 BRICK - 6 LINES - 26 CHARACTERS PER LINE @ \$300.00 PER BRICK
6 FT BENCH - 6 LINES - 26 CHARACTERS \$600.00

PLEASE PRINT IN CAPITAL LETTERS AND CHECK FOR SPELLING ACCURACY.
PUNCTUATIONS AND SPACES COUNT AS CHARACTERS.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CCFB FOUNDATION AND MAIL TO:
KATIE SMITH - DIR. OF MEMBERSHIP & ADMINISTRATION COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU
6438 JOLIET RD., COUNTRYSIDE, IL 60525

What’s Up?

We asked the directors of the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation Board—
“What do you anticipate the biggest Ag Literacy “need” in 2020 will be?”

Ruth Zeldendrust
“To inform people that the need to feed people is not optional. People are hungry all over the world.”

Dan Biernacki
“To educate consumers/ future consumers to what actual farm practices look like in the 21st century.”

Janet McCabe
“Adult Education; so many people have no idea where their food comes from and how it’s grown.”

Gerry Kopping
“Fundraising to keep our scholarships at a high level for the qualified applicants.”

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, big and small. We appreciate it greatly!

The Cook County Farm Bureau thanks...

- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Cam Davis and his staff for their outstanding efforts to recognize and celebrate Cook County Farm Bureau's centennial anniversary.
- Cook County Commissioner Sean Morrison and his staff for sponsoring a resolution recognizing Farm Bureau's centennial anniversary.
- Hometown School for sending the amazing thank you letters after receiving our 4th grade Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) presentation.
- Brown School (Adopt a Classroom participants) for sending questions to our AITC staff about pumpkins, corn, cows and more. Can't wait to write back to you and visit in early 2020!
- Sarah Batka, University of Illinois

Extension-Cook County Local Foods and Small Farms Program Coordinator, for her “shout out” regarding our marketing support for their Pumpkin Smash Collection held November 2 which brought in 6340 pounds of pumpkins to be composted.

- Sharon Stemke, Chicago NE Country Financial Agency Manager, for inviting some Cook County Farm Bureau staff to enjoy a Bulls game with her crew.
- Janis Zeldenrust for sharing some scrapbooks from the 70's, 80's and 90's that have many Cook County Farm Bureau board photos that can be used for the 100 year anniversary celebration.
- For the many members that have purchased brick pavers for the Centennial Legacy patio to benefit the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation in recognition of the 100-year anniversary.

2020 Foundation Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has opened the 22nd Annual “Farm and Food” Agricultural Scholarship Program. The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation is offering college students the opportunity to start or continue his/her higher education with a scholarship. Last year, the Foundation provided eight scholarships ranging from \$1,000-\$3,000 each.

The Board will name the top applicant as the Howard Paarlberg Excellence in Agriculture Scholarship recipient. The Foundation will award a scholarship (s) to college students pursuing agricultural related fields of study. The Conserv FS FFA Scholarship for \$1,000 will also be offered to individuals in Cook County involved past or present in an approved FFA Program.

The Foundation Board has set the following criteria for the scholarship program:

- Applications must be completed and submitted to the CCFB Foundation by February 14, 2020. Late applications will not be considered. Much of the application can be submitted electronically.
- All applicants must be members or dependents of members in good standing with the Cook County Farm Bureau for at least one year. (With the exception of the Conserv FS FFA Award)
- All applicants must be high school graduates accepted for enrollment by, or currently enrolled at, an accredited college, university, or community college.
- All applicants must be pursuing a field of study in agriculture, agri-business, or an agricultural related major with a focus on an ag-related career (food, fuel or fiber).
- Scholarships will be awarded following application evaluation for exceptional academic ability, financial need, demonstrated interest in agriculture, evidence of self-help, and character.

For more information or an application, please contact the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation at 708-354-3276 or print an application out from our website at cookcfb.org/foundation/scholarships.

What is an Agricultural Career? Farming, of course, but so much more! Here are a few other examples and there are so many more careers!

Nutritionist

Forestry Management

Large Animal Veterinarian

Co-Operator

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Downwind

by Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager

More Food Talk

My mom taught me that eating everything on your plate was the polite thing to do. I am quite polite. She also knows I will eat nearly anything. For that, I'm self-taught. My mom likes to test my politeness and ability to "eat anything" skill. She sends me new food items to test. Today's world provides many testing opportunities. The latest test was watermelon slices in a pouch. I love watermelon. I tried them. I will not try them again. Sorry, Mom, I will not be finishing this pouch. Please do not put it on my plate to test my politeness. Fresh watermelon is the only way to eat watermelon.

In the good ol' days, foods found in a sealed plastic bag consisted of potato chips, snack crackers and cookies. Things got a little crazy in those days when they double stuffed the Oreos, created scoops out of Tostitos, added flavored powder to the pretzels, and increased the box size of the Bugles. I managed to live through that change.

Today, it feels like a contest of "What can we put in a bag that no one else is ever thought of?" Everyone is experimenting with food, food combinations, food snacks, and food ingredients. The "prize" is finding a convenient, healthy, consumer demanded product. People and companies are using great creativity and thinking outside the (garden) box.

With so many creative products seeking shelf space, people are being inundated with food thoughts and concepts at the supermarket, through social media, on the radio, on the television, in the news, and nearly everywhere a person may exist. Images, marketing messages, social media posts, news, studies. Good food. Bad food. Fattening food. Slimming food. Do, don't and don't even think about it.

Around us, there are the "Frowny" people that grumble at the foods you like or want. Sometimes, the same "Frowny" people change roles and become the "Smile,

Grin and Fake it" people, usually while chewing a kale salad. In some respects, food has become the new "weather or sports". If you don't have anything to talk about, you bring up the topic of food. "That food is sure smelling good today" "How about those pork chops?" "What did Skilling say about food forecast today?" "It's been a great year for the beans" We are coming down off our food high Thanksgiving holiday and headed into the Christmas/New Year holiday season in which food remains a major focus. I don't know very many people who eagerly anticipate a holiday dinner composed of beet juice, mashed cauliflower, dried watermelon slices or fake turkey legs. Can we at least agree that pumpkin pies should not feature whipped coconut cream, the stuffing should be full of gluten (properly cooked in farm raised turkey), and the mashed potatoes should have a minimum of one stick of butter?

We have the final decade of the Cook County Farm Bureau, 2010 through- today, that we want to highlight as we roll into the 2020 Centennial of the Cook County Farm Bureau. The contrast between the organization that began in 1920 and continues through today is significant. The growth in membership, programming, and action is obvious. However, the 100-year purpose of the organization remains consistent and steadfast:

Cook County Farm Bureau® is a non-for-profit, general farm organization created in 1920 by area farmers, businessmen, and community leaders to improve science, knowledge, lifestyle, and standards of living on the farm and off for its members. Today, the Cook County Farm Bureau holds close to these roots through agricultural literacy efforts, membership service, public policy interaction, consumer engagement, farm product marketing, and outreach.

Enjoy reliving a bit of the most current Cook County Farm Bureau decade...
Bob can be reached at brohrer@cookcfb.org.

CCFB History: 2000-2009

- 2010**
- Cook County Farm Bureau places first in total percentage membership gain in Illinois (106.75%).
 - Cook County Farm Bureau Political Action Committee (Cook CFB PAC) endorses its first round of candidates, naming eight Cook County Commissioners "Friends of the Farm Bureau" in recognition of their voting record on pertinent Farm Bureau issues.
 - Cook County teacher Debbie Jimenez, is named Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom "Teacher of the Year."
 - Farm Bureau celebrates the 10th anniversary of Food Checkout Day and its partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana.
 - Beth Christian, former board member, is awarded the 2010 Illinois Agricultural Education Advocacy Award from the Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education/Illinois Committee for Agricultural Education.

