



# 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. 94 No. 1

Countryside, IL 60525

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

January 2020

## Mark Your Calendar

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### HOLD THE DATE!

#### BREAKFAST AT THE FARM BUREAU

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

## Question of the Month

See page 2 for a Historic photo from the CCFB'S first 100 years and respond to the question related to the photo.

December's winner is  
**Dick Vero**

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

*Answer: President Calvin Coolidge*



Cook County farmer and Farm Bureau Board Member Mike Rauch (front, right) met with a delegation of Chinese foreign service advisors and officials during a recent farm visit. Rauch and the delegation discussed a variety of topics including the 2019 growing season, US/Chinese trade relations, and farming practices on modern American farms. They were also interested in learning more about the political landscape in the country.

## Farm Bureau Partners with Local Food Pantry for 2020 Food Checkout Day...please lend a hand!

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.

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. Donations can also be made by calling 708- 354-3276.

## 2020 Foundation Scholarship Applications Being Accepted...Feb 14 deadline

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation has opened the 22st 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 \$2,000 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.

*Continued on page 2*

## 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!



# AFBF Selects Cook County Farm Bureau® as a “County Activity of Excellence” Winner for 2020

The American Farm Bureau Federation® (AFBF) has named the Cook County Farm Bureau’s “Food Pantry Challenge” a 2020 County Activity of Excellence (CAE)! As a CAE winner, Cook CFB will participate in the Farm Bureau CAE Showcase at the 2020 AFBF Annual Convention and Trade Show in Austin, Texas this month.

AFBF received over 100 entries across all membership categories with 24 activities selected for the Trade Show.

Sponsored by the Public Relations Team, the Food Pantry Challenge, asked urban families to support their local food pantry by voting for them on Facebook. Messages connected urban consumers to local farmers and the healthy and nutritious food they grow and raise.

Final results included \$3,500 donated to 14 Cook County food pantries. The social media campaign featured over 7,000 votes, 400 comments, 1,500 shares, nearly 15,000 engagements and an organic reach of 118,000.

## Hello Ciao Guten Tag Hola Bonjour Tere Olá Shalom Translate to other Languages

We are very fortunate to have members that come from various backgrounds and countries. While we publish this publication in English, the Google Translate App can convert the publication text through your smart phone screen into Spanish, French, Polish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic and a host of other languages. Check it out. Enjoy and happy reading!

## Cześć Aloha Zdravo Salam Dobry den Hei God Dag Alo

### Historical Question of the Month



What year did this group of farmers meet at the LaSalle Hotel in Chicago to decide if they wanted to proceed with organizing the Cook County Farm Bureau®?

Answers (if not at the tip of your tongue) are available online at [cookcfb.org/ccfb/ourhistory](http://cookcfb.org/ccfb/ourhistory). Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276, fax your answer to 708-579-6056, or email to [fbcooperator@gmail.com](mailto:fbcooperator@gmail.com) to enter the

drawing for a \$25 gas card. (Please include name, FB# and phone number)

Check next month’s publication for the answer and the next historical question of the month.



## 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...

- Charlotte Sellers for preparing Ag in the Classroom reminder postcards for our back-to-school mailing that went out this month.
- Young Leaders, Becca and Doug, for taking time out of their workday to visit Walker Elementary School to talk to their adopted classroom and the Young Leaders for adopting the classroom.
- Mark Tolene, Division Manager from Prairie Farms Joliet, for donating 100 new milk cartons to use for our Dimes for Dairy collection efforts by local schools.
- Our members who are gearing up for the 100-year celebration by purchasing Centennial Legacy patio blocks and recording videos of happy birthday well wishes to the organization.
- The members who donated coats to the Young Leaders winter coat drive to benefit Together We Cope and to Jessica Biernacki, Kristen Yunker, and Rebecca Biernacki for presenting the bags of coats to the charity.
- Member business, Clarke’s Garden Center, for hosting a wonderful Winter Holiday Porch Planter workshop for our members and guests.
- Member Mr. L. Zielezinski for his generosity in donating books to our Ag Literacy Library (see photo) for use by teachers, members, and students.



## 2020 Foundation Scholarship Applications Being Accepted...Feb 14 Deadline

Continued from page 1

- 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](http://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!



Entomologist

Animal Nutritionist

Aquaculturalist

## Are You a Long-Time Member Age 90 or Above?

The Cook County Farm Bureau’s 100-year Celebration Committee wants to recognize our long-time members during our “Breakfast at the Farm Bureau” celebration event scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2020 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Cook County Farm Bureau building in Countryside. If you are a “long time” member, age 90 or above, and interested in attending to be a part of the celebration, please contact Katie Smith at the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276. For those members that fit the criteria and let us know in advance of your attendance, we will order a special gift, a Cook County Farm Bureau gate sign, for you! Thank you!

### Co-Operator

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# Downwind

by Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager

## a tough topic

2019 was a difficult year for farmers and there's no avoiding it.

Illinois Farm Bureau® (IFB) President, Richard Guebert, Jr. said last month in Chicago during his annual Illinois Farm Bureau address, "I do not know about you, but I am ready to be done with 2019 and turn the page to 2020!" He was talking about the never-ending weather issues that plagued farmers this past year, the depressed farm prices for most commodities, the continuing trade wars, escalating input costs and the many related issues facing American agriculture.

All of the 1000 farmer members in attendance at the speech clapped in agreement!

I have been working at the Farm Bureau for over 32 years, have been involved in farming all my life and have never seen a frustrating year like 2019 affecting all farmers. It rained all spring and into the summer. Only a portion of crops were planted and grown.

Hay grew uncut. Some of the hay that was cut was rained on, diminishing its quality. Now, I hear there's a hay shortage in the area.

Storm clouds kept customers away from farm stands, greenhouses and other agricultural businesses that depend on direct sales. Customers stayed dry at home, leaving flower beds and gardens unplanted.

To throw salt on the wound, it continued to rain during the fall as farmers attempted harvest (what there was available to harvest).

Trade talks have been mired all season, depressing commodity prices. Finally,

there has been a glimmer of hope on the trade front in recent weeks... a tentative agreement with China. The House of Representatives has opened discussions to consider approval of the United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA). In addition, the recently announced Japanese trade deal grabbed a portion of the benefits that had been promised to farmers as a part of the Trans-Pacific partnership agreement several years ago which President Trump negated.

However, farmers are reluctant to get excited; what if the rug is yanked out from under their farms again?

