



# CO-OPERATOR

To serve all our members of the Cook County Farm Bureau® with meaningful and beneficial programs that reflect our agricultural heritage.

## Mark Your Calendar

FEBRUARY	PAGE
2, 9, 16, 23 Beekeeping	12
4 Going Solar in 2021	12
4 Virtual Fieldtrip/Mt. Pulaski Courthouse	5
9 & 25 Winter Agribusiness Seminar	12
10 Timber Harvesting in 2021	12
11 Legislative Briefing	9
11 Virtual Author Visit	5
15 Foundation App Scholarship Deadline	12
25 Food Checkout Day Donation Deadline	2
28 Comm. Urban Garden Grant Deadline	11
MARCH	
2 & 9 Beekeeping	12
4 Virtual Rules of the Road	12
23 Drawdown for Ag Education (Early Bird Drawing 2/16)	1
25 Preparing Wills and Trust	12

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 by using the member service center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).

## Question of the Month

**What is the title of the American Farm Bureau Federation farm book of the year?**

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)

Last month's question: What is the cost to "attend" the January 2021 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual meeting?

Answer: No cost.  
January's Winner is John Stromski.

## But Wait, There's More!

Go to [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org) for these extras...

- Pork Power Provides 101
- Hemp Database Thru U of I Extension
- Landowners need to know timber's worth
- Preparations underway for 2020 Illinois State Fair
- Partners Podcast - A Shot for Better Food

COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

# DRAWDOWN FOR AG EDUCATION

MARCH 23, 2021 | 7-9PM

**\$100 PER TICKET**

Purchase your ticket by 2/15/21 to be entered into a special early bird drawing for \$250  
(early bird drawing will take place on 2/16/21)

**A MAXIMUM OF 300 TICKETS WILL BE SOLD.**  
The Drawing will occur virtually using Facebook live and Zoom  
The top prize (if all tickets are sold) will be \$3,000 with smaller prizes provided during drawing breakpoints

To purchase tickets go to: <https://bit.ly/2KpKNsY>  
call the office to make payment with a credit card  
or mail a check to the address below.

Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation 6438 Joliet Rd., Countryside IL 60525 708-354-3276

\*Must be 18 years or older at the time of entry purchase. The intended purposes of the proceeds from the drawdown raffle is to provide funding for the Cook County Farm Bureau's award-winning Ag in the Classroom program, fund higher education scholarships for members/dependents pursuing a future agriculturally related career and to provide funding for a Foundation sponsored internship focused on supporting the agriculture literacy program of the organization. For official rules please go to [www.cookcfb.org/foundation](http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation)

## Cook County Farm Bureau® to Support Cook County Families and Food Pantries as Part of Food Checkout Day 2021

In celebration of the healthy and nutritious food grown and raised by local farmers, Cook County Farm Bureau® members and partners are supporting local families and food pantries.

The year 2021 marks the 21st anniversary of Food Checkout Day and Cook County Farm Bureau's largest effort to date to support local families in need. Rather than support a single charity or even a handful, **Cook CFB will match member donations to any area food pantry.**

Farm Bureau members who wish to donate to a local food pantry in celebration of Food Checkout Day are asked to complete the form below and to designate the food pantry that their donation and Cook CFB's match is for. The food pantry selected must be a registered 501(c)3. A total of \$1,000 has been allocated for this program. All donations will be considered part of Food Checkout Day.

In addition, Cook County Farm Bureau is partnering with six food pantries for Food Checkout Day. The food pantries are selected by our partners at COUNTRY Financial.

### Meet our Partner Food Pantries

**Alicia's House, South Chicago Heights:** Selected by representatives from the South Holland COUNTRY Financial Agency, Alicia's House Food Pantry is dedicated to Alicia who loved people and loved helping people. She would spend hours working with her Grandma Stella at the church food pantry, making bags of food to hand out to people in need. Although her Grandma had a specific way to nutritionally pack the bags, Alicia would always add her special touch by making sure each bag would contain a special treat, usually candy. To honor the memory of Alicia who passed away at the age of four, Grandma Stella and Poppy Juan started Alicia's

**LOCAL FOOD PANTRY ASSISTANCE WITH FOOD CHECKOUT DAY 2021**

House. Alicia's House feeds hundreds of hungry families and each bag of food contains Alicia's special loving touch. Alicia's House serves the communities of Beecher, Crete, Steger, Peotone, University Park, Monee, and South Chicago Heights.

**Lakeview Pantry, Chicago:** Selected by representatives from the Chicago North COUNTRY Financial Agency, Lakeview Pantry is Chicago's largest and longest-operating food pantry. Lakeview Pantry's mission is to eliminate hunger and poverty in their communities by providing food to fill the basic need of hungry people, empowering clients to achieve independence through social service programming, and raising awareness

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!

## Food Checkout Day 2021...Continued

of hunger and poverty. Lakeview Pantry experienced a 400% increase in demand when COVID-19 hit Chicago and anticipates another surge in the coming winter months. The Pantry is on track to provide five million meals in Chicago this year.

**Orland Township Food Pantry, Orland Park:** Selected by representatives from the Orland Park COUNTRY Financial Agency, the Orland Township Food Pantry supplies food to low income residents residing in Orland Hills, Orland Park, and parts of Tinley Park who need immediate assistance. Since 2009, the food pantry has expanded to more than 2,200 square feet and houses a walk-in freezer, walk-in refrigerator, reach in-freezers, reach-in refrigerators, and aisles of non-perishable food items. The food pantry now assists more than 300 families per month.

**Schaumburg Township Food Pantry, Hoffman Estates:** Selected by representatives from the Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial Agency, for over 40 years the Schaumburg Township Food Pantry has been serving residents in Schaumburg, Hoffman Estates, Streamwood, Elk Grove, Rolling Meadows, Roselle, and Hanover Park. The Schaumburg Township Food Pantry is a client choice pantry meaning that clients can shop for and select their items from a variety of shelf stable, fresh, and freezer items as well as produce and personal items. The 100%

donation-based program is currently serving over 800 households per month.

**St. Cletus Food Pantry, LaGrange:** Selected by representatives from Chicago South COUNTRY Financial Agency, the St. Cletus Food Pantry strives to best meet the needs of their neighbors where they are, serve them with dignity, and provide pathways to self-sufficiency. Monthly, the food pantry serves between 300 and 400 households throughout Lyons Township, which includes 18 municipalities. The 'client choice' model empowers clients to shop for the items that work best for them including produce from their onsite garden, milk, meat, shelf-stable items, as well as household necessities.

**Wheeling Township Food Pantry, Arlington Heights:** Selected by representatives from the Chicago Northeast COUNTRY Financial Agency, the Wheeling Township Food Pantry serves residents in all or portions of Arlington Heights, Buffalo Grove, Des Plaines, Mount Prospect, Northbrook, Rolling Meadow, Prospect Heights, and Wheeling. Food pantry distributions are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and include shelf-stable items such as beans, cereal, meat products, pasta, soup, and vegetables.

Donations can be made by credit card by calling the Farm Bureau office at 708-354-3276 or by mailing in the form below with a check. Donations will be accepted until February 25, 2021.



## Gratitude Journal

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

### The Cook County Farm Bureau thanks...

The 24 members that took time to register for and participate in the virtual 2021 American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting and Convention in January.

The members that popped into the office to pick up a 100-year anniversary gift bag (we still have some available for those interested).

Area high schools for interest regarding participation in the Farm Shadows program.

The members that have already purchased their raffle tickets for the Foundation's Drawdown for Ag Education and the companies/families that have helped to bring the program to you through sponsorship.

Thanks to Young Leader, Tom Poole, for driving to Wagner Farm to pick up coats to donate to Together We Cope.



## Gomes named to serve as Agency Manager, Country Financial® Chicago Northwest Agency



Kevin Gomes

Mr. Kevin Gomes has been selected to lead the COUNTRY Financial® Chicago Northwest Agency with its main office in Schaumburg as agency manager effective February 1, 2021. Gomes replaces the

recently retired Mr. Jack Smith. Gomes was most recently the agency manager for the COUNTRY Financial Aurora Agency. He began as a COUNTRY Financial insurance agent 31 years ago after graduating from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. Gomes is married to Gigi and has four sons.

### Food Checkout Day 2021 Food Pantry Match Donations

Food Pantry for Match: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Cook County Farm Bureau. All proceeds will be donated to Cook County food pantries.

## 5 things members should know about... the Cook County Farm Bureau Ag Literacy Team

1. Team members are volunteers within the Cook County Farm Bureau with a strong interest in expanding agricultural literacy and education in Cook County..
2. Team members come from a diverse background including farming, horticulture, education/teaching, health/nutrition, and specialty crop production.
3. The Ag Literacy team's responsibilities were originally carried out by the Cook County Farm Bureau Women's Committee and later by the Ag Literacy Committee.
4. The team works with Farm Bureau staff and contracted Ag in the Classroom presenters to deliver virtual and hands-on agricultural educational content and experiences to K-12th grade students within the Cook County region.
5. The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation supports the financial aspects of the Team's programming and Illinois Ag in the Classroom provides support through grants, materials and resources to assist in the Ag Literacy Team efforts.

*Note: Members interested in participating in the Ag Literacy Team or in supporting their goals and objectives can contact Diane Merrion, Director of Ag Literacy for the Cook County Farm Bureau, at aitic@cookcfb.org.*



**Like us on Facebook**



**Follow us on Twitter**



**Follow us on Instagram**

Past issues of the Co-Operator are available online at [cookcfb.org/stay updated](http://cookcfb.org/stay updated)

### Co-Operator

published monthly

Cook County Farm Bureau

6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525

(ph) 708-354-3276 (fax) 708-579-6056

(e-mail) [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org) (website) [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)

USPS No 132180 Periodical Postage Paid at LaGrange, IL 60525 & additional mailing office

#### Editor

Bob Rohrer

#### Copy Analyst

Ashley Christensen

#### Copy Development

CCFB Office Staff

#### Officers & Directors

Janet McCabe, President

Michael Rauch, Vice President

Ruth Zeldenrust, Secretary-Treasurer

Dan Biernacki

James Bloomstrand

Roger Freeman

James Gutzmer

Patrick Horcher

Gerald Kopping

Todd Price

Tim Stuenkel

Mark Yunker

#### Farm Bureau Manager

Bob Rohrer

#### Office Staff

Jill Drover

Bob Heine

Bona Heinsohn

Diane Merrion

Juanita Ramos

Melanie Senne

Katie Smith

Kelli Villarreal

Debbie Voltz

#### Affiliated Companies

Jeff Orman..... Insurance Agency Manager, South Holland

Victoria Nygren.....Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago North

Jeff Maxson..... Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago South

Kevin Gomes..... Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago Northwest

Sharon Stemke.....Insurance Agency Manager, Chicago Northeast

Cary Tate..... Insurance Agency Manager, Orland Park

David Swigart..... General Manager, Conserve FS

Postmaster - Mail Form 3579 to 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525

"Co-Operator" (USPS No 132180) is published monthly as a membership publication for \$2.50 per year to members as a part of their annual membership dues by Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525. Periodical postage paid at LaGrange, IL and additional mailing office. Postmaster: send address changes to the Co-Operator, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525.

