



# 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

<b>JULY</b>		
	Selfie Contest	1
13	Party for the Pollinators	12
22	An Evening for Ag Education Gala	12
<b>AUGUST</b>		
	Selfie Contest	1
31	Solar & ComEd Energy Efficiency Program	12
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17	Farm Crawl	12
20/21	Smart Driver Course	12
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
1	Giant Pumpkin Contest	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

**The Illinois General Assembly through legislation recently selected August 1 to commemorate what farm crop?**

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)

June Winner is Gary Przewoznik

Q. Where is the farm Herban Produce located?  
 Answer: "A. 2900 w. Van Buren St. Chicago, IL"

Access your great membership benefit package of discounts, deals, and services at

[cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits](http://cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits)



Farm Bureau leaders completed the installation of the pollinator garden sign in June. A party for the pollinator event has been scheduled for Wednesday, July 13 from 5:30 – 6:30 PM. All members are invited to participate. See page 12 for details.

Members, students, and community members are encouraged to visit the garden and see the pollinators and native plants. Those who wish to submit a "pollinator report" detailing the pollinators, their numbers, date, and time of day are encouraged to send that information via email to Bona Heinsohn at [bona@cookcfb.org](mailto:bona@cookcfb.org).

## Members and Friends Invited for A Spectacular Evening of Fun To Support Agricultural Education

Cook County Farm Bureau® members and friends are invited to participate in the return of the Foundation's Gala event in 2022! After a two-year Covid induced hiatus, the CCFB Foundation's July 22 Evening for Ag Education Gala Fun-raiser is a must attend, signature event!

The headline entertainment is the band, Libido Funk Circus. In addition to the live band, the event price features a full plated dinner, four-hour open bar, live band, live auction, silent auction baskets, Truth or Hogwash game, and split-the-pot 50/50 raffle.

**CCFB Foundation "Evening for Ag Education Gala"**  
 \$100 per person (early bird rate)

**Friday, July 22, 2022**  
**6:00-11:00p.m.**  
 Crystal Grand Banquets  
 12416 S. Archer Ave.  
 Lemont, Illinois

Tickets to the event may be purchased at the Cook County Farm Bureau office, by mailing a check to CCFB Foundation, 6438 Joliet Rd., Countryside, IL, or by calling 708-354-3276 to pay by credit card.

Janet McCabe, CCFB Foundation President, said, "We are thrilled to return to an in-person, fun-filled event and want you to be a part of it!"

Those attending this event will support the Foundation's Agriculture Literacy efforts to

- Help urban kids, their parents, and teachers know about where their food, clothing, fuel, and nutrition comes from.

- Provide scholarships to help area young adults attend college to pursue farm and food related career paths.

- Provide farm experiences and hands-on lessons about farming and food-based education for teachers, schools, and Chicago area families.

**Continued on Page 2**

## Cook County Farm Bureau® Summer Selfie Contest

Join us to be a part of the Cook County Farm Bureau Summer Selfie Contest action!

Win a cash prize or Farm Fresh Funds in June, July, and August by capturing the best photo from one of the selected categories. Don't forget to include yourself in the "selfie"!

**Categories:**

- 1) Farmers' Markets
- 2) Crops/Gardening
- 3) Farm Animals

**Prizes:**

Each month, a winning photo will be selected from each category. Winners will receive \$50, and all remaining entries will be entered into a random drawing to win \$20 in Farm Fresh Funds. Photos will be featured in the Co-Operator, on our website, and social media.

Go to <https://cookcofarmbureau.wufoo.com/forms/rwk7mey1s46rup/> to submit entries. The contest is open to all members in good standing. We are holding this contest to obtain usable and appropriate photos that accurately portray today's agriculture in Cook County.

\* Farm Bureau Farm Fresh Funds are funds that can be redeemed at local farm stands, greenhouses, and garden centers just as you would use cash.