IFB President Guebert described 2019 as the movie, The Perfect Storm. All the forces of nature and economics have come down hard upon the backs of our Midwestern farmers. This can take a toll on an individual physically, mentally, spiritually, and psychologically.

Knowing that this is been such a difficult year, I wanted to reach out to our members and farm producers that may be feeling down. Please know that there are people available to talk to and provide help.

What would happen if you as a farmer, ignored signs of stress in your crops and livestock? I know that you go out of your way to care for and fix the problem. Please do the same for yourself as well.

I have learned through example and witnessed myself that farmers are resilient. I have learned through example and witnessed myself that farmers are optimists. I have learned through example and witnessed myself that farmers tend to try to work it out, many times alone. Sometimes alone is not the right course.

2020 is a fresh, new year. The sun will shine again. Our fertile earth will provide again. Crops will grow. Livestock will provide so much to us. The consumer and customer will be back in full force seeking great food and local products.

Remember, your family and friends are your most precious commodity. We want all in agriculture to be a part of 2020's rebirth.

*Bob can be reached at brohrer@cookcfb.org.*

Seek help as soon as possible by contacting a mental health professional or by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK if someone you know exhibits any of the following signs:

- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself or talking about wanting to hurt or kill oneself
- Looking for ways to kill oneself by seeking access to firearms, available pills, or other means
- Talking or writing about death, dying, or suicide when these actions are out of the ordinary for the person
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling rage or uncontrolled anger or seeking revenge
- Acting reckless or engaging in risky activities—seemingly without thinking
- Feeling trapped—like there's no way out
- Increasing alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and society
- Feeling anxious, agitated, or unable to sleep or sleeping all the time
- Experiencing dramatic mood changes
- Seeing no reason for living or having no sense of purpose in life

### 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](http://cookcfb.org/foundation) to donate.

**COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION BRICK ORDER FORM**

<p><b>4x8</b></p> <p>Line 1 _____</p> <p>Line 2 _____</p> <p>Line 3 _____</p>	<p><b>8x8</b></p> <p>Line 1 _____</p> <p>Line 2 _____</p> <p>Line 3 _____</p> <p>Line 4 _____</p> <p>Line 5 _____</p> <p>Line 6 _____</p>
<p><b>8X16 / BENCH</b></p> <p>Line 1 _____</p> <p>Line 2 _____</p> <p>Line 3 _____</p> <p>Line 4 _____</p> <p>Line 5 _____</p> <p>Line 6 _____</p>	

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

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

## Your South Holland Agency

<b>Jeff Orman</b> Agency Manager 708-560-7777	<b>Andrew Carrell</b> South Holland 708-596-3999	<b>Jim Verduin</b> South Holland 708-596-0008	<b>Randall Cox</b> Flossmoor 708-679-1870	<b>Elliot Day</b> Flossmoor 708-679-1870
<b>Gary Molenhouse</b> Matteson 708-679-1870	<b>Josh Van Namen</b> Worth 708-361-3925	<b>Jim Pathemore</b> Orland Park 708-745-5151	<b>Tim Perchinski</b> Steger 708-754-7300	<b>Bob Smith</b> Homewood 708-798-4844
<b>Paul Turay</b> Mokena 708-478-0423	<b>John VanGennep</b> Mokena 708-478-5500	<b>Bob Deenik</b> Lansing 708-474-5600	<b>Tim Van Zuidam</b> St. John, IN 219-365-1781	<b>Mike Cerf</b> Oak Forest 708-560-7777
<b>Charmaine Toney-Adkins</b> Oak Forest 708-381-4010	<b>Grace Cordero</b> Oak Forest 708-381-4011	<b>John Tym</b> Worth 708-480-5091		

## Helping you protect what matters most



## Young Leaders Visit Local Classroom



“How big is your farm?” “What animals do you have on your farm?” “How many greenhouses do you have?” The third-grade students at Walker Elementary School in Bedford Park had many questions for Young Leaders Doug Yunker and Becca Biernacki who visited the school as part of the Illinois Ag in the Classroom Adopt A Classroom Program. Yunker talked to the students about his family corn and soybean farm explaining how he delivers some of his corn to Ingredion which is across the street from the school. Biernacki spoke about her family’s greenhouse and brought examples of poinsettias and other plants that are produced year-round at Ted’s Greenhouse in Tinley Park. The students were excited to share their knowledge of farming with the young leaders including posters showing the definitions of agriculture terms they studied prior to the visit. Our thanks to teacher Ms. Eva Manske for sharing agricultural resources with her students through our local, state and national AITC partnerships.

### Recipe of the Month: *Cream of Cauliflower or Broccoli Soup* Zeldenrust Farm Market, Chicago Heights

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| 6 cups water              | 10 chicken bouillon cubes                      |
| 4 ribs of celery (cut up) | 1 cup onion (cut up)                           |
| 1 teaspoon salt           | ¼ teaspoon pepper                              |
| ½ teaspoon garlic powder  | 8 cups fresh cauliflower/<br>broccoli (cut up) |

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 stick butter     | 2 cups milk        |
| 8 tablespoon flour | 2 cups heavy cream |

Boil first 8 ingredients until tender, about 15 minutes.

In saucepan melt butter; stir in flour, milk and heavy cream until blended. Optional: ¼ lb of American cheese added gives good flavor. Recipes reprinted with member’s permission from our 2019 Cookfresh Recipe Collection Brochure, available online at [www.cookcfb.org/discover-local/recipes](http://www.cookcfb.org/discover-local/recipes).

The 2020 Cookfresh Recipe Collection will be a “throwback” edition for our 100 year Anniversary. Recipes will be selected from decades of submissions to commemorate our Centennial! Recipe Booklets will be available at our 100 year Celebration Breakfast on March 28th and after. Visit our Events Calendar for details.

## Meet a “Face” of the Cook County Farm Bureau®

This month’s “Face of CCFB” is ...

### Brooke Bestwina, co-owner of The Feed Store

- Brooke Bestwina came into the family business about 7 years ago, now a co-owner with her uncle, Joseph Bestwina. Joe and his brother Rudy Bestwina (Brooke’s dad) purchased the establishment in 1948 and continue to serve Chicagoland and the Tri-state area for over 70 years.
- We sell the best fresh hand-packed feed for any animal, and litter, hay, straw, and bedding that is always clean and dry. We have a huge selection of grass seed, seed and fertilizers. Special wildlife feeds and mixes. Traps and bait to control pests and vermin. Farm animals available and sold year-round.
- We also do a lot of pigeon feed - If it walks, crawls, flies, runs, or swims, We Can feed it!