The Co-Operator, the monthly publication of the Cook County Farm Bureau®, is available to members through mail delivery, email, or by viewing online at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org). Members that wish to receive the publication solely by email can let us know by sending an email to [juanita@cookcfb.org](mailto:juanita@cookcfb.org) with the subject: E-Cooperator.



# Downwind

by Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager

## “A Down-Home, Country Wedding”

My brother and his wife live in what I consider one of the more remote areas in the state of Illinois, Brown County. Mount Sterling, the county seat, boasts a population of 2,100 or so and is the largest town in the county. The total population of Brown County is somewhere south of 7,000 residents. Adding in the deer population would likely double that number. The native standard dress attire is quite casual...mostly camouflage, flannel, and Carhartts. The deer are brown with white tails, also casual.

My brother moved to the Brown County area to start his career out of college, loved it, and has remained there to raise his family. This has provided a wonderful reason for me to visit. During those visits, I have enjoyed meeting my brother’s “people”, an eclectic group of friends and neighbors, bursting with true rural agricultural character and charm.

Over this past New Year’s holiday my brother’s daughter was married in Mount Sterling. Unfortunately, the pandemic circumstances required...

- preparations to be different (trimming the invitation list, changing locations from dream wedding/reception, postponing honeymoons, promising a proper reception at a later date)
- weddings to be different (limited attendees, masks distributed upon entry, sanitation station, spreading out through the church). It is difficult to whisper about people in a church when you are 6 ft apart!
- receptions to be different (a short, small, gathering featuring pizza rather than music and dance and embarrassing moments)

However, young love remains the same!

My wife and I felt honored to make the cut despite the various restrictions and gathering rules.

Brown County is far enough away from Cook County to require an overnight stay. Rather than intrude upon my brother and sister-in-law (who had plenty of other things happening), my wife and I opted to seek a place to stay in Mount Sterling. Knowing the area, I anticipated limited options.

My suggestions of packing a tent or sleeping in the back of our SUV were vetoed. My wife went to work with her thumbs and discovered that Airbnb featured a tiny house listing in Mount Sterling. Approximately 200 sq. ft. of kitchen, bathroom, and loft for bedroom meets the definition of tiny. The listing indicated the tiny house was owned by Lexi and was nestled on the outskirts of Mount Sterling in the woods. I hope my “book it” projected the proper enthusiasm to my wife.

Driving down the day of the wedding, we decided to stop at the tiny house rental to shake off the road dust, drop our bags, and put on our fancy wedding duds. We found the tiny house by exiting the hard road to the gravel road to the narrow, snow-covered private drive (a dirt road?) flanked by brush and trees. Despite being tiny, I could still see it, a cute, oversized “box” sitting in a woodsy location. The “box” even had a trailer hitch.

During the “exploration” of the tiny house, I was fascinated by several things:

- the seating...one barstool and a giant pillow (oh, and a toilet seat)
- access to the loft (crawling on the kitchen counter)
- the loft height (4 feet might be pushing it)

My wife loved the décor and took lots of pictures.

Off to the wedding we went. My niece was beautiful and radiant. Her fiancé was fawning and charismatic. The ceremony was beautiful and intimate.

The friendly wedding party made up of family and friends wanted to know where we were staying. Just the mention of the tiny house lead everyone to say, “Lexi’s place!” Some attending the wedding were cousins of Lexi. Others attending the wedding were friends of Lexi. Certainly, everybody from Brown County must know Lexi.

Following quality sleep that night in the loft, successfully avoiding cracking our heads upon egress, my wife and I met my brother and sister-in-law for breakfast at a classic small-town café. Wisely, my wife let my brother and sister-in-law lead the way into the restaurant knowing that certain tables may be “claimed” by the locals.

On our way to an empty table, everyone in the restaurant waved and greeted my brother and sister-in-law while eyeballing the two strangers, my wife and me. The waitresses wanted to know all about the wedding. Various individuals and sets of couples stopped by the table throughout breakfast to inquire “how the wedding went” and rave about the wedding photos posted online. As a bonus, we also learned about deer harvest, field tile, hunting dogs, job offers, COVID health issues, house projects, law enforcement, and more.

I managed to stay focused throughout breakfast, plowing through the café’s terrific eggs, bacon, hash browns, biscuits and gravy, mugs of steaming hot coffee...heaven.

We enjoyed another awesome Brown County experience. There is something heartwarming and truly wonderful about a down-home, country wedding.

Bob can be reached at [brohrer@cookcfb.org](mailto:brohrer@cookcfb.org)

Recipe of the Month:

## Simple Garlic & Basil Pesto

2007



**Ingredients:**

- ½ c pine nuts
- 1/8 c Brazil nuts
- 2 T minced garlic
- ½ t chili powder
- 3 c chopped fresh basil
- 1 c extra virgin olive oil
- 2/3 c grated Parmesan cheese

**Directions:** Place the basil in a blender. Pour in about 1Tbsp of the oil and blend into a paste. Gradually add pine nuts, Brazil nuts, Parmesan cheese, garlic, chili powder, and remaining oil. Continue to blend until smooth.



Recipe from our 2020 CookFresh Recipe Collection, booklets still available!

## Your Chicago South Agency

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



**Jeff Maxson**  
708-352-5555  
Agency Manager



**Robert Sweiss**  
773-498-7339  
6415 W. 63rd St.  
Chicago, IL 60638



**Theo Leonard**  
773-239-7800  
10414 S. Western Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60643



**Gwen Shaw**  
773-487-0919  
820 E. 87th Street, Ste 212  
Chicago, IL 60619



**Silver Castillo**  
773-284-5953  
6239 S. Archer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638



**Leo Maldonado**  
773-254-5810  
5716 S. Pulaski Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60629



**Martha Dominguez**  
773-254-5810  
3458 S. Halsted St.  
Chicago, IL 60608



**Kirk Gregory**  
773-239-7800  
10414 S. Western Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60643



**David DeSantiago**  
773-254-5810  
5716 S. Pulaski Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60629



**David Jara**  
773-284-5945  
6239 S. Archer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638



**Mike Sheahan**  
773-239-7800  
10414 S. Western Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60643



**Steve Phillips**  
312-583-1416  
1401 S. State St. #150  
Chicago, IL 60605



**Alonzo Nevarez**  
773-284-5539  
6239 S. Archer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638



**Ed Beavers**  
312-588-1404  
1401 S. State St. #150  
Chicago, IL 60605



**Tony Munno**  
708-352-5555  
6438 Joliet Road  
Countryside, IL 60525



**Nick Zegar**  
708-352-5560  
16614 W 159th St, #303  
Lockport, IL 60441



**Edgar DeLeon**  
773-498-1184  
6239 S. Archer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638



**Kirk Gregory, Jr.**  
773-619-0649  
1401 S. State St. #150  
Chicago, IL 60605



0920-514HO

## Be Leery Of Deals Offering Unneeded Transportation Compliance Services

Farmers need to be aware of companies calling and offering services to help them comply with transportation regulations, warned Rodney Knittel, Illinois Farm Bureau assistant director of transportation and infrastructure.

“If someone is calling you out of the blue, be suspicious,” Knittel told FarmWeek. “A company may send an email with U.S. or DOT in the name. If an email doesn’t end in ‘.gov,’ it’s not the government.”

He reminded farmers the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) rarely emails or calls a notice unless the individual is a new applicant for a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) number. The FMCSA never requests credit card numbers by telephone. Knittel described one of the sales pitches as service to help a farmer with Unified Carrier Registration (UCR) and drug and alcohol testing

to keep him compliant with DOT and FMCSA rules.

Within the past week, Knittel heard a report of a farmer charged \$300 to become part of a drug and alcohol consortium, which is not necessary for farmers under the covered farm vehicle exemption. “Drivers of covered farm vehicles (Farm Plates) are exempt from Controlled Substances, Alcohol Use and Testing including the new clearinghouse requirement,” he noted. IFB members who need or want to be part of a drug and alcohol consortium may work through the Midwest Truckers Association and should contact that organization, according to Knittel. “Being compliant and safe is extremely important and if you need help with compliance do the research and choose a company, don’t let them choose you,” Knittel advised.

Please submit your recipes for the 2021 CookFresh Recipe Brochure by mailing to the Farm Bureau or email to: [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org).



# Samuelson retires after 60 years at WGN Radio

Some of the best things in life have humble beginnings. Like a morning that starts with helping your father milk cows, followed by a 17-mile drive to the local radio station, that eventually leads to a radio broadcasting career spanning six decades.

That was how Orion Samuelson, WGN Radio farm broadcaster, started his first day on the air more than 60 years ago. Samuelson retired at the end of December, but his legacy will live on for years to come.

Samuelson started his radio broadcasting career at WKLJ, a local radio station down the road from his family's farm in western Wisconsin. In 1960, he began working at WGN Radio, where he has delivered daily livestock and economic reports and co-hosted "The Morning Show" on Saturdays with Max Armstrong ever since.



Orion Samuelson, WGN Radio farm broadcaster, right, interviews Richard Guebert Jr., Illinois Farm Bureau president, during Ag Day at the 2019 Illinois State Fair. (Photo by Katie Zelechowski)

Samuelson, also known as "The Big O," played a key role in several Cook County Farm Bureau events throughout the years including the 50th year anniversary and the 75th year anniversary celebrations of the organization (We asked him to participate in the CCFB 100-year event but he had previously scheduled his birthday party!), keynote speaker at annual meetings and public relations activities with farmers and non-farmers.