- 2011**
- Cook County Farm Bureau Agriculture in the Classroom program celebrates 25 years of educating local students about agriculture in their everyday lives.
 - Farm Bureau introduces the "Illinois Farm Families" program and Cook County Farm Bureau takes an active role in recruiting field moms and participating in the tours, spokespeople training, and television commercials.
 - Members and future farmers participate in a 'Farming Fundamentals Workshop,' a one-day program discussing setting up a farming operation.
 - Janet McCabe becomes the first women elected to the Farm Bureau Board of Directors.
 - Sarah Fine-Koukol from St. Vincent Ferrer School in River Forest is named "Teacher of the Year" by Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom.

- 2012**
- Farm Bureau's Commodity and Marketing Team launches an urban garden grant program. Cookfresh® aids urban gardens with the purchase of supplies, including plants, seeds, raised bed construction materials, soil, compost, fencing, and more.
 - Cook County Farm Bureau receives the Summit Award for Food Checkout Day from the American Society of Association Executives. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions to society that occur when non-profit organizations partner.



Cook County Farm Bureau President, Jim Gutierrez and Vice President, Mike Ranch, represent the organization on stage at the National Museum Building in Washington, DC during the national award ceremony presentation for the winners of the prestigious Summit Award. The presentation from the American Society of Association Executives was presented to four of over 1000 Association leaders from across the Country in recognition of the 2012 Food Checkout Day in honor of Ronald McDonald House. Gutierrez and Ranch accepted the award on behalf of the many members and individuals that come together to make the program successful.

- Farm Bureau upgrades its website to improve member relations and communications.
- Cook CFB PAC names seven Cook County Commissioners "Friends of the Farm Bureau" and endorses four candidates for office in Cook County.

- Cook County Farm Bureau receives the President's Award and Liberty Bell from the Illinois Farm Bureau® in recognition of outstanding and innovative programing.
- 2013**
- Farm Bureau launches a 'Speakers Bureau' designed to connect groups, organizations, and clubs with local experts in agriculture.
 - The 'Cook County Staff Exchange Program' is named a County Activity of Excellence by the American Farm Bureau Federation®.



Cook County Farm Bureau directors gathered around the American Farm Bureau Federation President, Bob Stallman in Nashville at the booth that helped members from across the country learn about the award-winning County Staff Exchange program. Left to right: Mark Yunker, Jim Brundin, Harry Sunkel, Jim Gutierrez, President Stallman, Janet McCabe, Gerry Kopping, Dan Biernacki, and Mike Ranch.

- The Master Gardener Resource Center opens in the Cook County Farm Bureau office to aid members in search of information on soil testing recommendations, plant disease issues and treatments, horticulture related questions, and pest identification and treatment.
- Farm Bureau launches a Young Leader/Ag Professional Group in an effort to attract and engage younger individuals in the agricultural industry.

- 2014**
- Farm Bureau's "Passport to the Farm Camp" for children ages 7-11 is named a County Activities of Excellence by the American Farm Bureau Federation.
 - Cook County Farm Bureau hosts the county's first "Meet the Buyers" event designed to help farmers connect with buyers.



Sam, Paul, Vince and Wally of Angelo Caputo's Fresh Market met with area farmer and CCFB Board Member, Ruth Zeldensrud (r), during the Meet the Buyer event on February 18th in Orland Park. The event provided the unique opportunity for farmers to market their 2014 crop and livestock prospects with area buyers of food. See additional photos on Page 4 or on our Facebook page.

- Farm Bureau rebrands and relaunches Local Farm Products, consumers one stop shop for local farmstands, greenhouses, and agri-businesses.
- Cook County Farm Bureau receives the President's Award from the Illinois Farm Bureau for outstanding programing in the areas of Agricultural Literacy, Commodities/Marketing, Communications/ Promotions, Health/Safety, Legislative/Political Process, Local Affairs, Member Relations, Policy Development, and Membership Quota.

- 2015**
- Farm Bureau partners with Ted's Greenhouse and Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana to re-create the rooftop garden at the Lurie House for the Flower and Garden Show.
 - Farm Bureau launches the "Farming Forum" program designed to explore new ways to produce food, creatively market and launch value-added programs.

- 2016**
- Cook County Farm Bureau's "Grocery Giveaway" program is named a County Activities of Excellence by the American Farm Bureau Federation. The program connected urban consumers to local farmers through social media.
 - Farm Bureau submits the state's first policy on Community Support Agriculture programs. The policy is later considered by delegates at the American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting.
 - Farm Bureau launches "Farm Bureau Cares Day" in which Farm Bureau leadership and staff assist local charities.
 - Farm Bureau launches the "Master Member Club" to recognize Farm Bureau members' new member recruitment efforts.

- 2017**
- Cook County Farm Bureau Board members approved a bylaw change to provide for a new classification of member, the Professional Member (PM), for individuals who are employed in farm and agricultural related occupations but do not directly earn their income from farming.
 - Janet McCabe is elected the first female CCFB President.
 - Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation hosts its first annual "Farming for our Future" gala and raises over \$25,000 to support Farm Bureau's agricultural literacy efforts.
 - Farm Bureau partners with Ted's Greenhouse and COUNTRY Financial for a display at the Chicago Flower and Garden Show.



A John Deere tractor with planter with corn growing was a huge attraction during the Flower and Garden Show held in March on Navy Pier in the Country Financial Garden.

- Farm Bureau hosts its first annual Farm Crawl.

- 2018**
- Farm Bureau in partnership with Fairway Farms in Lemont, host a magical farm-to-table dinner at Cog Hill.
 - Cook County Farm Bureau launches its latest website to better serve members and to communicate more effectively to the general public.
 - Farm Bureau spearheads a District 5 Sense of the Delegate Resolution calling on the Illinois Farm Bureau Board to seek out solutions for farmer member families and small businesses on the devastating impact of rising health insurance costs.
 - Cathy Malloy, Family and Consumer Science teacher at Westchester Middle School is named a finalist for "Teacher of the Year" by the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom program.
 - Farm Bureau introduces policy revising and updating the state's Government Assisted Nutrition Program and Organic Agriculture policies.

- 2019**
- Farm Bureau launches the "Food Pantry Challenge" and financially supports 14 local food pantries.
 - The Foundation's Gala transitions to a Fun/raiser and plants the seeds of farm and food literacy.

Board Selects 2020 Leadership Team, Sets Goals



At the Novenmber meeting of the Cook County Farm Bureau, the Board of Directors elected its leadership team for the next year. Ms. Janet McCabe, Orland Park, was re-elected by the Board to serve as the organization’s President, a position she has held for the past year. McCabe and her husband Joe, farm in the southern Cook County area and northern Will County raising corn, soybeans, wheat and marketing hay/straw. She has served on the Cook County Farm Bureau Board since 2011 and has been a part of the organization’s Team structure since it was created in 2005.

McCabe said, “I am humbled to be re-elected to another term as President and look forward to continuing our work with the goal of having the importance of agriculture in everyone’s daily life recognized. I look forward to working with the board to optimize our volunteer base and their contributions to the organization.”



Mr. Mike Rauch, Tinley Park, was re-elected to the Executive Committee as the Vice-President of the Board. Mike Rauch has been a member of the CCFB Board of Directors since 2003 and has served as Vice-President since 2011. Mike raises corn and soybeans in south Cook County and has been active in agriculture for the past 35-plus years.



Ms. Ruth Zeldenrust, Chicago Heights, was elected to the post of Secretary-Treasurer by the Board. She is also Chair of the Audit Committee. She has been a member of the CCFB Board of Directors since 2011 and has been a part of the organization’s team structure since it was created in 2005.