#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FEED STORE MEMORY?

My dad would bring us to work with him; we would climb on the stacks of 50lb bags of feed.

#### WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO OR CONSIDER A MENTOR?

In this business, my dad, I miss him every day. He was always so calm and didn’t let the stress of the business get to him.

#### WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY?

Seeing the store successful so I can keep my long-time employees working, as they are like family.

#### WHAT IS THE MOST UNUSUAL QUESTION OR REQUEST YOU HAVE RECEIVED?

Unusual may be worm chow but nothing is a surprise anymore. We carry monkey, alligator, cow, hedgehog, ferret feed. We are a niche store that supplies it all.

#### WHAT PRODUCT IS A CUSTOMER FAVORITE?

Our premium chicken feed- we make our own and it is a large part of our sales. Also, Fromm’s dog feed; it’s high quality and reasonably priced as they do not advertise a lot and pass the savings on to customers.

The Feed Store  
5408 S. Harlem Ave.  
Summit, IL 60501  
Ph: 708-458-1327  
Hours: Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri;  
9a.m.- 6p.m.  
Sat: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Sun: 10 a.m.-2 p.m  
Closed on Wednesdays  
Online: [frommfamily.com/r/1802](http://frommfamily.com/r/1802)  
FB: [www.facebook.com/thefeedstore1948/](https://www.facebook.com/thefeedstore1948/)

#### WHAT ANIMAL IS YOUR FAVORITE?

Dogs- I love my chocolate lab, Pretzel...she’s old, slow and grey.

## Cook County Farm Bureau Board of Directors



The Cook County Farm Bureau Board of Directors is excited for 2020 and the wide-ranging, beneficial programs and activities in store for the organization’s members. Board members include front row left to right: Roger Freeman, Ruth Zeldenrust (Sec. – Treas.), Mark Yunker, Gerry Kopping, and Jim Bloomstrand. Back row left to right: Tim Stuenkel, Dan Biernacki, Jim Gutzmer, Mike Rauch (VP), Janet McCabe (Pres.), Patrick Horcher, Todd Price and Farm Bureau Manager Bob Rohrer.

## Cook County Farm Bureau Staff



The staff of the Cook County Farm Bureau is geared up for a great 2020 year of membership benefits and services, Ag in the classroom programming, support of farmers, policy implementation, workshops and events, and fun filled activities for members to enjoy throughout. Staff members include front row left to right: Melanie Senne, Diane Merrion, Bob Rohrer. Back row left to right: Bob Heine, Debbie Voltz, Katie Smith, Juanita Ramos, Kelli Villarreal, Jill Drover and Bona Heinsohn.



# FOOD CHECKOUT DAY

February 20th

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 donation
- Become a Cart Sponsor for \$250



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

\*Cash Donations can be made by calling (708) 354-3276



# Photo Contest Results are in!

The Cook County Farm Bureau is pleased to announce the winners of our 2020 photo contest! We received over 30 entries; each image was beautiful and portrayed a scene of agriculture in all its unique glory. Nine photos (three in each category) "shout out"

to our judges. These and other photos will be featured in a special calendar commemorating the Cook County Farm Bureau's 100-year anniversary as well as in various publications, on our website, social media, etc. Thank you and congratulations!

## Cook County Ag Winners



1st place Alex Swistun



1st Place Cathy Johnson



3rd Place Allen Oconnell



2nd Place Lauren Lysy



3rd Place Angelica Carmen

## Kids in Ag Winners



1st Place Kathleen Down



2nd Place Cady Boer



3rd Place Josh Dotson



## Livestock/Farm Animals Winners



2nd Place Sophia Grande

## Your Orland Park Agency



**Cary Tate**  
708-226-1111  
Agency Manager  
Orland Park, IL



**Piero Setta**  
708-226-0431  
7601 W. 191st St  
Tinley Park, IL



**Jim Andresen**  
708-633-6490  
17605 S Oak Park Ave  
Tinley Park, IL



**Thomas Geraghty**  
708-425-9700  
5003 W 95th St  
Oak Lawn, IL



**Mark Wright**  
708-403-2416  
7601 W. 191st St  
Tinley Park, IL



**George Parthemore**  
708-226-1896  
9432 W 143rd St  
Orland Park, IL



**Mike Skrabis**  
708-226-1666  
9731 W 165th St  
Orland Park, IL



**Tony Palumbo**  
708-403-5708  
7601 W. 191st St  
Tinley Park, IL



**Mike Spadoni**  
708-425-1825  
3923 W. 95th St  
Evergreen Park, IL



**Bob Johnson**  
708-429-9422  
17605 S Oak Park Ave  
Tinley Park, IL



**Dan Stumpf**  
708-614-1688  
17605 S Oak Park Ave  
Tinley Park, IL



**Bill Thompson**  
708-361-1304  
106 Stephen St  
Lemont, IL



**Nora Beverly**  
708-429-7789  
1938 Lincoln Highway  
New Lenox, IL



**Brian Zielinski**  
630-257-6100  
106 Stephen St  
Lemont, IL



**Nick Burke**  
708-425-1816  
3923 W. 95th St  
Evergreen Park, IL



**Mike Thauer**  
708-425-1559  
3923 W. 95th St  
Evergreen Park, IL



**Erica Storrs-Gray**  
708-671-1465  
12130 S Harlem Ave  
Palos Heights, IL



**Terry LaMastus**  
708-754-5900  
3308 Chicago Rd  
Steger, IL



**Joe Voves**  
708-425-1527  
3923 W. 95th St  
Evergreen Park, IL



9731 W 165th St Suite 36 Orland Park, IL 60467  
**708-226-1111**





# Agricultural Literacy

## AG LIT BIT

### Let The Celebration Begin

Ag in the Classroom



Diane Merrion, CCFB Director of Ag Literacy

It's a big year and we hope you'll be a part of the celebration! You're going to be hearing a lot about 100 in 2020 as that is the theme of the year for the Cook County Farm Bureau as we reach our 100th anniversary.

technology. What has evolved over the past 100 years will likely change much faster during the next 100 years.

Just last month alone, we saw researchers writing about future "Dropcopters" (using drones to pollinate crops), Artificial Intelligence to track cows (using bovine facial recognition and hide patterns), use of solar panels on farm fields including growing crops under the panels (cranberries for example), and use of technology to create a solution to extend the shelf life of produce (imagine bananas or avocados lasting far longer).