Early on in his time with WGN, Samuelson recognized the importance of using his platform

to speak to both people in rural communities and in cities. He saw an opportunity to educate listeners from different backgrounds on the importance of agriculture.

Samuelson has received an overwhelming number of messages thanking him for his time on the radio. WGN provided a voicemail box for fans and friends to call in wishing him the best and many of those voice messages were played on the air. Cook County Farm Bureau made a phone call on behalf of the members to wish Orion "the very best on behalf of his local farmers and local friends and thanked him for being such a wonderful advocate for agriculture in the public for so many years." We will miss this powerful voice of agriculture. During a recent interview with the RFD Radio Network, Samuelson said although he may not respond to every email and letter he receives, he reads and cherishes each one.

Cook County Farm Bureau thanks Mr. Orion Samuelson, who retired December 31, for providing such a powerful voice and advocacy for farmers and agriculture for so many decades through radio, TV, and print.

Portions of this article were adapted from a FarmWeek article written by Katie Zelechowski



Orion interviews a member in the '70s during a Farm Bureau event.

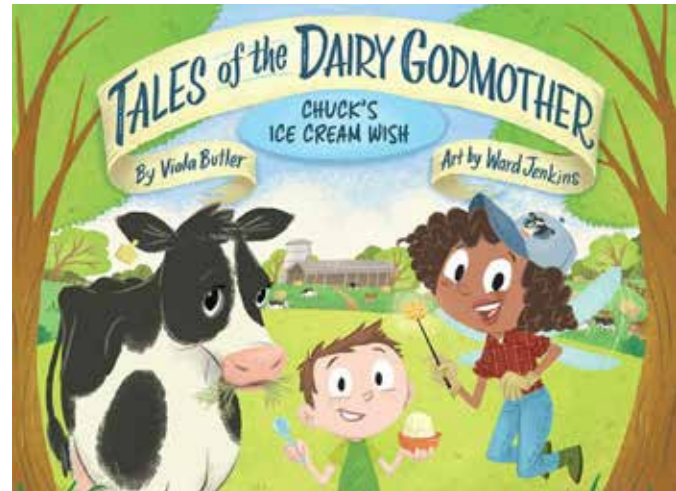
# AFBF Announces Book of the Year Winner

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture presented its 14th Book of the Year award to Viola Butler for "Tales of the Dairy Godmother: Chuck's Ice Cream Wish."

In this "dairy-tale," a young boy named

Illinois Ag in the Classroom program.

The Book of the Year award springs from the Foundation's effort to identify "Accurate Ag Books," a collection of nearly 500 books for children, teenagers and adults that accurately



Chuck wishes for all the ice cream he can eat, prompting his "Dairy Godmother" to show up to grant his wish with a dairy farm, where he gets a firsthand look at the hard work and care that goes into producing his favorite treat.

"Chuck's Ice Cream Wish" is Butler's first published book. She works in education and lives in the suburbs with her family.

Last year, Kelsi Kessler, the 2020 Illinois State County Fair Queen, read the book as part of an

cover agricultural topics. Book of the Year selections are educational, help to create positive public perceptions about agriculture, inspire readers to learn more and touch their readers' lives as well as tell the farmer's story.

The Accurate Ag Books database is available on line at: [www.agfoundation.org/recommended-pubs](http://www.agfoundation.org/recommended-pubs)

To accompany "Chuck's Ice Cream Wish," the Foundation created an educator's guide.

# The American Farm Bureau Foundation Releases New Children's Soybean Book

The American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture's Feeding Minds Press has released a new book, "My Family's Soybean Farm," along with a companion educator guide.

The story, geared for grades K-2, follows the farm adventures of Alexander, who takes

My Family's Soybean Farm was created by Iowa natives with farm backgrounds. Author Katie Olthoff has written extensively about agriculture and lives on a turkey farm with her family. Illustrator Joe Hox was raised on a farm and has illustrated more than a dozen books,



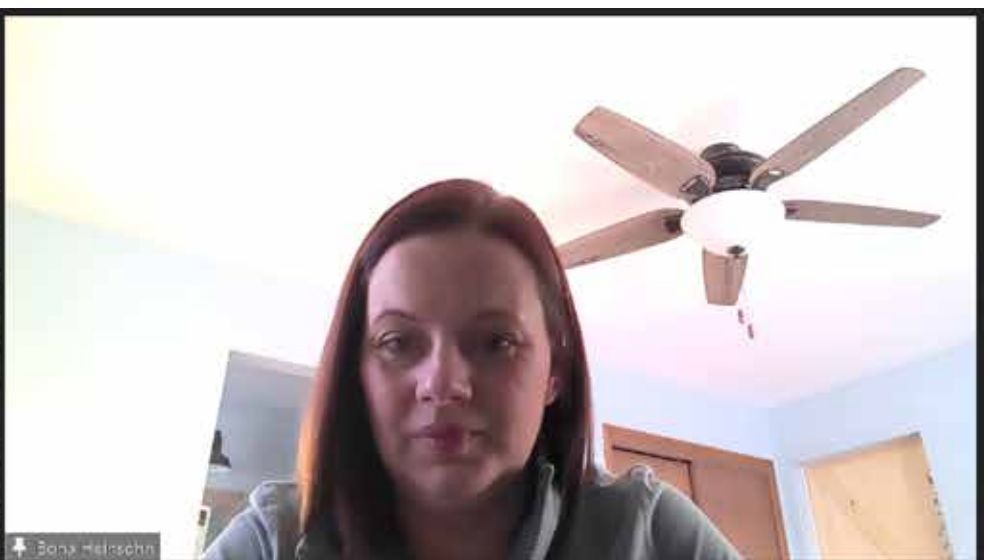
readers on a tour of his family's soybean farm, showing how soybeans are planted, grown, and harvested, technology used on the farm, pest management techniques, and the many different products soybeans are used in.

including Zoe's Hiding Place and Farmer Gary's Birthday Adventure.

My Family's Soybean Farm may be purchased directly from Feeding Minds Press, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble online. Special bulk pricing is also available.

Membership brings out great value!  
**Go to [www.cookcfb.org/membership](http://www.cookcfb.org/membership)**  
to access great savings and discounts.

# 100 Year Interview



Board member Mark Yunker discusses Farm Bureau and farming history with Farm Bureau staff member Bona Heinsohn during his 100-year anniversary interview. Interviews are recorded and will be available for the public in the near future. As an offshoot from the CCFB 100 year celebration, the organization is seeking to create a lasting record of agriculture and Farm Bureau in Cook County.

# Farmland Values Resilient Through Pandemic, Poised To Grow

**Farmland market proved once again this year that, even in a pandemic, it's worth what it earns.**

Values remain steady and even increased in some areas of the Midwest, including Illinois, in 2020. And that trend could continue, according to Bruce Sherrick, director of the TIAA Center for Farmland Research in the Department of Ag and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois. He discussed farmland values during the fifth and final webinar of the Illinois Farm Economics Summit.

"This has been quite a year. As we near the end of the year, the big question is, what's coming up next," Sherrick said.

"I think in the next four years there's going to be more than a 5% increase (in farmland values)," he noted. "Income prospects going forward certainly support an increase in valuations by more than 1.25% per year."

How can that be during times featuring such market volatility and uncertainty? Sherrick looks for demand for feed grains and protein to grow; interest rates continue to track at historically low levels; investors remain interested in farmland, which relative to inflation has been fairly constant; and the low turnover rate of farmland (1.5% to 2% annually) increases competition for buyers when tracts do become available for purchase.

"It's an asset whose capital appreciation has exceeded that of the rest of the economy," Sherrick said of the farmland market. "You've heard of people who are land rich and cash poor. It can happen because land values did increase rather dramatically (within the last decade)."

A survey of members of the Illinois Society of Farmland Managers and Rural Appraisers estimated average land values across the state at \$10,313 per acre for excellent productivity soil, \$8,233 per acre for good ground and \$6,350 per acre for average land as of August. Values

ranged from up 3% to down 2.1% depending on location and soil type.

The story was similar in Iowa this year where farmland values increased by an average of 1.7%, according to Iowa State University's annual survey. Values ranged from an average of \$9,068 per acre for high quality land to \$5,078 for low quality ground. A sale of 72 acres in Sioux County, Iowa, recently brought an eye-popping \$14,300 per acre.

"I'm of the opinion we're looking at a very rational farmland market," Sherrick said. "We don't expect the 1980s to recur."

The ag sector currently holds about \$3 trillion in assets with about 14% debt.

"We've heard a lot about increasing debt loads," Sherrick said. "But, frankly, it's not that high. If you look back to the 1970s, we were approaching 20%, 16% in the 1980s and 15% in the 1990s. We got to 10% to 14% only in the last decade when we had massive growth in asset values, which diluted the amount of debt."

Looking ahead, the Federal Reserve signaled it's likely to maintain interest rates at historically low levels for several years as the economy recovers from the pandemic.

The Fed cut the target for the federal funds rates by 1.5% since March 3, bringing it down to a range of zero to 0.25%. And low rates help support farmland values.

"Even if interest rates come back up, it doesn't mean it will push farmland values back down," Sherrick said. "It has much more to do with, are we going to maintain income?"

"Demand for feed grains and protein looks strong in the future," he added.

USDA surveys indicate farmland values began rising in 1988, and except for single year declines in 2009 and 2016, have continued to rise.