Joining these three leaders on the Executive Finance Committee for the next year will be board members Gerry Kopping, Lemont, and Dan Biernacki, Tinley Park. The Executive Finance Committee holds the responsibility of the budgeting, finance, personnel, and day-to-day oversight of the organization. They also joined the officers on the Foundation Board of Directors.

From the Board of Directors, the following leaders will head up programming committees of the organization: Mike Rauch, Public Relations Team; Gerry Kopping, Commodities/Marketing Team; Jim Bloomstrand, Member Relations Team; Tim Stuenkel, Ag Literacy Team; and Ruth Zeldenrust, Governmental Affairs Team.

The Board of Directors also approved the following:

2020 Goals and Objectives of Cook County Farm Bureau

- Help Farmer Members succeed financially in Cook County (Commodity/Marketing Team).
- Engage and influence elected local, state and national officials (Governmental Affairs Team).
- Recruit and retain Members through an increase in membership benefits/ services (Member Relations Team).
- Improve the image of farmers through public outreach activities (Public Relations Team).
- Teach primary, middle school and high school students and teachers about farmers and agriculture (Ag Literacy Team).
- Develop a volunteer management plan (Board of Directors).

Farm Bureau Partners with Local Food Pantry for 2020 Food Checkout Day

Continued from page 1

Food donations can be dropped off at the Farm Bureau office at 643 Joliet Road in Countryside or at your local COUNTRY Financial office. Cash donations can be mailed to the Farm Bureau office using the enclosed envelope or through LINK. Donations can also be made by calling 708- 354-3276 or visiting the Member Center at www.myilfb.org.

Food Checkout Day 2020

Join Cook County Farm Bureau® and celebrate Food Checkout Day and the healthy and nutritious food grown and raised by local farmers by raising much needed funds for Together We Cope, a local food pantry based in Tinley Park.

Together We Cope is a homelessness prevention agency that serves 27 communities in four townships in Chicago’s south suburbs. As a bridge for Southland residents in temporary crisis, Together We Cope serves 5,000 people monthly.

Please consider partnering with us to raise much needed funds for Together We Cope. Your donation will go to the families in need.

Shopping Cart Sponsor

Includes promotion on cart signs at the grocery store event, signage, media, and social media inclusion.

\$250

Company/ Individual Name _____
Written as you wish it to appear in publications or on signage

Contact Person _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

If affiliated with a Country Financial Agency, please indicate: _____

Please make checks payable to: Cook County Farm Bureau®. All proceeds will be donated to Together we Cope.

For more information, contact Bona Heinsohn at the Cook County Farm Bureau® at 708-354-3276 or bona@cookcfb.org.



February
20th

FOOD
CHECKOUT
DAY

Join Cook County Farm Bureau® and celebrate Food Checkout Day and the healthy and nutritious food grown and raised by local farmers by raising much needed funds for **Together We Cope**, a local food pantry based in Tinley Park.



- **Collect non-perishable food items & deliver to the Farm Bureau office**
- **Make a cash/online donation**
- **Become a Cart Sponsor for \$250**

*Food items can be dropped off at the CCFB office before February 19th.

*To donate call (708) 354-3276 or visit the Member Center at www.myilfb.org.





Your Chicago South Agency

6438 Joliet Road | Countryside, IL 60525 | 708-352-5555

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0819-538HO

Family Farm and Food Bytes

SOYBEANS HELP TURKEY STAR DURING HOLIDAY SEASON (FarmWeek) - Soybeans are an important part of turkeys’ diets and the favorite holiday bird consumes 15% of all soybean meal crushed from Illinois soybeans, according to the Illinois Soybean Association. In addition, odds are that soybean meal, oil and play-based ingredients will be in many foods featured on dinner tables.

IS THE TIPPING POINT COMING FOR PLANT-BASED FOOD OPTIONS? (Forbes) - Recent months have seen a substantial increase in fast food and casual dining restaurants offering plant-based meat options, including offerings from companies such as Beyond Meat and Impossible Taco. The degree to which this market will continue to grow is still an open question, but there is little doubt that the past year has seen such brands move more into the mainstream.

CORN BELT FARMERS FACE PROPANE CRUNCH (DTN) –Farmers across the Corn Belt are running into supply bottlenecks at a time when they can ill afford to wait. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration declared a regional emergency in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Governors in Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin issued emergency declarations to lift restrictions on carriers for the transportation of heating fuel, including propane.

HOLIDAY CHOCOLATE CUSTARD MILK (FarmWeek) - Prairie Farms has added Chocolate Custard to its holiday season line of milk flavors. Others include chocolate mint, sugar cookie, maple pecan, pumpkin spice, eggnog and custard. The Prairie Farms’ holiday lineup is made with classic recipes that blend locally produced milk, cream, sugar and egg yolks with just the right amount of spices.

COLORED CORN SOURCES OF NATURAL FOOD DYES (FarmWeek). With consumers insisting on more all-natural ingredients, natural food dyes have been expensive and hard to come by. However, a University of Illinois projects aims to fill the gap with colored corn. A U of I team has been experimenting on blue and purple corn varieties in which the outer layer is used for pigments and the remainder can be used for ethanol, grits, livestock feed or other products corn is already used for.

STUDY: FRESH PRODUCE EFFECT OF GM LABELING LAW (Cornell) - Consumers are more willing to buy unlabeled produce after seeing food labeled as genetically modified in a new Cornell University study, according to the Cornell Chronicle. USDA will begin implementing the National Bioengineered Food Disclosure Standard on Jan. 1. that requires labels denoting genetically modified (GM) organism on food products. The researchers’ goal was to glimpse consumers’ reaction to conventional products when the labeling takes effect. In the study, 1,300 consumers were randomly shown GM, non-GM and unlabeled opportunities to buy apples, as well as other fruits and vegetables. When presented an unlabeled apple first, the initial consumer response was 65.2% willingness to buy. But if the unlabeled apple was shown after an individual saw an apple with a GM label, the consumer’s willingness to buy an unlabeled apple increased to 77.7%.

If presented with a non-GM labeled apple first, the consumer was 67.2% willing to buy, considered statistically even with the percentage willing to buy unlabeled products. “In other words, the ‘non-GM’ label is not stigmatizing the unlabeled product,” Gómez said. The researchers admitted they were surprised by the study’s results. They had anticipated a non-GM label would have a stigmatizing effect on unlabeled fresh products.

CONGRESS’ BEEF WITH PLANT-BASED COMPANIES USING THE WORD “MEAT” (Quartz) – The biggest beef lobbying group in the United States is backing new legislation in Congress that would stop popular plant-based meat alternative companies—including Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods—from using the word “meat” to describe their products. The bipartisan legislation was proposed by House representatives Anthony Brindisi and Roger Marshall.

CONSUMERS CONFUSED ABOUT CBD (FarmWeek) - Research by the Grocery Manufacturers Association shows most American consumers don’t know what cannabidiol (CBD) is, what it does or whether all products made with CBDs are safe to eat. Of those surveyed, 39% said they believe CBD is another name for marijuana and 51% think that CBD can intoxicate individuals who use it. In addition, 92% of consumers incorrectly assume or have no idea if the federal government regulates CBD.

About Family Farm and Food Bytes: This is a collection of articles gathered from both mainstream and agriculture media and is designed to keep you informed as a member and leader within the Cook County Farm Bureau organization. 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.

Stump the Staff!

Every day, the Cook County Farm Bureau office fields many phone calls and provides information and answers to a variety of questions. This feature is designed to highlight some of the questions that we frequently receive...