It's never been a more interesting (or challenging) time for our industry, although they probably thought that a century ago. Growing A Nation (<https://growinganation.org/>) is a wonderful resource that provides a timeline into the history of agriculture to see how we got to where we are today. Prohibition led the headlines back in January of 1920 and 100 years later cannabis is the hot topic.

Not sure what's next but we here at CCFB hope you will enjoy celebrating our birthday with us on March 28, 2020

Diane can be reached at [aite@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite@cookcfb.org).

The Farm Bureau was established in March of 1920, the same year my grandparents were celebrating the arrival of their first (and only) son, who was born that January in Independence, Louisiana. It's crazy to think my father would be celebrating his 100th birthday this month and would have been a bit older than our Farm Bureau. Ironically, his family had a small farm and existed on what they raised, selling the excess (like strawberries) to buy other necessities.

During that time, one farmer fed about 10 people (enough for their family), whereas today one U.S. farmer feeds about 166 people. That number has changed due to many factors, including

# Bring 3rd Grade to the Farm



Students learned about raising sheep from Todd Price (Superintendent of the Glenview Park District) at Ag Day North 2019.

Agriculture Day North 2020 registration is now open to 3rd grade classrooms. Funded by the Cook County Farm Bureau® Foundation, this educational field trip held at Wagner Farm in Glenview affords young learners the opportunity to rotate through eight learning stations. Students will walk away with a greater understanding of the role agriculture plays in their lives including the importance of plants and animals. As one teacher shared after last year's program, "Students were engaged, excited and learned so much. The materials sent beforehand really helped lay a foundation." To register or learn more about this free program visit <https://bit.ly/2Ms4A9x> or email [aite@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite@cookcfb.org). Limited to 16 classrooms.



## Dimes for Dairy

### Calling all schools: Service Project

Start the new year with a service project to collect dimes to purchase dairy products for a local food pantry, Together We Cope. Our partnerships will combine efforts to provide for local families in need. We'll supply the milk cartons and you can design the competition at your school to see how you can collect the most dimes. The Farm Bureau will match each school's first \$100 as a tribute to your efforts and our 100th anniversary celebration. Our thanks to Prairie Farms who will be delivering the dairy products the pantry selects.

Every school will be acknowledged with a plaque and dairy themed book for their school library. For details visit <https://bit.ly/2PG32dK> or email us at [aite2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite2@cookcfb.org). We'd love to have you join us! Collection will take place from mid-January to mid-February.

## Summer Intern: Agriculture Education

The Ag in the Classroom program, through the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation®, 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 educational programming including preparing agricultural education materials for Summer Professional Development Conferences, planning lessons and conducting summer youth programs, updating social media, and writing articles for public relations. Position requires excellent organizational skills and strong speaking and writing skills. Must provide own transportation throughout Cook County to conduct local programs. Approximately 30 hours per week. For information or to submit application, contact Diane Merrion, Ag Literacy Coordinator, at [aite@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite@cookcfb.org).

## Summer Ag Academy 2020

### June 15–18 Producer-Consumer-Teacher: Rural Summer Ag Academy

Participants will tour NW Illinois farms and agribusinesses and enjoy guest speakers from the education and agriculture industry.

One overnight stay in NW Illinois.

### July 7–10 Teaching & Experiencing Urban/Rural Agriculture

Explore rural Illinois agriculture and how it connects to Chicago markets.

One overnight stay in Central Illinois.

Both programs include curriculum concepts to agriculture with STEM focused content and lessons.

Earn 30 PDCH or 2 Grad Credits Each

Cost: \$125 each; grad credits extra fee

Registration required [aite2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite2@cookcfb.org)

For more information visit our website at <https://bit.ly/2EDftkv>



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?





### KIRSTEN RAVER

Ag Literacy Intern 2018

**Education/Degree:** University of Illinois - Champaign, Illinois / Agricultural Sciences Education with an endorsement in Biology

**Current Role:** Rolling Meadows HS teacher, teaches classes in Veterinary Science, Agriculture Biology, and Biology. Advisor for Rolling Meadows FFA chapter.

**Why Agriculture:** I chose agriculture as my major because it had been an interest of mine ever since I was young. I grew up in a town that did not have very much agriculture, so it wasn't something easily available to me through school. When I got a little bit older (middle school) my family built a farm and we moved there. That is where my passion sparked and a whole new world opened to me. After learning agriculture courses were offered at other schools, I realized that I wanted to offer something to students that I did not have the opportunity to be a part of while in high school.



# Agriculture Adventure for Families

While soups are popular year-round, there's something about having a bowl of hot soup during the cold winter months to make us feel good. January is National Soup Month and a great time to celebrate the ingredients our farmers provide that can be turned into a bowl of goodness. Chickens, beef, vegetables and grains are just a few of the commodities our farms produce every day enabling us to create soup recipes to please everyone.

Everyone has a favorite soup in America. Whether it's the classic, homemade comfort of chicken noodle soup or a bowl of ramen, we love our soup in this country. In fact, Americans eat more than 10 billion bowls of soup every single year. So what soups do Americans really love? Here are some of the best selling soups in America?

### 1. Chicken Noodle Soup

There's no surprise that chicken noodle soup tops the list of best-selling soups in America. Some of us grew up with our parents lovingly preparing a big bowl of chicken noodle soup to help us feel better on a bad day. The warm, comforting flavor brings us back to those simpler times and reminds us of home.



### 2. Tomato Soup

A bowl of tomato soup makes the perfect meal. Whether served warm with a crunchy grilled cheese during the winter or cold as a spicy gazpacho in the summer, there's no surprise this garden fresh soup is America's second favorite.

### 3. Clam Chowder

Clam chowder is a New England regional favorite that's wonderful flavor has become so popular, it is now an American standard. No matter if you prefer a classic cream-based or the tomato-based clam chowders, topped with a handful of oyster crackers, this creamy soup is the perfect food to warm you up on a cold, rainy day no matter where you live.

### 4. Potato Soup

Potato soups are also incredibly versatile, so there's no wondering why Americans love it. Potato and ham, potato and leek, and potato and beef stew are just some of our favorite go-to soups in America. No matter what savory flavor you crave, there's a potato soup that's a perfect match for your tastes.