## Your South Holland Agency

 <b>Jeff Orman</b> Agency Manager 708-560-7777	 <b>Andrew Carrell</b> South Holland 708-596-3999	 <b>Randall Cox</b> Flossmoor 708-679-1870	 <b>Elliot Day</b> Flossmoor 708-679-1870	 <b>Gary Molenhouse</b> Manhattan 815-478-0190
 <b>Josh Van Namen</b> Worth 708-361-3925	 <b>Jim Pathmore</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>John Tymms</b> Worth 708-480-5091	 <b>Chad Christie</b> Oak Forest 708-560-7777		

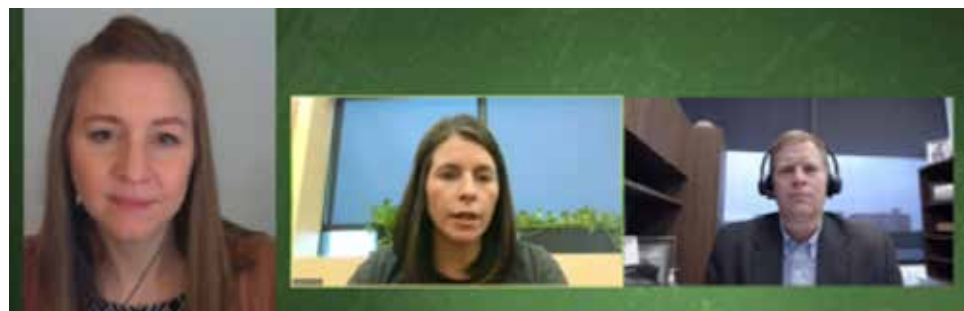
## Helping you protect what matters most

©19-503HO

## How COVID Changed Consumer Preferences

Temporarily empty grocery store shelves and some meat packing plant closures last year as a result of the pandemic focused greater attention on the U.S. food and farming sector. At a featured session during the AFBF Convention entitled "The Post-COVID Consumer: What's

where we really saw the biggest growth." A representative of Cargill, one of the world's largest food companies, said the pandemic forced it to rapidly change and become increasingly nimble. The result: a renewed focus on the value of all employees.



Roxi Beck, left, with CFI, Martha Hilton of grocery and restaurant chain Wegmans, and Jarrod Gillig with Cargill participated in a featured session during the AFBF Convention entitled, "The post-COVID consumer: what's top of mind for them."

Top of Mind for Them," participants discussed coronavirus-forced food trends that they believe will stick, and possible new ones still to come. For example, Roxi Beck, director of consumer engagement for the Center for Food Integrity (CFI), noted some so-called "dying" food brands experienced a resurgence in retail sales. She said CFI consumer research also found concerns about some food production practices.

"Progresso Soup and Hamburger Helper really hadn't grown in many years, but now, as a result of a lot of home cooking, a lot of needing easy meal solutions, even baking categories like Pillsbury and Betty Crocker, they've seen exponential growth," said Beck. "There are some worries that come along with mass-produced food in particular ... we heard concerns like mono-cropping and a lack of diversity."

Beck cited CFI research that showed only 5% of U.S. consumers purchased groceries online a year ago. By March, when most of the United States went into lockdown, it jumped to 30%.

"We really pride ourselves on having one of the best in-store shopping experiences, so when overnight our consumers don't want to come in our stores, that's hard for us," said Martha Hilton, vice president of produce and floral for Wegmans, an east coast grocery and restaurant chain. "We added a cart-to-curb option ... that's

"We had food service customers who were not necessarily as busy, right," said Jarrod Gillig, Cargill president of business operations and supply chain for Cargill North America. "We actually figured out how to engage them to supply more meat into the retail service."

While agriculture had been deemed "essential" at the start of the pandemic and packing plants, Gillig noted his company quickly put in place things like rapid temperature screenings and barriers between employees.

"As essential workers, here they're asked to come to work, but we also don't want incentivize people coming to work sick," said Gillig. "Making sure that they don't get burdened if they were sick, Cargill enacted a 14-day pay where if they were out of work they were going to get a pay continuation."

AFBF Vice President of Communications Terri Moore, who moderated the session, noted at its start that national organization farmer-leaders had met with food and agriculture industry representatives at a pre-convention roundtable. She said the group called for agriculture to strengthen consumer engagement.

"If we fail to pay attention to consumer preferences or to hear their concerns, we lose in the long-run," said Moore. "Their message: if we want their trust, we must engage with them."

CALLING ALL HISTORY BUFFS  
Teachers, students, families, individuals that like history-be sure to take advantage of the exciting February opportunities from Illinois Ag in the Classroom



February 4th  
Virtual Field Trip  
Mt. Pulaski Courthouse  
Register at  
<https://iaite.co/fieldtrips>



February 11th  
Virtual Author Visit  
Peggy Thomas  
Lincoln Clears a Path  
Register at  
<https://iaite.co/authorvisits>



For more family fun, activities, and lessons visit Illinois Ag in the Classroom at:  
<https://beyondthebarndoor.wordpress.com/>

## Virtual School/Community Garden Training

This year, Illinois Extension will host a Virtual School and Community Garden Training via Zoom.

Please save the date: Saturday, March 13th from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Visit

<https://extension.illinois.edu/cook/school-and-community-gardening-resources>

for details.

## Ag Lit Bit

“Acts of Kindness”



Diane Merrion,  
CCFB Director of  
Ag Literacy

There seems to be a designated day to celebrate just about everything on the various calendar websites. I often glance through them and take note of some that strike me as special.

One that stood out this month as particularly meaningful for our current times is called Random Acts of Kindness Day and takes place on February 17. A day to bring joy to the people you come across.

There is a Random Acts of Kindness Foundation that promotes kindness in the workplace, school, and home. While we share our Ag in the Classroom curriculum, they share their Kindness in the Classroom® curriculum which features the phrase, “Make kindness the norm.”

I evidenced a random act of kindness a few weeks ago that took me by surprise. As we got a small snow one evening our doorbell rang and I opened it to see six smiling eyes, and they were not the deer I’m always obsessing about. It

was three neighbor children asking if it was OK if they shoveled our driveway. As they shoveled while talking and laughing it brought me right back to the past when our boys went door to door looking to shovel and I always said, “And don’t take any money” and they would always come back with some money. I’m not so sure my kids were doing a random act of kindness or a fundraiser for themselves. I’ll let someone else be the final judge on that.

Any small gesture has the power to make someone happy and turn their bad day into a good one. Trust me, I’m sure we’ve all had some challenging days these last few months and welcomed a personal note or gesture of kindness. I get a dose of happiness every time I open an email from a specific individual. Each of her emails has a quote on it that says, “Focus on the good. It’s there.” Those words have never felt more reassuring as they did these last few months. Try to take a moment to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day on February 17 or maybe every day this year.

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

## Summer Ag Institute Returns in 2021

Our Summer Ag Institute returns in June with an opportunity for teachers to get away from the screen and head outside to experience the field of agriculture. Walk away with lessons, resources, and most of all, a new understanding of the ag connections to your existing curriculum. We are holding spots as we finalize the registration process. To sign up, email Diane Merrion at [aipc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aipc@cookcfb.org).

Cost: \$70 (members\*) or \$100 (non-members)

\*Farm Bureau membership \$20

Includes: All materials, books, speakers, tours, and supplies. Lunch provided as part of in-person socially distanced tours. 30 PDCH credits

included. Additional \$200 fee required for two grad credits through University of St. Francis.

Location:

Days 1&4

Cook County Farm Bureau, Countryside, IL (subject to change based on COVID restrictions in place as of June 2021 in which case will be virtual)

Days 2&3

Tours of local farms and businesses to see agriculture up close

Day 2-southern suburbs

Day 3-northern suburbs

{Teachers will meet at tour stops.}

## Get to know Agriculture Education in Cook County!

CHICAGO VOCATIONAL CAREER ACADEMY



• **How is agriculture used at your school?** Career Technical Education (CTE) has bought (and will be distributing) growing kits for each student for virtual learning as students are not able to access the greenhouse at the school. The last two years our focus has been growing crops including hydroponic and aquaculture crops.

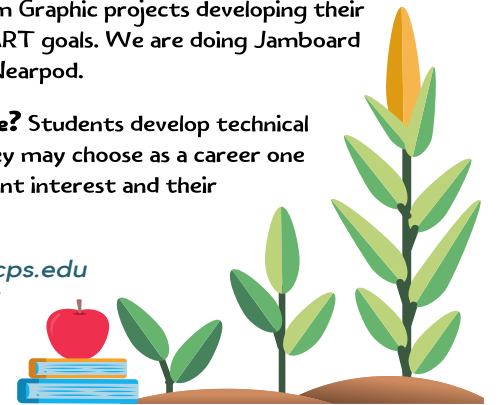
• **How many students are FFA Members?** 100% of the agriculture students are members this year. (61 students)

• **What classes do you teach?** Agriculture/Horticulture Science

• **What kinds of projects do your students have?** Currently, advanced students are working on an instructional guide to growing cold crops in Jamboard. The sophomores are focused on the major vitamins a consumer gets when they eat the crop. All students have an ongoing Jam Graphic projects developing their short, mid, and long-term education SMART goals. We are doing Jamboard projects, Pear Deck, Quizlet, Kahoot and Nearpod.

• **What makes your program unique?** Students develop technical skills and have fun while learning what they may choose as a career one day. Individual projects are based on student interest and their career of choice.

\*Joyce Stackhouse - [jstackhouse@cps.edu](mailto:jstackhouse@cps.edu)  
Horticulture Educator/FFA Advisor  
CVS/CTE Lead Teacher  
2021 Senior Event Adviser  
<https://bit.ly/35TwwIZ>



## Farm Shadows Program

Our new Farm Shadow Program is a wonderful opportunity for students to gain valuable insight into potential agriculture careers.

Through partnerships with our Farm Bureau professional members working within the ag industry, we hope to provide middle and high school students with an understanding of how their coursework connects to the variety of jobs in our field 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.

Our speakers will explain careers that are available in our industry both here in Cook County as well as throughout the U.S.. Examples of careers include:

- Agricultural Sales & Marketing
- Agricultural Engineering
- Agriculture Teacher
- Horticulturist
- Farm Bureau Manager
- Greenhouse Management

- Food Nutrition/Dietician
- Historical Farm Management
- Turf Management
- Farm Policy Lobbyist
- Marketing Graphic Designer IL Farm Bureau
- Farmer...and much more.

Presentations are available on a limited basis and can be requested at <https://cookcfb.org/foundation/farm-shadow-program>. Teachers can select a career sector they would like their students to learn about and we will partner them with a guest speaker to arrange a date, time and delivery platform for the program. While our speaker will provide an overview of their education and job functions we will reserve the vast majority of time for student questions. If you would like more information, feel free to contact Diane Merrion, Ag Literacy Coordinator via email at [aipc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aipc@cookcfb.org). This free program is supported through the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation.