Q. Does the Farm Bureau have any type of discount on tires or car service?

A. We have a 10% discount for our CCFB members at Cassidy Tires and Service. Take your CCFB membership card and walk into any of their 14 Chicagoland locations and they will take 10 percent off your bill including new tires, brakes, oil changes, batteries, and nitrogen (if available). Check out our website www.cookcfb.org under member benefits for the locations.



Evaluate Health Options Now for 2020

Continued from page 1

members use Healthcare.gov as an online price-comparison tool when reviewing individual health plans.

This plan type represents just one of several coverage options available. Farms with employees could form a small group insurance plan. Short-term health plans can bridge the gap between insurance coverages, and healthcare sharing ministries provide a faith-based, non-insurance option that works for some members. IFB also explores the formation of an association health plan, which allows people in a like industry to band together to establish a plan at a potentially lower cost.

In that spirit of savings, members seeking price relief at the pharmacy counter can try the ScriptSave Prescription Drug Savings Card provided with their Farm Bureau membership. Benefits consultant Lisa Carlson of Lockton Companies in Chicago also recommended GoodRx,

a free online tool and mobile app that offers drug coupons.

Shopping around can save money, too. Various retailers advertise flat-rate deals on generic drugs. For brand drugs, some manufacturers offer discounted medications to patients through their web sites.

IFB knows the rising cost of health care adds stress for families, particularly during this challenging year on the farm. Members mentally overwhelmed with daily stresses, anxiety or depression should seek support.

Carlson said telehealth assistance through programs like MDLIVE can put help just a virtual visit away. Meanwhile, IFB continues to expand its accessible mental wellness resources, including online at www.ilfb.org/resources/mental-health-wellness. Members can use this site to identify stressors and find wellness tools for a healthier 2020.

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Agricultural Literacy

AG LIT BIT

Holiday Cacti



Diane Merrion,
CCFB Director
of Ag Literacy

Upon return from a quick November weekend to visit family in Utah, I checked on my houseplants and to my surprise our Christmas Cactus was bursting with pink buds. This crazy weather has confused the cactus as much as me. I was rather excited to see the cactus blooming as we had missed the beauty of the desert flowers out west.



Of course, no vacation could be complete without connecting back to the farm which came up as we strolled around the Red Hills Desert Garden in St. George. I wasn't expecting to see a Cow's Tongue Cactus (native to central Texas) an Artichoke Agave (evergreen family) or a Dinner Plate Cactus. I didn't know such things existed.

I took a particular liking to the Pine Cone Prickly Pear as I love pinecones and had never seen this plant before. These unique varieties were being adorned with lights in anticipation of the holiday

season. Different climates, different traditions.

There wasn't, however, any Christmas cactuses out in the desert which I came to discover are not really grown outside in dry, arid environments. Turns out they originate from the rain forests of Brazil and prefer a humid indoor climate. So, as I'm thinking my cactus is confused, I come to find out how to tell holiday cacti apart through The Old Farmers Almanac.com.

How To Tell Holiday Cacti Apart

There are several types of holiday cacti: Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. They typically bloom closest to the holiday that they're named after. For simplicity's sake, we refer to all three as "Christmas cacti" in the Planting and Care section.

To tell the three cacti apart, pay attention to their leaf shapes and flowers:

- Christmas cacti have flattened leaves with rounded teeth on the margins of the leaves.
- Thanksgiving cacti have flattened leaves with pointed teeth.
- Easter cacti also have flattened leaves with rounded teeth, but their flowers are broader and almost daisy-like, whereas the flowers of the other cacti are more tube-shaped.

To confuse matters further, most of the Christmas cacti sold are actually Thanksgiving cactus. If you find your Christmas cactus blooming near Thanksgiving, guess what? You learn something new every day.

Diane can be reached at aite@cookcfb.org.

Over \$1000 Granted

Congratulations to the 2019-20 Food Science Grant Recipients funded by the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation.

- Barack Obama School of Leadership and STEM, Chicago Heights
Students will problem solve and create their own solutions on how local food can be stored and distributed safely without spoilage.
- St. Thomas Villanova, Palatine
Students will be investigating cultural preferences for foods and comparing produce and products of Illinois versus with other regions. A special focus will be on Hispanic foods since the lesson is part of their Spanish class project.
- Schaumburg High School, Schaumburg
Students will make the connection from farm-to-table in Culinary Arts class through the research, preparation and distribution of foods for their Charity Soup Luncheon in December serving over 200 attendees (which is the culmination of the classroom lessons).
- Westchester Middle School, Westchester
The Family and Consumer Science classes will investigate the USDA MyPlate in order to research and identify key components of creating a healthy diet. After learning the farm-to-table process, student labs will prepare foods from each food group that promote healthy eating and include nutritional make-up of each item.
- Proviso West High School, Hillside
The Life Skills class will study the food process from farming through consumption. With a focus on soups, stocks and sauces, the food labs will not only teach about food sourcing, but also about potential careers through the production chain.



Over 100 students in John Hershey High School's Child Development classes spent their prep time learning about resources and lessons that can be used with their preschool classrooms throughout the school year. Students received materials for future lessons including two farm-to-table sequencing activities.

SUMMER AG
INSTITUTES 2020

Session 1 June 15-18
Using Rural Agriculture in STEM

Session 2 July 7-10
Urban/Rural Agriculture Experience

Details at <https://cookcfb.org/ag-literacy-and-education/teacher-resources>

Congratulations 2019-2020 Teacher Grant winners!	
School	Topic
CPS - Ruben Salazar Bilingual Center	Farming Around the World
Claremont Academy	Earth Day
Nazarene Nursery School and Kindergarten	Earth Day
Rolling Meadows HS -Mini Mustang Preschool	Earth Day
Barack Obama School of Leadership and STEM	Hungry Planet
Strassburg Elementary	Hungry Planet
District 65	Poetry
Eberhart Elementary	Poetry
Saint John Fisher School	Poetry
CPS - Ruben Salazar Bilingual Center	Pollinators
McPherson Elementary School	Pollinators
St. Thomas Villanova School	Pollinators
Barack Obama School of Leadership & STEM	Community Food Security
E. F. Lindop School District #92	Designing A Solar Water Heater
Prairie Hills Junior High School	Worm Farm/Composting Project

Agriculture in the Classroom
Summer Intern

The Ag in the Classroom program is offering a summer internship to a college student majoring in Ag Communications or Ag Education. The individual selected for this paid internship will assist with all educational programming including: preparing agricultural education materials for Summer Professional Development Conference, planning lessons for youth programs and local library presentations, updating social media including Facebook. Candidate will do group presentations for adults and students and should have knowledge of Illinois commodities such as corn, wheat, soybeans. Position requires excellent organizational skills and strong oral/written communication skills. Transportation required as travel throughout Cook County to conduct programs is necessary. Position runs from June 1st- August 1st.

Contact: For more details visit <http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation/internships> or contact Diane Merrion, Ag Literacy Coordinator at via email at aite@cookcfb.org. Open application period until filled.

Agriculture Adventure

for Families

From fall through winter, the smells in the air signify the changing of seasons. Winter walks through the damp forest send the smell of pine up through the air. Quick stops at the store begin with the instant smell of cinnamon pinecones as the doors push open. Pies, candles, infusers and fresh trees fill homes and giving off warm spicy wisps of holiday cheer. Take a moment this month to welcome the scents of winter as we say goodbye to a challenging farm year.

Smells of the Season

Holiday fragrances are filled with nostalgia and tradition. While scent and the memories evoked by it are incredibly personal, there are certain smells that instantly fill a room with festive feeling.