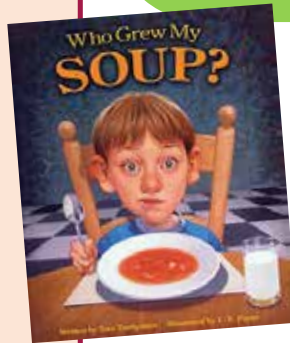
### 5. Minestrone

Hailing from Rome, Italy, Americans were quick to take on minestrone soup as one of their favorites. The flavorful mix of vegetables and beans in a tomato broth is incredibly filling and tastes fantastic. Minestrone is also a great healthy choice because it's incredibly flexible and can be made no matter produce is in season.

Source: [www.solesoups.com/02/17/top-five-best-selling-soups-america/](http://www.solesoups.com/02/17/top-five-best-selling-soups-america/)

## Soup Fun Facts

- There are 32 feet of noodles inside each can of Campbell's Chicken Noodle Soup
- Soup can be dated back to about 6000 B.C. and was first made of hippopotamus.
- Statistics show that women are fonder of soups than men, for their numerous benefits.
- There are different types of soup including: Bisque, Chowder, Stock/Broth, Bouillon, and Consomme.



Who Grew My Soup? tells the story of young Phineas Quinn and his questions about the vegetable soup his mom serves for lunch. Phin declares he won't slurp a single spoonful until he knows: Who grew my soup? Join Phin and the magical Mr. Mattoo as they fly

from farm to farm, learning about amazing vegetables and the farmers who grow them.



TRY OUR ARCHIVE RECIPE..

## CARROT SOUP

- |                     |                      |                         |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 tbl. Margarine    | 1 C. Milk            | 3 c. Sliced Carrots     |
| 2 C. Water          | 1/8 tsp. Nutmeg      | 1 Chicken Boullion Cube |
| 1 c. Diced Potatoes | 1 med. Onion Chopped | ¼ tsp. Salt             |

In med. suacepan, melt margarine, add onion and saute til tender. Pour in water and bring to boil - add carrots, potatoes and boullion. Return to boil, reduce heat, cover and simmer until vegetables are tender. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Place mixture in blender and blend till smooth. Return to pan, stir in milk and seasonings, heat to boil. Serve hot - 4 servings.

## Make a Pot of MyPlate Soup



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 2020 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..  
*Jeanette Schneidewent*

## January Word Search

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| Bowl      | Minestrone |
| Broth     | Noodle     |
| Campbells | Potato     |
| Carrot    | Recipe     |
| Chicken   | Soup       |
| Goodness  | Tomato     |
| Healthy   | Vegetables |
| Hot       | Winter     |

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.

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





## Good Food Brings Winter Comfort

These days, my husband’s favorite supper of roast beef with mashed potatoes, gravy and homemade rolls prompts him to ask, “What’s the occasion?” My response: “We’re home.”

With both kids in middle school, a night at home free from extracurricular activities provides reason to celebrate some down time. Comfort foods flow from this availability, which triggers the desire to cook and bake with an enthusiasm that tackles even dish duty with high spirits. The aroma of home-baked goods and from-scratch meals fill our home, hugging hearts before taming empty stomachs. While I love to occasionally dine out and pay someone else to handle the food prep and clean-up, nothing quite matches having or making the time to enjoy the magic of a home-cooked meal around the family dinner table.

Food makes us feel good, and the farm women before me set flavor standards and meal-time priorities that I embrace and share with our kids. Our household teaches respect for mealtime as a family. We also deliver a hands-on education in how food grows, whether in our farm’s fields, our backyard garden, the hen house or Grandpa’s cattle pasture.

The kids see that the eggs they gather make it into the homemade rolls. We top those rolls with jelly,

home-made from the backyard grapevine. From the freezer, we pull steaks and roast beef processed from last year’s steer that Grandpa raised. This 30-cubic-foot appliance also holds last summer’s sweet corn, homemade pesto from the back-porch basil plant and broilers the kids helped raise.

This winter, roast beef with mashed potatoes one night may make beef stew with dumplings the next. Our daughter loves from-scratch chicken pot pie with our whole farm-raised broilers. The meal takes hours to prepare but tastes so good that we want to lick the ramekin. Our son cheers for meatballs, formed from our freezer beef and flavored with garden onions stored in the basement. We declare Sunday nights “pizza night” and, when time allows, opt for homemade topped with pizza sauce the kids preserved with me last August.

At another level entirely, Grandma used to butcher a chicken on Sunday morning for fried chicken after church. I take much simpler routes, but still share in ways to celebrate good food. Sometimes, that means leftover chicken noodle soup for Sunday lunch.

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

## Family Farm and Food Bytes

**STARTUP COMPANY USES DRONES TO HELP POLLINATE TREE CROPS (FarmWeekNow)** - A New York-based startup company is using drones to help pollinate tree crops, according to Growing Produce. Dropcopter relied on hexacopters to augment pollination of such crops as almonds, apples, cherries and pears. Three years of trials showed drone-augmented pollination increased yields by 25% to 50%. Not many trees are needed to harvest enough pollen for the entire orchard, according to the company and some buds remain on the trees whose buds are harvested. The drones follow a predetermined set flight plan, and the pollen is contained in a patented device that scatters pollen from the drone. Drones fly up and down the rows about 10 feet above the tree canopy and can cover about 20 to 25 acres an hour.

**GOODYEAR TO INCREASE SOY OIL USE (FarmWeek)** - Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company’s latest sustainability report shares the company’s goal of increasing soybean oil consumption by 25% next year. The company also wants to fully replace all petroleum in its tires by 2040.

**PRAIRIE FARMS CAPTURES AWARDS AT NATIONAL CHEESE CONTEST (FarmWeekNow)** - Prairie Farms Dairy, an Illinois Farm Bureau affiliate, recently won 14 awards at the 2019 National Milk Producers Federation Championship Cheese Contest held in New Orleans. Among the awards were four first-place, three second-place, and five third-place finishes. Prairie Farms Dairy also won the Best in Class Cottage Cheese Award and dominated the cottage cheese and Swiss cheese categories by taking 10 of 12 awards.

**U.S. FOOD MOST AFFORDABLE (AFBF)** - A new American Farm Bureau Federation® (AFBF) analysis shows that the U.S. has the most affordable food supply in the world. Megan Nelson, AFBF economic analyst, researched global food prices and found Americans enjoy the most affordable overall price for food at home – about 4.8% of disposable income. She also found people in high-income countries spend 4% to 6% of disposable income on food, while consumers in low-income countries spend more than 50% of their household budget on food.

*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.*

## Young Leaders Presents Coats to Together We Cope



Left to right: Kristen Yunker, Rebecca Biernacki, Lena (Assistant Manager for Together We Cope), and Jessica Biernacki.