## Do Your Students Know What’s on Their Plate?

Our free classroom program entitled, “There’s AG on My Plate” has been educating students about the origins of their food as it relates to the USDA MyPlate® since 2014 and has reached students in over 1,700 classrooms. Now being offered in a virtual live format, this lesson teaches students the origins of the food groups and how to make healthy choices when provided options. The interactive discussions will guide students on how to read the new food labels, show examples of serving sizes, and review the importance of understanding ingredients. The program is a wonderful follow-up to our 4th grade Intro to Illinois Agriculture presentation and is also being used with Health and Nutrition lessons from Grades 4 and up. Here are a few comments we received from teachers.



“The kids were engaged the whole time and they showed interest in nutrition since the visit.”

“I really liked the activity with the food labels. I hope that my students will be more aware when they are shopping with their parents.”

“I loved to see my students completely engaged in a well taught and desperately needed lesson on nutrition.”

“The lesson really got the students involved and they learned the information. Some were able to tell me later that they read labels before eating a snack.”

If your 4th grade classroom is interested in scheduling

this program and other virtual live offerings, contact us at [aipc2@cookcfb.org](mailto:aipc2@cookcfb.org). Presentations for other grade levels can be accommodated for teachers studying Illinois agriculture or nutrition as part of their curriculum.

# Agriculture Adventures for Families

Americans are eating a lot more pizza during the pandemic. Pizza deliveries are up double-digits for many companies during 2020 and remain strong as we get closer to a popular pizza event, Super Bowl Sunday. Other top dates for ordering pizza include New Year's Eve, Thanksgiving Eve, Halloween and even Valentine's Day! Whether you make your own or order out from your favorite local restaurant, all pizza takes a lot longer to grow than it does to bake. See what part our farmers have in growing your favorite pie.



## Ingredients in a Pizza - Where Do They Come From?

### Wheat - A Grain

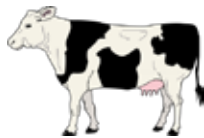


Pizza crust is made from wheat. Farmers plant tiny wheat kernels in the ground using a drill. Wheat looks like fresh new grass when it comes out of the soil. It grows to about 24 inches high. The farmer then harvests the wheat and hauls it in trucks or wagons to the grain elevator. From there, it is exported or sold to various industries which make feed or food. Wheat passes through quite a process to become flour for pizza dough. After the wheat is shipped to a mill, it is cleaned to remove weeds, stems and other plant material. Then rollers press the kernels to break them into pieces. Finally, the small wheat pieces are shaken onto screens to sift out the bran and germ not used in wheat flour.



### Cheese—A Dairy Product

Cheese is made up from milk that comes from dairy cows. Illinois companies produce more than 77 million pounds of cheese each year. Kraft Foods, a major cheese producer, is in Northfield, Illinois. Cheddar is the most popular cheese, followed by mozzarella, commonly used on pizza. We all have our favorite toppings but chances are, everyone likes cheese.



### Tomato Sauce - A Vegetable

Tomato seeds require 75-85 days to develop into mature plants with ripe fruits. When the tomatoes are ripe enough to ship, they are carefully packed in boxes. The boxes are then loaded into semi-trailers for transporting to grocery stores. Some tomatoes are sent to a canner where they are processed (cooked, squashed, preservatives added) to make sauces or ketchup. Special herbs, such as oregano, dill, and garlic, are added to tomatoes used in pizza sauce to give it a special taste.



### Pepperoni & Sausage - Pork Products

Pepperoni and sausage are meats made from pigs. Many Illinois farmers raise pigs. The animals are fed a special blend of ground corn, soybeans, vitamins, and minerals. The pigs go to market in five to six months when they weigh 240- 250 pounds. The meat from the pigs is called pork. It is ground up and special seasonings are added to make sausage, salami, hot dogs, bacon and pepperoni.

Source: <http://www.agintheclassroom.org/TeacherResources/AgMags/Pizza>

### In Real Time

How long does it take to get a pizza? Three minutes, thirty minutes? How long does it really take? Build your favorite pizza using the ingredients on this page. Calculate in months or years how long it really takes to make a pizza

Cheese	Tomatoes	Onion	Garlic
3 years from birth to cheese	7 months from seed to sauce	5 months from seed to harvest	9 months from planting to harvest
Pork	Wheat	Beef	Peppers
5 months from birth to market	6 months from seed to harvest	18 months from birth to market	6 months from seed to harvest

Source: <https://cdn.agclassroom.org/media/uploads/2015/05/19/InRealTime1.pdf>

### Did You Know?



- Three billion pizzas are sold every year in the United States.
- Every second, an average of 350 slices are sold.
- The pizza industry sells more than \$40 billion in product every year.



- Americans prefer meat toppings to veggie topics at a ratio of roughly two to one.
- More than 41 percent of us eat pizza every week, with one in eight of all Americans eating pizza on any given day.

Source: <https://altohartley.com/13-pizza-stats-that-will-blow-your-mind/>

## February Word Search

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

- |             |         |
|-------------|---------|
| Cheese      | Pork    |
| Crust       | Sauce   |
| Farm        | Sausage |
| Harvest     | Seed    |
| Ingredients | Slice   |
| Onion       | Tomato  |
| Pepperoni   | Topping |
| Pizza       | Wheat   |

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 2021 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...**

**Sharon Styles**

## Love for the Land, Valentine Month and Beyond



On a westward drive to the home farm, my eyes drift to the tree-lined grassy knoll atop the Southeast Field. From that hilltop a good half mile off the gravel road, you can take in one of the best views of the home farm. Add in a brilliant sunset, and my heart feels the praise that we vocalize in unison at Sunday worship: God is good.

February brings the month to reflect on love, and a farm family's love for the land proves a unique, powerful, and spiritual bond. While better felt than described, the closest parallel seems a loving parent-child relationship. Farmers often name their fields based on location, size, or ownership lineage. We monitor the land's health and nourish it. We identify its strengths and weaknesses and nurture within its abilities to reach its full potential. Then, we share in the land's accomplishments and failures at harvest.

Spend enough time with the land and you learn where the deer travel, racoons roam, and bald eagles frequent. The biggest, oldest cottonwood and sycamore trees stand as

landmarks at field edges in the Front Bottom and Fremont East Field. Our kids now fish as we did in the bordering river in the summer and hike the timber for morel mushrooms in the spring. During harvest, they dine on meals in the field and learn to drive tractors. By winter, they beg to sled at the first fall of snow on the soybean stubble at Beecher South.

In time, they will understand how rainwater moves across the land and to use modern precision technologies to implement nutrient management plans. Environmental impact guides our decisions for waterways, conservation practices, and minimum to no-tillage of the soils. Cover crops bring promise to build soil health and nutrient retention. Soil sampling remains a routine standard, something like bloodwork to monitor health. The land's temperature and touch tell its readiness to plant, and a weather-related app on our smartphones tell us the rainfall at each field under our care. Like generations before us, we tend the land with the tools, resources, and know-how of the time.

The timeless mission remains: Leave the land better than you found it. The mantra resonates across the state and nation, where farmers raise the next generation to love the land and fulfill their duty as temporary caretakers and stewards.

*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

**WILL JARS OF SALAD SELL AT A DOUGHNUT SHOP? FARMER'S FRIDGE IS TRYING THAT AT DUNKIN'** (Chicago Tribune) – Farmer's Fridge, best known for selling jars of fresh salads out of vending machines, is now hawking its healthy fare through an unlikely partner: doughnut titan Dunkin'.

**PEPSICO PLANS TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS BY OVER 40%** (Food Business News) – Through actions in areas such as farming practices, packaging materials and delivery vehicles, PepsiCo, Inc. plans to cut carbon emissions by more than 40% by 2030 when compared against a 2015 baseline.

**ILLINOIS SEES MORE HEMP PROCESSORS BUT FEWER ACRES AS INDUSTRY MATURES IN AGRICULTURAL POWERHOUSE** (Hemp Industry Daily) – The number of hemp processors in Illinois doubled over the last year as the new industry tries to establish itself in a state that's already an agricultural powerhouse.

**BILL GATES, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE CHAMPION, IS AMERICA'S BIGGEST FARMLAND OWNER** (Newsweek) – Billionaire and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates owns 242,000 acres of farmland, making him America's biggest farmland owner. His investment in farming may be connected to his investments in climate change agricultural developments and Impossible Foods, a company that develops plant-based substitutes for meat products.

**ROLLING MEADOWS HIGH GREENHOUSE SERVES FAMILIES IN NEED** (Daily Herald) – Rolling Meadows High School in Northwestern Cook County utilized its agriculture program's greenhouse after COVID - 19 closed Illinois schools last March. The high school used the greenhouse for community outreach by growing vegetables that could be distributed to the citizens from the local community during the difficult time. The school continues to conduct a once-a-week school meal bag pickup.

**HOT AIR FROM BURGER CHAIN IGNITES MORE THAN A FIRESTORM ABOUT FARMING** (FarmWeekNow) - a fast food restaurant's (Burger King) attempt to distinguish itself by poking fun at cattle emissions led to a dialogue that some hope will lead to a preemptive, fact-based approach about farming and advertising. "Everyone keeps blaming counterparts for global warming and there's so much more to it than that," said Michelle Miller, I will farmer and social media maverick known as the Farm Babe.

"Nobody ever questions the carbon footprint of their coffee. They never question the carbon footprint of their alcohol. It's always cows, cows, cows". Her assertions led to Burger King company officials to visit her and other farms in Iowa and Wisconsin.

**TYSON FOODS TO PAY \$221.5 MILLION TO SETTLE SOME CHICKEN PRICE-FIXING CLAIMS** (Reuters) – Tyson Foods Inc said it will pay \$221.5 million to settle litigation by three groups of plaintiffs that accused it of illegally conspiring to inflate chicken prices.

**HIGH-TECH INDOOR FARMER APPHARVEST STARTS SHIPPING TOMATOES** (Associated Press) – Greenhouses have been around for decades, but not until recently have they grown into such large-scale facilities. At the same time, consumers are increasingly looking for better-tasting, sustainably produced food.