Ginger

No confection symbolizes the holidays quite like gingerbread in its many forms, from edible houses to candy-studded gingerbread men to spiced loaves of cake-like bread. In Medieval England, the term gingerbread simply meant ‘preserved ginger’ and wasn’t applied to the desserts we are familiar with until the 15th century. The term is now broadly used to describe any type of sweet treat that combines ginger with honey, treacle or molasses.

Ginger is a spice that comes from the fresh or dried root of the ginger plant, Zingiber officinale. This plant belongs to the same family as turmeric and cardamom. It was domesticated in the islands of Southeast Asia and was known only in the West by being imported during the spice trade. Ginger is available in six forms: fresh, dried, pickled, preserved, crystallized (or candied), and powdered or ground.

Ground ginger, also referred to as powdered, is the dried and ground ginger root. It is readily available in standard supermarkets and is used primarily in sweets and curry mixes.

The flavor of fresh ginger is peppery and slightly sweet, with a pungent and spicy aroma.

Source: www.pbs.org/food/the-history
Source: www.thespruceeats.com/ginger-recipes-and-cooking-tips

Trees

What gives conifer trees their scent? Well, most of that piney odor is due to chemical compounds called terpenes. Pine, spruce, and fir trees – favored trees for decorating during Christmas – produce terpenes, which give them a distinctive and refreshing scent.

Christmas tree cultivation is an agricultural, forestry, and horticultural occupation which involves growing trees specifically for use during Christmas. Farms come in all sizes, from family-run spare-land operations to companies with thousands of acres devoted to the stock. Almost all trees require shearing, or trimming, during their growth to attain the desired Christmas tree shape. There are approximately 350 million Christmas trees growing on U.S. farms in any given year.

Don’t have time to go pick a live tree? Well of course you can go online, select one and have it at your doorstep ready to decorate!!

Source: University of Illinois Extension, National Christmas Tree Association



This farm bureau favorite book chronicles the lifecycle of growing a Christmas tree, showing the love and patience it takes to create this symbol of the holiday.

Cinnamon

Traditional use of this beloved spice is in mulled cider and a plethora of breakfast breads, from toast to rolls to sticky buns.

Grabbing the stick and powdered forms at the supermarket is easy, and few give a passing thought to the process to get it there. Cinnamon comes from the dried inner bark of several different types of tropical evergreen laurel trees, and is harvested during the rainy season when the bark is more pliable.

Trees should be at least a decade old in order to be harvested, and there are a couple of dozen commercially viable types. Some “trees” look more like thick-stemmed bushes. The bark is not only stripped from the trunk, but also the branches. It is rolled into tight quills to dry — some quills can be up to 30 inches long.

Source: www.tennessean.com/story/life/food/2018/12/15/cinnamon-holiday-

November Word Search

O R T M K Q B P P S K U E T V
J K T E D C N A E X R T S N S
J C X M R O I E Q B A W B E N
S J P O M P R T C Q B K R C J
R Q A R X T E I S D J I E S W
Q S P I C E D N P J F S A J O
A J H E R E T A E R T F D H A
F Z E S R X X U E S E Y E K P
I G T Z W W M S R E D W O P G
F E D F Z N A L W I M N A I D
M I J B J R E A C E P S N U Q
O G E A F N K R F E E G H V R
C I N N A M O N G T E T H V K
P D L F I P F E L R Y J K R N
G M Y R Z P S W E Q G W M I W

Bark

Bread

Cider

Cinnamon

Fraser Fir

Ginger

Memories

Pine

Powder

Scent

Spice

Stick

Sweet

Terpenes

Treat

Trees

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Membership #: _____

(Membership # is located on front of paper)

If you were to win, check your preference:

___ Beggar’s Pizza GC ___ HRI GC ___ 3 Movie Tix
(If a choice is not made, movie tickets will be sent)

Deadline is the 20th of each month.

Choose your prize:

Choices include a \$25 Beggar’s Pizza Gift Card, a \$25 Home Run Inn Gift Card, OR *3 AMC Movie Tickets *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 2019 and your name is automatically entered into an “End of Year” drawing for a gift basket full of ag themed goodies.
Good luck!

Last Month's Word
Search Winner Is..

Paul Hammes



Memories Around the Tree Glow Bright

Six Christmas trees help set the holiday mood in our home.

My husband keeps a different tally, pointing out that our indoor forest calculates to a few dozen evergreens when you count the 12-inch trees atop the kitchen cupboards and the backdrop to our nativity display. Don't forget the tabletop trees that surround my Christmas barns, nor the set of trees cut from aged barn wood displayed on our bathroom counter. In the kitchen, we decorate a pencil tree with old family cookie cutters, a personal favorite.

I love Christmas trees. In fact, they seem to make all of us happy, so we planted a short-needed evergreen in our front landscaping last year. Their presence and meaning bring together some of our most favorite things. Family time, farm influences and rustic decor intertwine with a Christian holiday, making our hearts and minivan radio break into Christmas songs.

This time of year, I most especially enjoy staying home in our tree-filled retreat, anticipating the moments when programmed timers cue the Christmas lights throughout the house. Our family gathers next to the lit living room tree to watch Christmas movies. I fall asleep by tree light in our bedroom. I savor the peace of early morning, rolling out cinnamon rolls before dawn with the glowing Christmas tree.

Consistent with the memories of my childhood, we shop the Christmas tree farm right after Thanksgiving, connecting with families growing a different crop for a different harvest season. We walk the farm and take a family vote for the best nine-foot fir. This tree, the only real one in our home, bears the gifts, the Christmas star, and the most sentimental ornaments. Five other trees, all six-foot artificials, take on our family's personalities through themes of hunting, fishing, the farm and our alma mater.

My husband should have predicted my obsession for needled trees upon marriage to me, a farmgirl born on Christmas Eve. At our September wedding reception in the farm shop, guests placed gifts under a 12-foot, fresh-cut pine, a gift itself from the local tree farm.

A few tree tribulations since have tested the marriage. Most notably, my husband tells the story of cutting a board from the unfinished garage wall to improve the "cheap tree stand" he says that I purchased for our first Christmas together. Without elaborating, the story ends well. We've celebrated 17 Christmases since.

About the author: Joanie Stiers' family grows corn, soybeans and hay and raises beef cattle in West-Central Illinois.

Christmas Trees

Often referred to as evergreens, Christmas trees include different species of firs, spruces, and pines, all of which stay green year-round. These trees are grown and harvested in 45 different states.

Across the country, over 300,000 acres are dedicated to growing a traditional holiday sight, the Christmas tree. In 2018, more than 32 million Christmas trees were purchased to display in homes and public areas throughout the United States, according to the National Christmas Tree Association. Today, 98% of Christmas trees are grown on farms, and unlike artificial trees made from plastics, real Christmas trees can be recycled to provide benefits to the environment.

A Christmas tree can take up to 15 years to grow to 6 feet tall, so for each tree harvested, Christmas tree farmers plant one to three more seeds. On average, trees are harvested at about seven years old.



**Adapted from Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom's 'Seasons' Ag Mag.*

Christmas Tree History

- The first decorated Christmas tree was in Riga, Latvia in 1510.
- The first printed reference to Christmas trees appeared in Germany in 1531.
- Using small candles to light a Christmas tree dates back to the middle of the 17th century.
- Thomas Edison's assistant, Edward Johnson, came up with the idea of electric lights for Christmas trees in 1882. Christmas tree lights were first mass produced in 1890.
- In 1900, large stores started to display large, illuminated Christmas trees.
- The tradition of an official Chicago Christmas tree began in 1913, when one was first lit by Mayer Carter H. Harrison in Grant Park.
- The official Christmas tree tradition at Rockefeller Center began in 1933. Since 2004, the tree has been topped with a 550-pound Swarovski Crystal star. Since 2007, the tree has been lit with 30,000 energy-efficient LED lights, which are powered by solar panels.
- Every year since 1947, the people of Oslo, Norway have given a Christmas tree to the city of Westminster, England as an expression of goodwill and gratitude for Britain's help to Norway during World War II.
- In 1856, Franklin Pierce, the 14th President of the United States, was the first President to place a Christmas tree in the White House.
- U.S. President Calvin Coolidge started the National Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on the White House lawn in 1923.