Young leader Chairman Jessica Biernacki, with Kristen Yunker and Rebecca Biernacki, presented 5 large bags of coats that were generously donated by various Cook County Farm Bureau members to benefit the Together We Cope charity in Tinley Park. The 501 (c)(3) charity supports over 27 communities in the southwestern area of Cook County.

**About: Together We Cope**

- Located in Tinley Park at 17010 Oak Park Ave.
- A homelessness prevention agency based in Tinley Park, Illinois. We serve 27 communities in four townships (Orland, Palos, and Bremen townships and the suburban part of Worth Township) in Chicago’s south suburbs. Our mission is to bridge the gap for Southland residents in temporary crisis.
- Helps people stay in their homes during unexpected temporary financial problems
- Provides basic necessities during a financial downturn (food, shampoo, diapers and clothing. We help with prescriptions, past due rent, mortgage, utility payments, school supplies and Christmas presents for children). Help with food, clothing and referrals helps to prevent their homelessness because it allows more of their limited money to continue to be spent on housing, utilities, and medical needs while they work hard to get back on their feet again.
- Helps people in Alsip • Blue Island • Bridgeview • Chicago Ridge • Country Club Hills • Crestwood • Evergreen Park • Garden Homes • Harvey • Hazel Crest • Hickory Hills • Hometown • Homewood • Markham • Merrionette Park • Midlothian • Oak Forest • Oak Lawn • Orland Hills • Orland Park • Palos Heights • Palos Hills • Palos Park • Posen • Robbins • Tinley Park and Worth.

### County Assessor Deadline for Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit

The Cook County Assessor’s office has a deadline of January 31st for filing the 2020 Cook County Farmland Questionnaire/Affidavit. Forms are available at [www.cookcountyassessor.com](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com), click Forms>Farms>Download. Filing of this form is necessary on an annual basis to maintain the farm assessment of the property that is farmed in Cook County. The Cook County Assessor’s Office annually reviews the status of all properties classified as farms in the County. If the affidavit is not provided, the county will reclassify its usage which will likely increase the assessment value and increase the tax burden as a result.

We recommend that you maintain a copy of the document for your records for future use. The Cook County Farm Bureau does provide a notary service for members (required on the form). Please call the office at 708-354-3276 in advance to verify that Melanie or Kelli will be available to provide this service.

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# Farm Bureau Delegates Approve Cook County's Resolution Submittals



The Cook County Farm Bureau was well represented at the Illinois Farm Bureau annual meeting held in Chicago in December. From right to left, Janet McCabe, Todd Price, Roger Freeman, and Mike Rauch served as delegates on delegate floor during the debate to create the 2020 Illinois Farm Bureau policy book on agricultural issues and concerns. Cook County Farm Bureau led improvements in the policy book on the topics of government assisted nutrition programs, healthcare and equine agriculture. The Board of Directors donated a cordless drill/impact wrench for the silent auction to raise funds for ag literacy. Board members and spouses attended and participated in various functions and meetings throughout the event.

Through a grassroots process, Farm Bureau members submitted the following resolutions to delegates at the 2018 Illinois Agricultural Association® annual meeting.

**Government Assisted Nutrition Programs**

**We support:** An exemption from Criterion A and B for retailers to the USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retailer rules to allow seasonal and on-farm businesses to accept SNAP benefits.

To be SNAP-authorized, a store generally must meet one of two eligibility standards: Criterion A (staple food stock) or Criterion B (staple food sales). Staple foods are the basic food items that make up a significant portion of an individual's diet and are usually prepared at home and consumed as a major component of a meal. Staple food categories include vegetables or fruits; meat, poultry, or fish; dairy products; and breads or cereals.

This resolution speaks directly towards Criterion B (staple food sales). To be eligible under Criterion B, stores must have more than 50% of their total gross retail sales from items in one or more of the four staple food categories (i.e. butcher shops, bakeries, fruit and vegetables specialty stores).

**By removing the cap smaller businesses are eligible to accept SNAP benefits.**

**Health Care**

**We support:** 17. Patient access to critical access hospitals

(CAH) in rural and underserved areas.

The "critical access hospital" (CAH) designation is designed to reduce the financial vulnerability of rural hospitals and improve access to healthcare by keeping essential services in rural communities. There are 57 CAHs in Illinois. To accomplish this goal, CAHs receive certain benefits, such as cost-based reimbursement for Medicare services. Hospitals must meet the following conditions to obtain CAH designation: 25 or fewer acute care inpatient beds; located more than 35 miles from another hospital (exceptions may apply); maintain an annual average length of stay of 96 hours or less for acute care patients; and 24/7 emergency care services.

**Equine Agriculture**

**We oppose:**

1. Closing existing equestrian trails on federal, state, and property other than property where irreversible damage could occur.
2. Efforts to terminate, ban, effectively ban, or create an undue financial hardship relating to the use of horses in commerce, service, agriculture, husbandry, transportation, ranching, entertainment, education, or exhibition.

There's been numerous attempts by governments to limit the use of horses, including attempts locally in the City of Chicago.

Congresswoman Robin Kelly discusses the future of the United States-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) trade agreement with Cook County Farm Bureau® Board of Directors during the 2019 Illinois Agricultural Association Annual Meeting in Chicago. Pictured are Ruth Zeldenrust, Janet McCabe, Dan Biernacki, and Tim Stuenkel. (With Karen Warrick from Will County Farm Bureau)



State Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz joined Lee and Cook County Farm Bureaus for a farm visit in November. Rep. Gong-Gershowitz visited a beef farm and grain elevator before harvesting corn. Rep. Gong-Gershowitz is "adopted" by Lee County Farm Bureau through the Adopt-a-Legislator® program.



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

## Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure

Dear Congressman,  
It's me, Bona Heinsohn. I think you've might have forgotten about me amid politics, political posturing, and campaign fundraising.

Let me remind you. My farmer is a third-generation family famer who raises corn, soybean, wheat, and alfalfa in northern Illinois. Nearly half of our acres are certified organic by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We also have a medium-sized registered Holstein dairy herd complete with our blue-eyed girl's winter show calf named "Lickey". For several years, our milk went to Dean Foods in Huntley but more recently we market it through a farmer-owned co-operative, Dairy Farmers of American based in Michigan. Our soybeans go overseas to China and Japan and our organic certified corn is used as chicken feed. We feed our alfalfa to our cattle.