**PANDEMIC, LABOR WOES CHALLENGE PRODUCE INDUSTRY** (Western Farm Press) – As restaurants and schools were forced by government edict to close due to coronavirus concerns, lettuce that otherwise could have sold for a profit was wasted. One of the largest marketers of fresh produce lost several hundred million dollars as a result.

**ALBERTSONS REPORTS STRONG GROCERY SALES GROWTH AMID PANDEMIC** (Wall Street Journal) – After booking strong sales to consumers who spent most of 2020 cooking at home, Albertsons and other grocers are working to keep sales momentum and hold on to customers who they hope will make some of their pandemic-era eating habits permanent.

**FACING GREEN PUSH ON FARM, FERTILIZER MAKERS LOOK TO SEA FOR GROWTH** (Reuters) – Two of the world's biggest fertilizer producers, CF Industries Holdings Inc and Yara International Asa, are seeking to cash in on the green energy transition by reconfiguring ammonia plants in the United States and Norway to produce clean energy to power ships.

**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.*

### ILLINOIS FARM FAMILIES PRESENTS

INNOVATION  
**GROWS**  
HERE™

**ALEXIS HARTMAN**  
GROWING A BETTER  
ENVIRONMENT  
WITH BIOPLASTICS

For farmers, growing and raising our food means continuous improvement. It means discovering ways to do things better and finding solutions to complex problems. And we're making decisions every day that advance our methods for raising animals and growing crops. That's why innovation grows here.

Innovation on the farm – self-steering equipment, field-mapping drones, animal health monitors – means less environmental impact, safer food and a healthier world. In Illinois, farmers use the latest in science and technology to advance the way we grow and raise food that is better for you and our world.

Find out why firsthand from the farmers who are bringing this innovation to life.

[www.WatchUsGrow.org/innovation-grows-here](http://www.WatchUsGrow.org/innovation-grows-here)

**We offer wet hosing, bulk tank fills and package lubricants – D.E.F, Oil, Hydraulic, Diesel and Gas for all your needs.**

**We are a 24/7 Fuel Supplier servicing Illinois – Wisconsin – Indiana**  
**Call us today at 847-994-3010 or visit us online at [www.luckysenergy.com](http://www.luckysenergy.com)**  
**Growing To Serve You Better**



## Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure



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

Our household didn't see the clock strike midnight. Didn't toast 2021. And didn't open all our doors and windows to usher out 2020. We ate our chili, did chores, and tucked into bed long before 2021 technically kicked

off.

Most years I scoff at the idea of making New Year's resolutions, or as we affectionately told our blue-eyed girl that they're called "New Year's goal-ishes". But for 2021, some resolutions seem appropriate.

I have a longtime love affair with Dr. Pepper. I'd forgo coffee, lattes, and most meals for a large fountain Dr. Pepper preferably from McDonald's. Our well-used farmhouse came with a second refrigerator that we keep stocked full of drinks. Tea. Pop. Water. And some evening, adult beverages. This is the first time we've kept pop in the house since our big-little boy arrived on the scene. With the aging refrigerator situated right next to the front door it's a little too easy to grab a pop on my way out. In. Or just in general. For 2021, I will limit my Dr. Pepper consumption. Limit, not eliminate.

A very good friend of mine introduced me to Sweet Tart Ropes. I'm not typically a candy fan but these ropes are a chewy explosion of licorice and hard candy with a tangy tart filling. Like Dr. Pepper they're surprisingly high in sugar. And since I keep a package in my glovebox, they're a little too easy to snack on. For 2021, I will reduce my Sweet Tart Ropes consumption. Fortunately, these chewy goodies aren't sold everywhere so they're a lot easier to skip when grocery shopping.

On a more serious note than Sweet Tart Ropes and Dr. Pepper, I spend a fair amount of time on social media. Unfortunately, that time increased exponentially after we bought our well-used farmhouse. We spent a crazy amount of time on Pinterest and the Farmhouse Lookbook on Facebook. We looked

at reverse tuxedo kitchen ideas. Farmhouse sinks. Faucets. Flooring. Tiles. Chimneys. And lights. Lots and lots of lights. (Our well used farmhouse is not well lit.) For 2021, I want to spend more time in the present enjoying my soon-to-be reverse tuxedo kitchen and less time on social media even as we look to phase two of the renovations (bedrooms!).

Moving away from my personal New Year's goal-ishes, as a state and a country we need to look for and find common ground. As individuals have moved further left and further right, the middle common ground is often forgotten and it's that middle ground that offers compromise and success. As both the state and country look toward solutions for mounting debt, out of control spending, immigration reform, and economic rebuilding all in the wake of a seemingly insurmountable cultural divide, it is more important than ever to find middle ground and compromise.

For 36 years, the Illinois House of Representatives has been led by Speaker Michael Madigan. As the House embarks on a path not directly led by now Representative Madigan, its resolutions should be to accept new leadership, look towards compromise, accept that now-Speaker Chris Welch may be different than his predecessor, and accept that under his leadership the Democratic Caucus may look towards inclusion and open consideration as opposed to a single path determined and controlled by a single individual.

As 2020 looks to be in our rearview, 2021 offers us great opportunity. Even my farmer and I compromised and found middle ground. We agreed on a total of 20 recessed dimmable LED lights to be spread out between our mudroom, kitchen, dining and living rooms rather than the 36 he originally wanted. He installed the driveway doorbell that I shopped for. And together we designed, redesigned, designed again, and finally ordered our reverse tuxedo cabinets. Compromise and middle ground are all around.

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

## New Faces Join Cook County Government



Tammy Wendt, Cook County Board of (Tax) Review was elected in 2020. Photo first appeared in the Daily Herald.



Iris Martinez, Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court, became the first Latina to hold the position on December 1, 2020.

Former Senator Iris Martinez and attorney Tammy Wendt joined Cook County government in December.

Tammy Wendt, Board of (Tax) Review

Wendt is a practicing attorney who began her legal career as a prosecutor in the Office of the Cook County State's Attorney in 2000.

In 2004, Wendt opened her own law firm, practicing in the areas of real estate closings, property tax appeals, criminal defense, expungements, and estate planning.

In 2016, she joined The Herbert Law Firm until 2019. In 2019, she practiced independently while running for the Cook County Board of (Tax) Review.

Wendt is a past president of the Southwest Bar Association, a member of the Women's Bar Association of Illinois, the Illinois Real Estate Lawyers Association, and the Illinois State Bar Association.

\*Information gathered from the Wendt campaign website.

Iris Martinez, Cook County Circuit Clerk

Cook County Circuit Clerk Iris Martinez is not only the first Latina woman to be elected Circuit Court Clerk, she's also was the first Latina woman elected to the Illinois State Senate. Martinez was elected to the Senate in 2003. Prior to her inauguration as Circuit Clerk she served as the Chairperson of the Senate Licensed Activities and Pension Committee; Vice-Chairperson of the Energy and Public Utilities and Education Committees; and a member of the Labor, Commerce, and Economic Development, Transportation, and Pension Investments.

In 2004, Martinez was awarded the Hillary Clinton Leadership Award presented to an elected official by the Illinois Democratic Women's organization. Martinez is also the past President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators.

Martinez is a multi-year recipient of the Illinois Farm Bureau® ACTIVATOR award, which recognizes her outstanding voting record on agricultural and small business issues.

CCFB will be seeking to work with these and other newly elected officials in 2021.

ANNUAL UPDATE ON FARM BUREAU'S LOCAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL PRIORITY ISSUES AND CONCERNS.

## LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

THURSDAY FEB. 11 AT 1 P.M. VIA ZOOM

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/3QOMRUG](https://bit.ly/3QOMRUG)

PASSCODE: FARM

## Inside the Courthouse: Clerk of the Circuit Court

Special purpose districts are most often created to provide services that counties, municipalities, and townships are unable to provide due to financial constraints. Special purpose governments may be divided into two classes: school districts and all others. School districts that provide primary and secondary education have elected governing boards and taxing authority. The majority of other special purpose governments have their own funding mechanisms and are run by managers and governing bodies appointed by the county board.

Special Purpose Districts in Illinois include:

### Cemetery Maintenance Districts

Cemetery maintenance districts are created by the circuit court judge on petition of the voters, after public hearing and referendum. The governing body is a board of trustees appointed by county, municipal, or township officials depending on the area of the district. Cemetery districts may levy property taxes.

### Civic Center Authorities

These authorities provide auditorium and exposition facilities that are established by special acts. A civic center board is appointed by the governing body of the county, city, village, or township it serves. All civic center authorities may fix rents and charges and issue revenue bonds. Some civic authorities may also levy ad valorem taxes.

### Conservation Districts

These districts are established to conserve open spaces for recreational purposes. Such districts are created upon petition of voters to the circuit court of a county under 1,000,000 population with no forest preserve, or by petition of voters from not more than five counties, followed by local referendum. Conservation districts may collect fees, levy an annual tax, and issue bonds after voter approval.

### Historical Museum Districts

Districts to provide museums and historic preservation efforts are created by petition of voters to the circuit court of the most populous county to be served, after public hearing and referendum. A board of five

trustees, appointed by the county governing body, governs each district. The district may charge fees for its services, issue bonds, and, after voter approval, may levy ad valorem taxes.

### Water Commissions

These commissions were reorganized under provisions of 1985 law. The governing body consists of two representatives appointed by each participating government. The commission may, after voter approval, certify the amount of property taxes to be levied for commission purposes and may issue bonds.

### Drainage Districts

These districts, to provide drainage and levee facilities for agricultural, mining, and sanitary purposes, may be established by the circuit court after petition of landowners, report of temporary commissioner appointed by the court and public hearing, or, alternatively, after petition, hearing, and referendum. Such districts are governed by three commissioners who may be appointed by the circuit court or, upon petition of landowners, elected. Drainage districts may levy benefit assessments and issue bonds.

### Exposition Authorities

Exposition authorities to provide expositions, convention facilities, stadiums, and exhibitions are created by petition of park district commissioners to the secretary of state. A board of commissioners appointed by the mayor governs each authority. Exposition authorities may fix rentals, fees, and charges, and issue revenue bonds.

### Fire Protection Districts

Districts to provide fire protection and ambulance services are established by the circuit court on petition of voters, after a local referendum. They are governed by local boards of trustees that may be elected or appointed by county, municipal, or township officials, depending on the area in the district. Boards may issue bonds and levy property taxes.