Christmas Tree Facts:

- In 2012, U.S. farmers planted 46 million Christmas tree seedlings.
- 98 percent of all Christmas trees are grown on farms, while only 2 percent are cut from the wild.
- More than 2,000 trees are usually planted per acre.
- Almost all trees require shearing, or trimming, during their growth to attain the desired Christmas tree shape.
- Most Christmas trees take six to ten years to reach maturity.
- Live Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850.
- In 2012, 85% of the live Christmas trees purchased were pre-cut. The remainder were "cut-your-own."
- The most popular Christmas tree varieties are Scotch pine, Douglas fir, noble fir, Fraser fir, balsam fir, Virginia pine, and white pine.
- There are approximately 350 million Christmas trees growing on U.S. farms in any given year.

Sources: University of Illinois Extension, National Christmas Tree Association, USDA Census of Agriculture



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Growing To Serve You Better



Recipe of the Month: *Marinated Asparagus*

Yvonne Massie, Mount Prospect

- ¾ c warm water
- 1 T sugar
- ½ t fresh dill weed
- ½ t salt
- ½ c vegetable oil
- ½ c white vinegar
- 1 T onion finely chopped
- 1 ½ lb fresh asparagus spears

Cook asparagus in boiling water until tender crisp. Make the marinade by combining the remaining ingredients. Pour over asparagus in shallow dish. Refrigerate overnight. Drain before serving.

We are looking for YOUR favorite recipes using fresh, local produce for our 2020 Recipe Collection celebrating the Cook County Farm Bureau's 100th year!

Mail recipes to CCFB Attn: Debbie 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside, IL 60525

Email to membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org or Fax to 708-579-6056

Farm Bureau Engages on Renewable Fuel Standard

Cook County Farm Bureau® members sent the following letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS):

I am writing to urge the Environmental Protection Agency to restore integrity to the Renewable Fuel Standard, as promised by President Trump, and guaranteed by law. Over the past 15 years, the Renewable Fuel Standard has transformed Illinois agriculture. The law strengthened domestic demand and improved prices for my corn.

As a farmer, I can tell you that Small Refinery Exemptions granted by EPA over the last three years have been devastating to corn growers and to

the renewable fuel industry. The market for corn ethanol has shrunk dramatically, falling roughly 230 million bushels in the last year alone and leading to plant closures, including two in Illinois. This leaves farmers with fewer options to market our products and undermines the goals set by Congress to create a more robust renewable fuels industry and achieve greater energy independence.

EPA's supplemental proposal does nothing to restore integrity to the RFS. Rather than base the projected volume of gasoline and diesel that would be exempt in 2020 on a three-year rolling average of actual exemptions, the agency proposes that this three-year rolling average be based on the relief recommended by the Department of Energy. This is

problematic because DOE's projections for the volume of biofuels to be exempted are significantly lower than EPA's actual exemptions.

I urge EPA to reallocate a rolling average of actual exempted volumes. Doing otherwise would no doubt result in backsliding to much less than the statutorily required 15-billion-gallon level for conventional biofuels. That would fail to restore stability to the marketplace, continue to hurt farmers, and reduce America's energy independence.

Thank you for your consideration.

If you'd like additional information on this topic, please contact Bona Heinsohn at (708) 354-3276 or via email at bona@cookcfb.org.

Preckwinkle Delivers Proposed Budgets for the County and Forest Preserve District



In October, Cook County President, Toni Preckwinkle, announced her \$6.2 billion county budget. Her proposal does not include any new taxes or fees. The deficit was the smallest Preckwinkle has faced since assuming the reins of the county; however, she warns that next year's budget may not be as rosy given rising costs associated with the Health and Hospital System. Preckwinkle's proposal increases spending to the tune of \$260 million primarily for new positions in the State's Attorney, Clerk of the Circuit Court, and Chief Judge's Office.

Preckwinkle's spending plan is expected to face little opposition.

On the note of little opposition, after removing a proposed property tax increase from consideration,

Preckwinkle's Forest Preserve District's proposed 2020 budget is expected to face little controversy. Her \$125 million proposal includes \$23 million for the Brookfield Zoo and Chicago Botanic Garden, both of which are located on Forest Preserve land. Preckwinkle's proposal is a four percent increase from last year.

Preckwinkle's proposal includes no layoffs but acknowledges the District's efforts to reduce costs by eliminating landline phones and outsourcing campground management and room rentals. In addition, District non-tax revenue, including new concession opportunities and fee structures, including picnic permits, pools and campgrounds, has increased since fiscal year 2014. The District has also raised more than \$16 million in grants and is enjoying fundraising success through the Foundation.

The budget proposal is also expected to face little opposition.

Farm Bureau Members Concerned about Forest Preserve Tax Increase

In October, Farm Bureau sent voting members with email addresses on file a SNAP Viewpoint Survey to garner their thoughts on a proposed property tax increase for the Cook County Forest Preserves. By a two-to-one margin, members overwhelmingly opposed the proposal.

Members who supported the proposed increase indicated that they would like the funds allocated to the following items, in order of preference: maintenance of existing sites; shoring up pension funds; additional amenities at existing sites; purchasing additional acres; improvements at the Brookfield Zoo, and improvements to the Chicago Botanic Gardens.

Members were provided the following background: Forest Preserve Commissioners may ask homeowners to foot the bill for a property tax increase to fund improvements to the Cook On average, Cook County homeowners pays around \$50 per year for the preserves. While not final, early estimates would ask voters to pay an additional \$17 more per year. The increase is anticipated to raise over \$40 million per year.

In October Cook County President Toni Preckwinkle announced that a property tax increase would not be considered by voters.

Future SNAP Viewpoint Surveys may be sent to voting members with email addresses on file. If you are a voting member and have not provided Farm Bureau with your email, please contact (708) 354-3276 to add your email.



Cook County Farm Bureau® staff Bona Heinsohn accepts a celebratory resolution sponsored by Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) Commissioner, Cam Davis, during a recent MWRD Board of Commissioners meeting. The resolution recognized CCFB's upcoming centennial anniversary.

Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure



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

In January we rang in the New Year. With a fizzle and a pop 2019 came roaring in. Candidly, I don't even remember how our house celebrated or if we did. January gave way to the Polar Vortex and we happily ushered in February.

I'd like to say that spring planting came quickly on February's heels but that would be a lie. Spring planting, such that it was, was delayed. Miserable. Tedious. And muddy. Like many of my generation, I learned a new fun term "prevent plant." If you don't know, prevent plant is a provision in crop insurance that can provide coverage when weather extremes prevent farmers from planting a crop.

Spring washed out to summer and 2019 didn't get any easier. Summer application of crop protectants was delayed or simply didn't happen. Wheat and straw were delayed. Hay was delayed. And what hay was cut was likely rained on.

Thankfully summer gave way to fall. Somehow, we missed an early frost. But we didn't miss an early snow. My "Home Depot salesman" and "Annabeth Chase" walked the neighborhood in coveralls and

boots in a valiant attempt to trick-or-treat. They didn't complain, but their parents surely did. All retired early to the comforts of a warm house and good food.