Our small family boosts a blue-eyed girl who

loves horses, her trumpet, playing third base in softball, and school. We also have a big-little boy with no official eye color who loves farming, real tools (not those plastic ones in the toy section), tractors, and his extra-large cat named "Xanadau". These two, affectionately known as "children of the corn" are our future. Our fourth generation. We want nothing more than for them to follow their dad and grandpa around asking if they're old enough to milk a cow, drive a tractor, farm. They're our legacy.

As family farmers we rely heavily on trade and access to international markets. And Congressman, let's be frank. This is where you come in. In 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) reduced trade barriers between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is in a lot of ways an updated version of NAFTA but is expected to increase U.S. agricultural exports by two billion. This agreement needs to be ratified by

the United States and Canada. Mexico has already ratified the agreement but will need to ratify the recent changes. Canada is expected to ratify the agreement in parallel to the United States. Ratify the agreement. Help farmers. Help automobile manufacturers. Help the economy.

Speaking of trade, rumor is that there's a tentative agreement with China. Farmers need China as a trading partner. The phase one deal calls for China to purchase \$50 billion in agricultural products and \$200 billion in U.S. goods and services over a two-year period. Under this agreement, snapback tariffs will not go into effect.

Congressman, what we need most is an advocate for farmers. Someone who is willing to learn more about how food is grown and raised. Someone who is willing to stand up and push for agreements, legislation, and policy beneficial to Illinois farmers.

In the New Year, can you, Congressman be our advocate?

Bona can be reached at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).



# Master Member Club



During the Team kickoff, the Board of Directors conducted the ceremony for the Master Member Club which recognizes Cook County Farm Bureau volunteers that actively recruit members into the organization. Leaders in the Master Member Club, from left to right, are Ruth Zeldenrust, Dan Biernacki, Karen Biernacki, Jessica Biernacki, Janet McCabe and Jim Bloomstrand. Not pictured: Gerry Kopping.



Hit the road with Mickey Mouse and his pals for a high-octane ride in Disney On Ice presents ROAD TRIP ADVENTURES.

JANUARY 29 – FEBRUARY 2, 2020

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(312) 455-7469 and use the promotional code SG.

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Go to <https://bit.ly/33ZBmWc> to purchase tickets.



**SAVE 20% OFF SELECT PRICE LEVELS  
USE CODE: CCFB**



# 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.



**Maggie Lyczko**

*Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager*  
Maggie Lyczko has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. Her office is located at 3339 N. Harlem Ave. in Chicago, IL. Her phone number is 773-427-2964. Maggie has been a Financial Representative since February 2011.



**Sylwia Grochowska**

*Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager*  
Sylwia Grochowska has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. Her office is located at 3339 N. Harlem Ave. in Chicago, IL. Her phone number is 773-628-2502. Sylwia has been a Financial Representative since February 2016.



**Ray Massie Sr.**

*Chicago Northeast Agency, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager*  
Ray Massie Sr. has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. His office is located at 4200 W. Euclid Ave., Suite C, in Rolling Meadows, IL. His phone number is 847-991-0765. Ray has been a Career Financial Representative since February 1999.



**Ibrahim Essa**

*Chicago Northeast Agency, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager*  
Ibrahim Essa has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for November 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 November 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.



**Matthew Below**

*Chicago Northwest Agency, Jack Smith, Agency Manager*  
Matthew Below has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. His office is located at 1515 E. Woodfield Rd. Suite 930, Schaumburg, IL. His phone number is 847-891-3072. Matthew has been a Financial Representative since September 2019.



**Leo Maldonado**

*Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager*  
Leo Maldonado has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. His office is located at 5716 S Pulaski Rd., Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-254-5810. Leo has been a Financial Representative since November 2012.



**Steve Phillips**

*Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager*  
Steve Phillips has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for November 2019. His office is located at 1401 S. State St., Suite 150, Chicago, IL. His phone number is 312-583-1416. Steve has been a Financial Representative since November 2014.



**Tom Geraghty**

*Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager*  
Tom Geraghty has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for November 2019. His office is located at 5003 W. 95th St. in Oak Lawn, IL. His phone number is 708-425-9700. Tom has been a Financial Representative since December 1982.



**Kurt Husein**

*Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager*  
Kurt Husein has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for November 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.



**Jim Parthemore**

*South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager*  
Jim Parthemore has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for November 2019. His office is located at 9432 W 143rd St. in Orland Park, IL. His phone number is 708-745-5151. Jim has been a Financial Representative since April 2000.



**FREE CLASSIFIED ADS**  
For Cook County Farm Bureau Members

All Cook County Farm Bureau members may run four non-commercial classified ads annually free in the *Co-Operator*. Only items of personal property will be accepted. Ads must be in the office by the 15th of each month.

Category:  For Sale Misc.  For Sale Other  For Rent  Wanted

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Ad: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please be sure to include a contact phone number where interested buyers can contact you. Ad can be typed or written. PRINT CLEARLY. (If not enough room, put on separate sheet)

Complete the above form and mail to:  
Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525.  
You can also fax your ad to (708) 579-6056 or email to [juanita@cookcfb.org](mailto:juanita@cookcfb.org)  
Non-member ad rate: \$.75 per word; \$15.00 minimum.

**Classifieds**

All ads that we receive for The Co-Operator are also listed on our website at [cookcfb.org/membership/classifieds](http://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 [fbcooperator@gmail.com](mailto:fbcooperator@gmail.com). Please be sure to include your full name, Farm Bureau number, and phone number. Deadline for Classified ads is the 17th of each month. Any ads submitted after the 17th will appear in the following month's Co-Operator. Members may run up to four non-commercial classified ads annually for free. Any ads submitted after the fourth, will be charged. If mailing your ad, please mail to: Cook County Farm Bureau, Attention: Classified Ads, 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside, IL 60525. You can also fax your ad to 708-579-6056.

**For Sale**

Commercial Building 2300sq. ft with full basement. Fantastic opportunity, excellent location a mile from the expressway, 1½ block away from Arlington park train station. For more information call Rita at 847-259-9339.

Vacant lot 8712 sq. ft. in Marco Island Florida, facing Gulf of Mexico, facing waterfront lot. Call Rita for more information at 847-259-9339.

Ivory & Pond upright piano, good condition, needs tune-up, free, you must arrange pick-up and move. Call Mike at 708-296-0247.

**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.

Time share in Marco Island Florida, sleeps 6, week of January 18-25, the Surf Club. For more information call Rita at 847-259-9339.