\*Adapted from *Inside the Courthouse- Illinois County Government 2019*, published by the Illinois Association of County Board Members.

**New Member Benefit Platform**



Sign up to access over **302,000** discounts  
<https://ilfb.abenity.com>



Access local and national discounts at work, at home, or on the go! Save on thousands of hotels, restaurants, movie tickets, retailers, florist, theme parks, national attractions, concerts, and events.

**Sign up today!** <https://ilfb.abenity.com>

## Legislative Contacts Key Part of FB ACT

With ideas swirling around Springfield and Washington, D.C., Farm Bureau members need to be ready to advocate for agriculture and Farm Bureau issues.

Farm Bureau Agricultural Contact Team (FB ACT) works with members on the national, state, and local levels.

"We encourage FB ACT members to fight for the future of their farms by making their voices heard and responding to Farm Bureau action requests," said Allie Breen, Illinois Farm Bureau coordinator for FB ACT.

Those contacts may be as simple as calling, emailing, or writing elected officials about issues

important to agriculture.

Agriculture continues to find opportunities and challenges in the state legislature. The diverse backgrounds of lawmakers raise the importance of members building relationships with legislators, Breen said.

FB ACT members are the first to receive action request notices and information, and they're expected to be advocates by responding to action requests, Breen added.

To join FB ACT text 'FARM' to 52886, contact Bona Heinsohn at 708 354-3276, or via email at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

## Voting Members Asked to Weigh in on Government Financing

Farmer and Professional Farm Bureau members are asked to share their opinions on pertinent issues through an online Micro Survey sent directly to their email addresses.

Question one speaks directly about the financing of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. In light of unprecedented usage in 2020, advocates are encouraging the district to seek a property tax increase. The property tax increase could be used to fund district operations, pensions, ongoing projects, and land acquisition.

The second question asks which avenues

local governments should consider in order to fill the budget gaps created by COVID-19.

Cook County Farm Bureau® works hard to be a leader on legislative and regulatory issues that impact members. To help us better serve Farm Bureau members, Farmer and Professional members are asked to complete their surveys before February 12. If you have additional questions or would like to express your thoughts and opinions, please contact Bona Heinsohn at 708-354-3276 or via email at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

# 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.



**\* Ilir Numani**

*Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager*

Ilir Numani has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. His office is located at 6650 N. Northwest Hwy. #200, in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-631-2909. Ilir has been a Financial Representative since April 2005.



**\*Sylwia Grochowska**

*Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager*

Sylwia Grochowska has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. 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.



**Matthew Powell**

*Chicago Northeast, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager*

Matthew Powell has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. His office is located at 4200 W. Euclid Ave., Ste. E in Rolling Meadows, IL. His phone number is 847-934-5117. Matt has been a Career Financial Representative since February 2005.



**Tim Brown**

*Chicago Northeast, Sharon Stemke, Agency Manager*

Tim Brown has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. His office is located at 25 NW Point Blvd., Ste.850 in Elk Grove Village, IL. His phone number is 847-794-1221. Tim has been a Financial Representative since December 2018.



**Brett Riekema**

*Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager*

Brett Riekema has been named Career Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. His office is located at 23042 N Main St., Prairie View, IL. His phone number is 847-415-2666. Brett has been a Financial Representative since May 2011.



**\*Renata Bondarowicz**

*Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager*

Renata Bondarowicz has been named Employee Financial Representative of the month for December 2020. Her office is located at 1515 E. Woodfield Rd., Ste. 930 in Schaumburg, IL. Her phone number is 847-891-6388. Renata has been a Financial Representative since July 2016.



**Tim Hartnell**

*Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager*

Tim Hartnell has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for December 2020. His office is located at 1938 E. Lincoln Hwy., Unit 217 in New Lenox, IL. His phone number is 815-462-0023. Tim has been a Financial Representative since January 1993.



**Joel Wrzesinski**

*Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager*

Joel Wrzesinski has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for December 2020. His office is located at 9731 W. 165TH St., Ste. 36 in Palos Heights, IL. His phone is 708-645-5007. Joel has been a Financial Representative since May 2018.



**John Vangennep**

*South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager*

John Vangennep has been named Career Financial Representative of the Month for December 2020. His office is located at 19806 S. Wolf Rd., in Mokena, IL. His phone number is 708-478-5500. John has been a Financial Representative since November 1984.



**John Tym**

*South Holland Agency, Jeff Orman, Agency Manager*

John Tym has been named Employee Financial Representative of the Month for December 2020. His office is located at 10607 S. Harlem Ave., Unit 1A in Orland Park, IL. His phone number is 708-361-4330. John has been a Financial Representative since June 2019.

*\*Indicates that this Financial Representative is a CCFB Financial Certified Representative. The Cook County Farm Bureau Certified Financial Representative Program is designed to strengthen the partnership and relationship shared by Financial Representatives from Country Financial with the Cook County Farm Bureau organization.*

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

## COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU® FOUNDATION DRAWDOWN FOR AG EDUCATION

Join the Friends of the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation in a reverse raffle, fund-raising virtual experience to benefit agricultural literacy in urban area of Chicagoland!

**A \$250.00 SPONSORSHIP WILL INCLUDE:**

- Company logo on Foundation event landing website page
- Company logo added to event promotional material as available
- Recognition and Banner during the virtual event
- Sponsorship appreciation placard for company display/use
- Recognition of Sponsorship in Farm Bureau publication, the Co-Operator (cir. 42,000)
- Recognition posts through Facebook/Twitter/Instagram (6,000 + followers)

\*The Cook County Farm Bureau® Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Donations/contributions to the Foundation may tax-deductible under IRS guidelines. Please consult your tax advisor if you have any questions.

Business/Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

If you are making a donation by check, please mail to:  
CCFB Foundation, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525



## 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

Iphone 6SE brand new in box unopened, space gray \$100. AT&T prepaid. Call Philip 708-525-5111.

Price reduced, many possibilities, 2350 sq. ft. brick commercial (Zone B) building, with full basement, excellent location, 1 mile from expressway, 3 blocks from Arlington

Park train station and Arlington Park racetrack. Call Rita 847-259-9339.

52" inch bathroom sink and cabinet, honey oak \$100. HP 19" computer monitor \$40. Call Jim 708-594-6399.

Shotshell reloading equipment and supplies. 12 ga Mec 650 press, 20 ga Mec 600 jr press, 477 12 ga AA wads, 428 20 ga AA wads, 925 win 209 primers, 200+ empty 20 ga hulls, 1000+ empty 12ga hulls, \$500 everything, or make reasonable offer. Will separate 3210bhoren@gmail.com.

Cemetery plot- Mount Auburn Cemetery, Stickney IL includes cement surround and transfer fees. Cemetery price is \$3988, asking \$3500 or best offer. Call 847-463-6184.

2 snow blowers, Ariens 7 horse, 2 cycle, single stage, electric start. Toro Snow Commander, 2 cycle, 7 horse, single stage, electric start. \$400 each. Call Mark 219-617-0363.

New ivory wedding gown, never worn, never altered, sized 10, full length with medium length train, bodice and hemline trimmed with lace and pearls, sweetheart neckline with lace straps over the shoulders or could be strapless, back closure is a zipper with tiny button closure covering it. Original cost \$3600. Make an offer. Text 847-504-9069 to see pictures.

## 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.

## 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.

Wanted to buy, Coin collector is buying old coins American and Foreign and old currency and paper money. Turn Grandpa's collection into CASH! Call 630-667-4032.

Wanted enclosed trailer dual axle 8.5 by 16' or 20' with roll up ramp door at rear of trailer. Call Bob 708-636-2267.

Wanted to buy, Coin collector is buying old coins American and Foreign and old currency and paper money. Turn Grandpa's collection into CASH! Call 630-667-4032.

Wanted enclosed trailer dual axle 8.5 by 16' or 20' with roll up ramp door at rear of trailer. Call Bob 708-636-2267.

## FREE CLASSIFIED ADS

For Cook County Farm Bureau members All Cook County Farm Bureau members may run four non-commercial classified ads annually for free in the Co-Operator. Only items of personal property will be accepted. Ads must be in the office by the 17th of each month.

Category:

For Sale  For Rent  Wanted

To place an ad, call the CCFB office at 708-354-3276 or mail details 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

For commercial promo & discounts go to our member to member link: <https://cookcfb.org/membership/member-to-member>

## Making Your Goal a New Year's Reality

By Adrienne DeSutter, Mental Health Consultant

A new year is upon us, bringing new experiences, new ambitions, and new challenges. For many, 2020 left us filled with disappointment, much like a recent conversation I had with my husband:

"Welcome home, hubs. You're not going to be happy about this, but..."

"They're out, again?"

Since moving some of the cattle to our house, the rascals had gotten out at least once a week for over a month. My farmer felt so defeated. He had put in extra hours that day, up early to get equipment working and getting loads hauled in before the weekend. He thought he had really set them up for success by giving them plenty of land to roam, building a decent fence, and getting plenty of corn ready.

But despite his best efforts, his plan continued to fail.

Around this time each year, my new year's resolution is met with the same failure:

The resolution: we make "a firm decision to do or not do something" (according to Oxford English Dictionary), and we're convinced we can make it an entire year without breaking that resolution, often to be sorely disappointed after our first big setback.

The reality: resolutions are all about making changes, and change is hard! Sometimes, it's REALLY hard. If it wasn't, you wouldn't need to choose a resolution because you'd already have everything accomplished! When we assume our resolutions will come without setbacks, we're expecting perfection, and setting ourselves up for failure.

So how can we stay hopeful and productive when facing setbacks? Here's a few things to consider:

A setback doesn't mean you've lost. Just because you mess up doesn't mean you throw your goals out the window. Every single second of your day is an opportunity to restart and try again. Did you vow not to eat chocolate, and found yourself stuffing your face with Christmas candy today? Don't give yourself a pass; try again, right

now! Throw the half-eaten candy in the trash. Or finish it, but then have a family member hide the rest. When we accept that mistakes will be made on the journey to our end goal, we don't have to waste time beating ourselves up or giving in at every setback. We grant ourselves some grace, and then try again.