## 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!



# Members and Friends Invited for A Spectacular Evening of Fun to Support Agricultural Education

Continued from Page 1

Thank you to our sponsors for this event! Sponsors as of June 15, 2022 include:

Presenting Sponsor



- Chicago South Agency • Chicago North Agency
- Orland Park Agency • Chicago Northwest Agency
- South Holland Agency • Chicago Northeast Agency



Members or member businesses interested in becoming a sponsor can contact the Cook County Farm Bureau office at 708-354-3276. Additional details and perks are available at the Gala Fun'raiser landing page <https://cookcfb.org/foundation/>.

"The Foundation has the unique opportunity to see kids and adults experience new connections with farming, farmers, and food and we want you to feel the same joy of agricultural discovery!" stated McCabe. "Please partner with us on this farm education journey by attending this event!"

Call the Cook County Farm Bureau Foundation at 708-354-3276 to purchase your Gala event ticket today.

## HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED MEMBERS IN JUNE

- ▶ Engaged with several hundred zoogoers during a pollinator program at Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago.
- ▶ Engaged with Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioners and staff as well as researchers, farmers, and environmentalists during the Fulton County Field Days program sponsored by Cook and Fulton County Farm Bureaus and the Illinois Farm Bureau.
- ▶ Coordinated a fun member outing at Wrigley Field to watch the Chicago Cubs take on the San Diego Padres.



## 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 Farm Bureau family, including the Board, Staff, Teams, and so many friends who joined together to mourn the passing of board member, Tim Stuenkel, and for the outreach of broad support for the Stuenkel family during this difficult time.

The many CCFB Foundation "Evening for Ag Education" sponsors, donors, attendees, and 50/50 raffle buyers for supporting this year's upcoming event.

Stephanie Dunn, Executive Director of Star Farm, and her team for hosting the Illinois Farm Bureau and Cook County Farm Bureau staff, Lieut. Gov. Julianna Stratton, and Illinois Dir. of Agriculture Jerry Costello for a visit in late May.

Board member Jim Gutzmer for going through the training and testing to become an Illinois Farm Bureau certified board member.

Chicago Northwest COUNTRY Financial representatives and staff who participated in this year's Food Checkout Day. Financial representatives and staff celebrated their first Tipping the Scales victory in May.

Roger Freeman, Dan Biernacki, and everyone who assisted with the installation of the pollinator sign on the Farm Bureau grounds.

The Midwest Dairy Association interns for partnering with our Ag Literacy camps this summer.

## Party for the Pollinators

Join Cook County Farm Bureau and celebrate the tremendous contributions of pollinators during this educational and family-friendly free event.

Activities will include crafts, honey tasting, and pollinator programming.

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Wednesday, July 13 from 5:30- 6:30 p.m. at the CCFB (bottom level parking lot)

## Co-Operator

published monthly

Cook County Farm Bureau

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# Downwind

by Bob Rohrer, CCFB Manager

## “A Robot With A Spatula”

Every day, our society is one step closer to becoming a real-life version of the “Jetsons”. For those of you who are “junior” in age, the Jetsons were a 60s’ cartoon starring a futuristic family and society featuring pushbutton modern conveniences, magical wireless connections, voice command AI robotics, and driver-free (flying) cars.

In today’s version of the Jetsons...

- Technology provides pushbutton heated vests, remote start cars, remote cameras in our doorbells, and remote-controlled thermostats. Even my water softener has remote access.
- We verbally command things to happen in our homes...

“Alexa, make me laugh!” or

“Siri, why did the chicken cross the road?” or

“Hey Google, where’s the beef?”

We receive answers and things happen.

- We have robotic vacuums for houses, pools, lawnmowers, and milk cow barns. I call them Roomba®, Poomba, Lawnba, and Moomba.
- There are big plans for self-driving, automated versions of cars and there are even a few versions of hovercars.

Therefore, I am not sure why was I surprised to read the FarmWeek headline from Kay Shipman entitled

### “Robotic chefs bring artificial intelligence to the table”

The article highlights a robotic chef called Chef Nala, powered by artificial intelligence that can cook millions of recipes without human intervention invented by a robotics company in Arlington Heights. (We reprinted the article on this page!)