**Wanted**

Wanting to buy your HO scale or N scale electric train engines, cars, buildings, or anything train related. Do you have electric trains in your closet, basement, crawl space, attic or garage that you're not using? I buy train items from just a few pieces to hundreds of pieces at a time. Why sell them bit by bit, I'll offer you a price on all you have! TURN THOSE UNWANTED TRAIN ITEMS INTO CASH and give me a call! I also buy slot cars. 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.

**Community Urban Garden Grant Program**



Our Community Urban Garden Grant Program is looking to award six gardens in 2020...and we increased the award amount to \$350! Applications are now available. All community-based urban gardens in Cook County are encouraged to apply. Grant details and applications are available at:

- Online at: <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/community-programs>
- Email Debbie at [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org)
- Call the CCFB at 708-354-3276

**This Month in Cook County Agriculture**

- **Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism, and Organic Conference** - January 8-10, 2020, Springfield Don't miss your chance to attend this one of a kind event that will bring local farmers, organizations, and businesses together. This engaging three-day conference is hosted by Illinois Specialty Growers Association in partnership with Illinois Farm Bureau, University of Illinois, and Illinois Department of Agriculture. <https://www.specialtygrowers.org>
- **American Beekeeping Federation Conference & Trade Show** - Jan 8, 2020, 8:00 AM – Jan 11, 2020, 9:30 PM, Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center Hotel, 1551 N, Thoreau Dr N, Schaumburg, IL <http://www.abfconference.com/>
- **Hemp Summit** - Jan 27, 2020, 12 AM – Jan 28, 2020, 12 AM at Hilton Chicago, 720 S Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL. From Top Producer Summit: Spend time with experts discussing the best agronomic practices for hemp production and touch upon marketing, legal consideration and policy news. <https://www.tpsummit.com/hemp-summit/>

*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](mailto: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](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org).*

**Farm Shadow Program to Focus on Agricultural Career Exploration**

Our new farm shadow program is a wonderful opportunity for our future workforce to gain valuable insight into potential agriculture careers. Through partnerships with our members farming or working in careers in agriculture, we hope to provide students with an understanding of how their school coursework connects to the myriad jobs in our industry so they will come away with a better understanding of the skills needed to be successful. We want our area's enthusiastic, bright minds to seek agricultural careers through this program.

We are seeking agricultural business partners that want to help mentor young leaders in a variety of ways such as:

- Offering job shadow opportunities at your business/farm
  - Opening your business or farm for one of our Ag Career Exploration events (we will work with the school and you to facilitate the experience)
- We can also provide you with ways to connect with schools including:
- Volunteering for a Career Day speaking engagement at a local school
  - Judging a Science Fair at a local school
  - Serving as a judge during FFA contests such as parliamentary procedure, public speaking or job interviewing
  - Volunteering at an Ag in the Classroom educational event to showcase your occupation
  - Listing your career openings (part-time, summer, volunteer) through our monthly newsletter

Our farm shadow program provides a way to give back to the next generation through our middle school, high school and even some college programming. We feel this is a wonderful opportunity for our members to reach the next generation and get them excited about the diversity of careers related to the field of agriculture.

If you would like be included as a contact in this new program, please reach out to Diane Merrion or Bob Rohrer at 708-354-3276 or via email at [aite@cookcfb.org](mailto:aite@cookcfb.org) or [brohrer@cookcfb.org](mailto:brohrer@cookcfb.org) respectively.



*Karen Biernacki (L) was presented the Volunteer of the Year award by Janet McCabe (R), Cook County Farm Bureau President. The award selected by the Board of Directors goes to a Cook County Farm Bureau member volunteer(s) who demonstrates exemplary leadership and service, promotes the organization, assists CCFB on major program efforts, and is active in the recruitment of members. Past recipients include Amy Hansmann and Julie Michaels.*

**Are you a business owner and a member of the Cook County Farm Bureau?**



The Member-to-Member discount program was created to provide Cook County Farm Bureau members with businesses the opportunity to promote goods and services offered through their business to the other members of the organization. By offering a discount to the members of the organization, business owner members receive free advertising and promotion on our website.

In May and November of 2020, we will be developing a special "pull out" section of our monthly publication, The Co-Operator, in which the Member-to-Member discounts are emphasized and promoted along with our membership benefits. The program is designed to be a win-win for members of the Cook County Farm Bureau!

Please visit [www.cookcfb.org/membermember.html](http://www.cookcfb.org/membermember.html) for details, to sign up for the program, and to view a list of current participating member-to-member businesses.



# Member Workshops/Meetings Offered in 2020

For members, farmers, teachers, landowners, foodies, business owners, and those that want new experiences and to have a great time!

Register today for the following great programs by calling the office at 708-354-3276 or visiting the website at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)



**School Service Project / Dimes for Dairy**  
**Date:** January 27- February 7  
**Registration required:** [aitc2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc2@cookcfb.org) or by calling Jill or Diane at 708-354-3276  
 Have your school join the CCFB Ag in the Classroom and collect dimes to purchase dairy products for the Together We Cope, a local food pantry. Our partnership will help provide local families in need. In celebration of our 100th anniversary, the Cook County Farm Bureau will proudly match the first \$100.00 of your school's donation. Schools will be recognized for their participation with a plaque and agricultural themed book for your school library.



**Teacher Earth Day Workshop**  
 Energize your lessons as we celebrate 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Workshop will provide you with lessons connected to soil, horticulture, agriculture, water and more.  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 11, 2020  
**Time:** 4-6 p.m.  
**Location:** CCFB Building 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside  
**Registration required:** [aitc2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc2@cookcfb.org) or by calling Jill or Diane at 708-354-3276  
 Earn 2 Free PDCH



**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.ilfb.org/farmplanning)



**Teacher Summer Ag Academy 2020 Session I**  
 Enrich your STEM curriculum with agriculture content through hands-on-learning.  
**Dates:** June 15-18  
**Registration:** Call Diane at 708-354-3276 or email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org)  
 Join fellow educators to tour NW Illinois family farms and agribusinesses. This 4-day course will provide you with free resources, materials and contacts in our industry.



**Teacher Summer Ag Academy 2020 Session II**  
 Explore rural and urban farm operations to learn the farm-to-table process and vast careers connected to agriculture.  
**Dates:** July 7-10  
**Registration:** Call Diane at 708-354-3276 or email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org)  
 Teachers will gain an understanding of the production, processing and distribution of agriculture products from rural farms to Chicago markets.

For additional event details, please visit <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/upcoming-events> or contact 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 Kulton 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](http://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](http://www.cookcfb.org).