Change your strategy. Ultimately, setbacks are a sign that your plan might need adjusted. What can you change that will make it easier to reach your goal? First, my husband tried adding another line to our fence, which was helpful...until #43 decided it wasn't, and crawled right under. After some frustration, we tried again. Turns out barbed wire was a better plan! It doesn't matter how many times you make changes, as long as you're creating a better plan that will lead you to your goal.

Think about what's going right instead of focusing on what's going wrong. Instead of getting a disappointing phone call every time the cows were out, I started sending my farmer messages on days the cows didn't get out. This gave him a sense of relief (and gave us both a daily chuckle). Even if we had one not-so-great day a week with the cattle, we had six other days that week to celebrate that things worked out.

Whether it's a new year's resolution, a new endeavor on the farm, or just a new personal goal, remember that the journey won't be perfect. It's ok if you make a few mistakes. It's ok if there are setbacks...expect them. As long as you're making progress and becoming better, you're headed in the right direction.

And remember, progress is worth celebrating, maybe even more than reaching your goal.

Tips for Making New Year's Resolutions: 1. Set a realistic goal with a purpose 2. Develop a game plan 3. Don't let a setback ruin your plan 4. It's ok to make changes 5. Remember that progress is key

Tips for Making New Year's Resolutions: 1. Set a realistic goal with a purpose 2. Develop a game plan 3. Don't let a setback ruin your plan 4. It's ok to make changes 5. Remember that progress is key.

## Our Shop Local Directory Provides Simple Yet Powerful Search Tools to Connect Growers



Growing Our Community Together

Our Shop Local directory provides simple yet powerful search tools to connect growers, buyers, sellers, and consumers. Join and register your business today. Whether you are a farmer looking to reach new customers or a consumer looking for fresh produce, local dairy, or a brewery in your area – our Shop Local directory is a MUST-HAVE resource!

Member Ag businesses that are already a part of our Farm Products Locator have a profile on Shop Local!

- Just login using your contact email to access and update your profile today or as often as needed! The more information you place on your profile, the more searchable you become to the consumer and across a joint network of affiliations. You can also add an e-commerce store or link to an existing store. And more!

Visit us at <https://cookcfb.org/discover->

local/shop-local or contact Debbie at [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org) for additional details.

Not a part of the directory? Register your local food or farm business today at <https://foodmarketmaker.com/registration>.

Because of our partnerships, updating your MarketMaker profile enables automatic updates across multiple platforms, including Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Specialty Growers Association, Illinois Farmers Market Association, Farmer Veteran Coalition of Illinois, and the newly added Buy Fresh Buy Local Illinois. All these affiliations are important ways to increase sales and access.

Shop Local is brought to you through a partnership with Illinois Farm Bureau, in cooperation with the Illinois Specialty Growers Association and Illinois MarketMaker.

## Community Urban Garden Grant Program



The Cook County Farm Bureau's Community Urban Garden Grant Program is looking to award six gardens a \$350 grant! All community-based urban gardens in Cook County are encouraged to apply. Grant details and applications are available through February 28.

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



This Community Urban Garden is funded in part by a grant from:

Cook County Farm Bureau®  
Commodities & Product Marketing Team



JOIN US

## NUTRITION CHALLENGE TRIVIA

CCFB Facebook Page

Participants will be entered to win \$25 in Farm Fresh Funds, redeemable at local Cook County Farm Bureau farmstands

Four winners will be announced at the end of February

Participants can enter the contest daily and all correct entries are eligible

# Programs, Workshops, and Webinars

For Members, Farmers, Teachers, Landowners, Foodies, Business owners, and those that want new experiences and to have a great time!

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



**Going Solar in 2021 - Virtual Lunch & Learn for Homes, Farm & many Businesses**  
 Many homes, businesses, and farms are capitalizing on current rebates for producing clean and renewable energy. Atlas Solar Advisors will be walking us through the solar process, the economics of going solar, and grants /rebates available.  
**Date:** Thursday February 4  
**Time:** 1:00-1:30 PM | 20-minute solar discussion with 10 min Q&A  
**Location:** Webinar via Zoom or call in by phone – info and link will be sent prior  
**Price:** Free for members & guests | BYO lunch

**Registration:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).

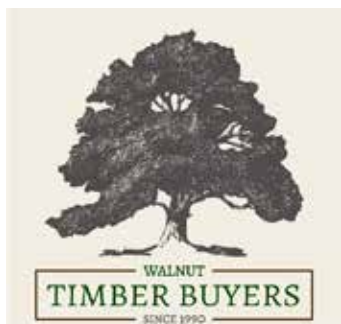


**Illinois Farm Bureau/COUNTRY Financial Winter Agribusiness Seminars**  
 COUNTRY Financial® and Illinois Farm Bureau staff will also host four live webinars throughout January and February to provide you updated information and answer viewer questions in real-time. RFD's Rita Frazer will host these 90-120-minute live meetings, and each session will cover crop/farm bill updates (Doug Yoder, COUNTRY Financial), legislative updates (Adam Nielsen, Illinois Farm Bureau) and provide a farm legacy planning overview (Joe Buhrmann, COUNTRY Financial). Choose the meeting date and time that best fits your schedule.

**Dates/Times:** Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 4 PM; Thursday, Feb. 25 at 12 PM  
**Location:** Webinar  
**Price:** Free for members & guests  
**Registration:** Visit [COUNTRYFinancial.com/AgWebinars](http://COUNTRYFinancial.com/AgWebinars)



**Workshop on Preparing Wills and Trusts and Transferring Non-Titled Property**  
 The program will inform you what types of information you will need to gather and decisions you will need to make before meeting with a lawyer to prepare a will or trust.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 25  
**Time:** 6:30-9:00 PM  
**Location:** Zoom (the zoom link will be emailed to all participants the evening before the class)  
**Price:** No charge for Cook County Farm Bureau Members. \$10 for non-members  
**Registration:** Call the CCFB at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).



**Timber Harvesting in 2021 - Virtual Lunch & Learn**  
 Timber is the crop to be harvested! Industry experts, Walnut Timber Buyers, will walk us through Best Practices of Timber Harvesting, the Timber Harvest Process, What Timber's Worth and Market Outlook, Walnut Timber Buyers service available to growers and landowners.  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 10  
**Time:** 1:00-1:30 PM  
**Location:** Webinar via Zoom or call in by phone – info and link will be sent prior  
**Price:** Free for members & guests | BYO lunch  
**Registration:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).



**Virtual Rules of the Road – Save the Date!**  
 Learn more about farm related transportation laws, rules, licenses, registration, implements of husbandry and more.  
**Date:** Thursday, March 4  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Registration:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276



**Crochet a Chunky Infinity Scarf Webinar for February 25**  
 CANCELED

# Last Chance 2021 Foundation Scholarship Applications Being Accepted...Feb 15 deadline

The Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation's 23rd Annual "Farm and Food" Agricultural Scholarship Program is receiving applicants. The Foundation is offering college students that are pursuing an agriculturally related career the opportunity to start or continue their higher education with a scholarship. Last year, the Foundation provided twelve scholarships ranging from \$1,000-\$2,500 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 15, 2021. 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 [www.cookcfb.org/foundation](http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation).

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!

**Other Opportunities may be available!**

There are other organizations that also provide agriculturally related scholarships. We've placed links to some of those opportunities on our website: [www.cookcfb.org/foundation](http://www.cookcfb.org/foundation).

Please go to the website for additional details on the scholarships offered by...

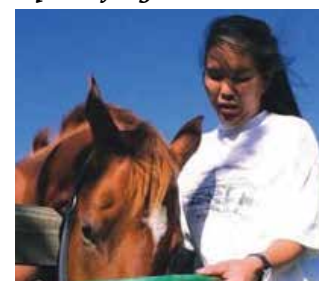
**Illinois Agricultural Association Foundation Compeer Financial GROWMARK**

Also, for students that may be seeking a skilled profession in a non-college environment, please check out the [MikeRoweWorks.org](http://MikeRoweWorks.org) for the Work Ethic Scholarship Program.

*Examples of Agricultural Careers*



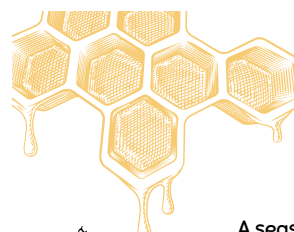
Aquaculturalist



Animal Nutritionist



Entomologist



## 2021 IT'S TIME TO "BEE ALL ABOUT IT!"



A seasonal approach to the craft of keeping bees. A comprehensive look at the various types of hives and methods, with emphasis on what you will need to know to keep your bees strong and healthy here locally. The CCFB is excited to be partnering to present this course via zoom or limited in person classroom setting as this course is offered two ways:

Online via Zoom or attend in person at the Cook County Farm Bureau. Seating is currently limited to 8, subject to change due to ongoing Covid guidelines. Reserve your spot early!!!

Class is on 6 consecutive Tuesday evenings, 1 hour of instruction and 30 mins Q&A.

**DATES**

FEB 2ND	SESSION 1:	HONEY BEE BIOLOGY & BEHAVIOR
FEB 9TH	SESSION 2:	GEARING-UP AND SOURCING BEES
FEB 16TH	SESSION 3:	ARRIVAL OF SPRING: IT'S SHOWTIME
FEB 23RD	SESSION 4:	TRANSITION TO SUMMER
MAR 2ND	SESSION 5:	ONSET OF FALL AND PREPARING FOR WINTER
MAR 9TH	SESSION 6:	HARVESTING HONEY AND COURSE REVIEW

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00 pm

Zoom or Location: Via Zoom or at the Cook County Farm Bureau Meeting Room (6438 Joliet Rd Countryside IL 60525)

Fee: \$50.00 for full course for CCFB Members. \$70.00 for non-members.

Registration: Register by calling the CCFB office at 708-354-3276; online at the Member Center or email Debbie at [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org).



*\*\*This program is brought to you by Kim Kulton, President of Bee All About It. Kim's background is in entomology. Kim operates a commercial beekeeping business which produces local honey, raises Queens, and rescues bees. She is joined by Pete Soltesz, President of CookDupage Beekeepers Association, one of the largest bee clubs in the Midwest. Kim and Pete are experts on what works locally in our Northern Illinois/Chicago area counties.*