Fall harvest has been much like 2019, rough. Fields are wet. The crop is wet. In some places there simply isn't a crop to pick.

On the note of wet. A couple of weekends ago we were picking corn. The east side of the field was largely dry. The west side of the field after the waterway was too wet for the grain cart or a slightly full combine to stay afloat. Each pass we'd unload the combine on the east side before it would cross the waterway and pick the west end of the field then we'd repeat on the return pass. It was one of those days when it felt wrong to be picking corn but even more wrong to let a day without rain pass.

That particular field is on the west side of a two-lane road that doubles as a want-to-be expressway between Boone and DeKalb Counties. It's even worse during the week because it's on the way to Northern Illinois University. Fortunately for us, it was a Sunday afternoon when we were hauling corn. Unfortunately, it was also wet, and a too short turn

ended up in a semi-truck stuck and blocking all lanes of traffic.

As the semi-truck was being worked out and then pulled out, drivers tried to edge by on the shoulder. Those same unhappy drivers were stopped from passing on the shoulder once the semi was being pulled out. Unfortunately, it was me directing traffic.

To the driver who nearly ran me down after I refused to let you pass on the shoulder with your fifth wheel travel trailer, while I respect that you were in a hurry, I stopped you for your safety and for ours. What would've happened if the chain had broken or the semi-truck had chosen that moment to get unstuck? If the shoulder was too steep for you to safely pass? Or if the one of three people who were working on the semi-truck had chosen that moment to step into the lane?

Everyone is in a hurry this fall, especially farmers. We'll be courteous and respectful of traffic laws, but our equipment and trucks move slowly and are large. Please help us this fall by keeping your eyes open and understanding that we're moving as fast as we safely can.

Bona can be reached at bona@cookcfb.org.



Gwen Shaw
Financial Representative

Considering a new career?

As a COUNTRY Financial® representative, you can make a difference in your community by helping customers achieve financial security. If you are one part analytical, one part creative and one part compassionate, let's get together!



Robert Saunders
Agency Sales Recruiter – Northern Illinois & Chicagoland
(309) 821-5226
Want to book some time for us to talk?
Go to <https://calendy.com/rob-at-country>

0518-585HO

PROFESSIONAL BULLS RIDERS ARE COMING TO ROSEMONT
and CCFB members can get
a 20% discount on select tickets
(OFFER NOT VALID ON \$20 TICKETS)
Go to <https://bit.ly/33ZBmWc> to purchase tickets.



SAVE 20% OFF SELECT PRICE LEVELS
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Cook County Financial Representatives of the Month

The Financial Representative of the Month program is designed by Country Financial Agency Managers 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 agency manager with the Financial Representative of the Month designation.



Matthew Powell
Chicago Northeast Agency, Sharon Stenke, Agency Manager
Matthew Powell has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. His office is located at 4200 W. Euclid Ave., Suite E, in Rolling Meadows, IL. His phone number is 847-934-5117. Matt has been a Career Financial Representative since February 2005.



Ibrahim Essa
Chicago Northeast Agency, Sharon Stenke, Agency Manager
Ibrahim Essa has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. His office is located at 25 NW. Point Blvd., Ste. 850, in Elk Grove Village, IL. His phone number is 847-963-8851. Ibrahim has been a Financial Representative since January 2017.



Kathy Spiewak
Chicago Northwest Agency, Jack Smith, Agency Manager
Kathy Spiewak has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. Her office is located at 11 W. Wise Rd., in Schaumburg, IL. Her phone number is 847-716-1010. Kathy has been a Financial Representative since February 2007.



Faustino Ramirez
Chicago Northwest Agency, Jack Smith, Agency Manager
Faustino Ramirez has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. His office is located at 1515 E. Woodfield Rd., Suite 930, Schaumburg, IL. His phone number is 847-891-3937. Faustino has been a Financial Representative since October 2017.



Gwen Shaw
Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager
Gwen Shaw has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. Her office is located at 820 E 87th St., Suite 212, Chicago, IL. Her phone number is 773-487-0919. Gwen has been a Financial Representative since October 2009.



Ed Beavers
Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager
Ed Beavers has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for October 2019. His office is located at 1401 S. State St., Suite 150, Chicago, IL. His phone number is 312-588-1404. Ed has been a Financial Representative since April 2015.



Jim Andresen
Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager
Jim Andresen has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for October 2019. His office is located at 17605 S. Oak Park Ave., Ste. C & D, in Tinley Park, IL. His phone number is 708-633-6490. Jim has been a Financial Representative since January 2003.



Kurt Husein
Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager
Kurt Husein has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for October 2019. His office is located at 12130 S. Harlem Ave., Unit A in Palos Heights, IL. His phone is 708-480-5099. Kurt has been a Financial Representative since December 2017.



Lionel Chavez
South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager
Lionel Chavez has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for October 2019. His office is located at 30 S Ash St., in Frankfort, IL. His phone number is 815-464-0219. Lionel has been a Financial Representative since August 2001.



John Tymmm
South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager
John Tymmm has been named Employee Financial John Tymmm has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for October 2019. His office is located at 10607 S. Harlem Ave., Unit 1A, in Worth, IL. His phone number is 708-480-5091. John has been a Financial Representative since June 2019.



HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT HOW YOUR FOOD IS GROWN?

Grab a seat at the table and visit watchusgrow.org to learn more about your food and the people who grow and raise it.

Classifieds

All ads that we receive for The Co-Operator are also listed on our website at cookcfb.org/membership/classifieds. 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 fbcoperator@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

40/ 2 Battery charger/starter, 2 Craftsman tool chests over

full of tools, 2 Tap & Die sets, 2 Ton Omega engine hoist on wheels, 750lb Engine stand, Transit, Generator, Power washers, light bar, socket sets, drill bits, drills, electric sanders, grease guns, tubes of grease, 100pc mechanic socket set. Sold all together for \$2000. Call Connie at 708-429-7815.

Cabela's Getaway Cabin 4-person tent with screenhouse- originally \$400 asking \$150 used once. Also, 4 army cots accommodating up to 375# never used asking \$50 each. Call Mary Lou at 708-798-1229 and leave a message for me to call you back.

Werner Heavy duty 30'feet extension ladder aluminum fiber glass combination new \$600 my price asking \$275. 2 tables or piano lamps asking \$100 or best offer. Call Eddy at 708-758-9119 (preferably evenings).

A ten horsepower Ryobi Snow blower \$250 or best offer. Courvoisier Erte collection Limited Edition un-open, brand new power tools, high end gun collection both long gun and handgun brand new in a box. Like new mannequin for sale. Call Jim at 773-581-4400.

Commercial Building 2300sq. ft with full basement. Fantastic opportunity, excellent location a mile from the expressway, 1hr ½ from Arlington park train station. For

more information call Rita at 847-259-9339.

Vacation lot in Marco Island Florida, facing Gulf of Mexico, facing waterfront lot. Call Rita for more information at 847-259-9339.

Vehicle

2002 Jaguar XKR 100 Limited Edition Supercharged convertible every available option, with 16K on it. For details call Jim at 773-581-4400.

2013 Nissan Altima 4.5S Like new condition, extended Nissan drivetrain warranty newer tires, brakes, just tuned, very clean one owner, mostly highway miles. Call Louie at 847-361-9292

For Rent

Vacation Villas at Fantasy World II Resort in Kissimmee, Florida. Seven (7) nights in onebedroom suite, full kitchen,

outdoor swimming pool, sleeps four (4). \$650 for seven (7) nights. No presentation is required. Call Ms. Day at 708-347-9369 for availability.

5 Star Resort 3br/ 2ba Condo miles from Disney World Orlando. Rental rates from \$80/night. Call 630-853-7669 or go to www.vrbo.com/218673.

Time Share in Marco Island Florida, suite 6, week 3 & 4 of January 2020. For more information call Rita at 847-259-9339.

Wanted

Wanting to buy your electric trains and slot cars, turn those unwanted Trains and Cars into Cash! Call Ron at 630-272-4433.

Wanted vintage plastic dealer promo cars & trucks, cast iron and tin toys, toy outboard motors also windup and slot cars. Call Jim at 708-361-8230.

This Month in Cook County Agriculture

- **Melka Garden Center's pictures with Santa, Live Reindeer and Musical Entertainment on December 7th at 10:00 AM.** Santa & Music from 10:00am-2:00pm & Reindeer from 10:00am-1:00pm. RSVP at Melka's at 708.349.6989 or send an email to gardencenter@jimmelka.com. Melka's is located at 11606 179th St., Mokena, IL 60448 | 708.349.6989.
- **Smits Farms Craft/Vendor Fair on December 14th from 9am-2pm.** No admission charge for this event. Over 45 home crafters and direct sale vendors will be participating in this event! Great place to get last minute Christmas items as well as baked goods! Smits will also have Christmas trees, wreaths and more Christmas items for sale at the fair! We will be making our amazing donuts for this event as well! This show is a very busy and well worth show coming to! Smits Farms is located at 3437 Sauk Trail, Chicago Heights, IL 60411 | (708) 758-3838

This article is for local farmstands, farmers' markets, chefs and restaurants, and organizations that are hosting farm-related activities, events, workshops, and gatherings that will occur soon. To promote your activity, email membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org or call 708-354-3276 by the 15th of the month. Please include your name, the event date/ time, a short 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. In addition, we will post farm, garden, or livestock related photos on our social media platform if you forward those to membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org.

Cook County Farm Bureau Young Leaders Winter Coat Drive



benefiting Together We Cope

(a local 501C(3) charity focused on preventing homelessness and serving local residents through a food pantry



The CCFB Young Leaders Group will be collecting new and gently used winter coats for those in need this winter.

All sizes accepted (newborn - 5X) October - Mid December

DROP OFF LOCATIONS:

Cook County Farm Bureau
6438 Joliet Road
Countryside IL 60525
M-F 8am - 4:30pm

Ted's Greenhouse Inc.
16930 S. 84th Avenue
Tinley Park IL 60487
Regular business hours

Historic Wagner Farm
1510 Wagner Road
Glenview IL 60025
Daily 9am - 5pm at the Heritage Center front desk

Call the CCFB with questions about the coat drive!



DECK your HALLS

this holiday season with fresh trees, garland, wreaths, poinsettias, greens and décor!

Purchase from a Farm Bureau Member Business. To locate one near you, visit our Farm Products Locator at www.cookcfb.org/Discover-Local

MEMBER BUSINESS	OPENING DAY
Big John's Farm Market	Chicago Hts. Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, greens, flowers, decor
Clarke's Garden Center	Chicago Hts. Nov. 15 th Wreaths, garland, greens, poinsettias, decor
Gorman Tree Farm	Monee Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, garland
Horcher's Farm	Wheeling Nov. 29 th Trees, handmade wreaths, greens, flowers
Kolze's Corner Garden	Woodstock Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, garland, poinsettias, decor
McCarthy's Farm Stand	Orland Park Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, garland, greens
Melka's Garden Center	Mokena Nov. 15 th Trees, wreaths, garland, greens, poinsettias, decor
Puckerville Farms	Lemont Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, garland, decor
Smits Farms	Sauk Village Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, greens
Ted's Greenhouse	Tinley Park Nov. 29 th Poinsettias, greens, handmade bows
Wagner Farm	Glenview Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, roping, garland, greens
West End Garden Ctr	Evanston Nov. 29 th Trees, wreaths, greens, flowers, plants, decor

Holiday Savings

302,000 BENEFITS TO SAVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Enjoy up to 20% off with Choice Hotels® advance reservations required 1-800-258-2847 IFB #00800614

Enjoy up to 20% off "Best Available Rate" with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts advance reservations required 1-877-670-7088 IFB #8000002027

If you need assistance with obtaining your County Farm Bureau® membership number, please contact us at (708)354-3276.

Farmer, Landowner, Ag Enthusiast & Member Workshops/Meetings Offered in 2020

Register today for the following great programs by calling the office at 708-354-3276 or visiting the website at www.cookcfb.org



Farmer | Landowner Meeting: Bankruptcy Protection, Market Facilitation Program, Farm Bill Info & More
Dates: February 4, 2020 | Tuesday
Time: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Location: CCFB Meeting Room, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: \$10 member | \$15 non-member fee includes lunch and materials
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or members online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org.



From Farm to You Addressing Food Insecurity
Date: March 12, 2020 | Thursday
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Location: Evergreen Park Library
Price: No charge
Registration: visit www.evergreenparklibrary.org
Join the Evergreen Park library and the Cook County Farm Bureau® for an interactive evening of exploring the path food takes from farm field to dinner plate and the obstacles in between. Participants will discuss, food labels, food banks, and food choices locally and internationally.



Creating a Farm Enterprise - this workshop is designed to help you start a farm or keep it!
Dates: February 22, 2020 | Saturday
Time: 9 a.m. – Noon
Location: CCFB Meeting Room, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: \$10 member | \$20 non-member fee will cover workshop materials and refreshments
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org



Planning for Organic Certification
Dates: April 4, 2020 | Saturday
Time: 9 a.m. – Noon
Location: CCFB Meeting Room, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: \$10 member | \$20 non-member fee will cover workshop materials and refreshments
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org



Keeping Your Farm in the Family: Farm Succession Planning – presented by ILFB & Country Financial
Dates: February 25, 2020 | Tuesday
Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m. – free Dinner included
Location: Hickory Grove Banquet & Conference Center, Rochelle, IL
Price: No charge
Registration: Registration opens January 1, 2020, to sign up for additional information and reminders go to: www.ilfb.org/farmplanning



Marketing to Today's Consumer
Dates: tbd
Time: Individual appointments – Registration required
Location: CCFB Meeting Room, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: Free
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org

For additional event details, please visit <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/upcoming-events> or contact Debbie at the CCFB at 708-354-3276.



Beekeeping Courses Offered in 2020

The Cook County Farm Bureau® and the Cook Du-Page Beekeepers Association (CDBA) have joined to help get you started down the right path in the keeping and caring for bees, by offering beekeeping workshops at the Farm Bureau! Pete Soltesz and Kim Kulon of the CDBA will be conducting the classes. Course outline and details online.

Beginning Beekeeping:
Dates: Feb. 29 & March 1, 2020 | Saturday & Sunday
Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. both days
Location: CCFB Meeting Room- 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: \$75.00 for CCFB & CDBA members
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org.

Q & A Help for Beekeeper Sessions:
Dates: April 20, 2020| Monday and May 18, 2020 | Monday
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Location: CCFB Meeting Room, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside
Price: \$20.00 per session
Registration: Call the Farm Bureau 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at www.cookcfb.org.

But Wait—There's More!

Go to www.cookcfb.org for these extras...

- CCFB holds 99th Annual Meeting of Organization
- Tofu offers growing market for Illinois soybeans
- Farmland Assessment and Flood Debasement
- IAA Foundation Christmas Cards for sale
- All Hands on deck to pass USMCA
- CCFB Member Health Benefits
- Study on Eating



From our family to yours, the Cook County Farm Bureau would like to wish you a warm and safe holiday!

Our holiday office hours:
In observance of Christmas and New Year's, our office will be closed on Tuesday, December 24th and Wednesday December 25th, as well as Tuesday, December 31st and Wednesday January 1st