Yes, robots are getting into the restaurant business.

I can see the possibility of a robot following a recipe inputted into its database with the outcome being of consistent quality. Seems like a quality assurance dream (Will a robot be able to determine if milk is sour through the smell test, though?).

As you may know, I am a big fan of small-town diners that feature comfort food such as breaded pork tenderloin the size of my head and homemade biscuits and gravy. The bacon is crispy. Grease is a desired ingredient. Everyone makes fun of kale, lentils, and quinoa.

Maybe there will be a “fry cook” robot model armed with a spatula for those greasy spoon diners? For me, what makes a small-town diner appealing are the nuances that cannot be included in a recipe. How will a robot know how much a dash of salt, a pinch of pepper, a splash of grease, and a dab of butter is in a homemade recipe that has never been written down? Every meal is totally unique. On the positive side, the odds of having a random hair in your food diminishes unless a robot wig upgrade is offered.

As the robotic chefs grow popular in restaurants, reality robot tv will be right around the corner. Robot versions of... Hell’s Kitchen; Iron Chef; Emeril Live; The Great British Baking Show; Diners, Drive-ins, and Dives; Cupcake Wars; Top Chef. These reality TV shows will feature robots that have broken out of their software programming barriers with personality and flair.

Most surprising to me, a survey of adults 18 and over conducted in early May resulted in 60% of respondents indicating food cooked by a robot would be the same or better than that prepared by a person (are coffee vending machines better than restaurant coffee...hmm). My faith was restored when I saw that the most reluctant age demographic in the survey were Baby Boomers at only 39% interest.

All joking aside, congratulations to Nala Robotics of Arlington Heights as the company brings food preparation to a new level of technology! I cannot wait to taste your robot’s biscuits and gravy!

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It is with great sadness and sorrow that I write a paragraph on the recent passing of Cook County Farm Bureau board member, Tim Stuenkel. We miss Tim’s energy, knowledge, wit, and passion for agriculture and leadership. Tim engaged in so many aspects of the organization that showcased his leadership talent on the board, for agricultural literacy, sharing farm technology and practices, and communicating with the general public. The Farm Bureau family including board, staff, teams, and Tim’s many friends express sincere condolences to the entire Stuenkel family that has been involved in farming and Farm Bureau for many decades.



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## Robotic Chefs Bring Artificial Intelligence to the Table

by Kay Shipman, FarmWeek

Definitely wielding kitchen utensils and carefully measuring ingredients, the chef stirs, then flips a pan to achieve a golden brown on evenly cooked ingredients. Unlike other chefs who spend years training and working in kitchens to perfect their skills, Chef Nala mastered a new recipe on her first try and is adept at any type of cuisine.

Nala (pronounced NAW-la) is a robot powered by artificial intelligence and can cook millions of recipes without human intervention.

“Nala is a fully automated robotic chef. What it does is take care of any recipes and cooks the food, taking the roles of the chef and the cook,” Nala’s

creator Ajay Sunkara told FarmWeek. Sunkara is the founder of Nala Robotics, a technology company based in Arlington Heights.

A software engineer, Sunkara applied machine learning and artificial intelligence to cooking when he saw a need. “I noticed there was no technology advancement in the food preparation industry for a long time,” he said.

The software engineer explained any type of recipe may be uploaded to a secure database. Ingredients are sourced from suppliers, and people prep the raw ingredients for Nala, “very similar to how it’s done in a restaurant,” Sunkara added.

Nala takes the cooking from there.

Using the automated chefs, dishes are prepared, taste tested and refined before they are uploaded. With its artificial intelligence, Nala gets better each day, learning and perfecting the recipes the more it cooks, according to Sunkara.

Nala Robotics launched a fully automated kitchen in November in Naperville’s Mall of India. One Mean Chicken offered wings and fried chicken cooked by Nala. Since then, the company opened three additional restaurants, specializing in Thai, Indian and burgers, in the same location.

Sunkara sees robots offering solutions to

some of the issues faced in the food preparation and restaurant sectors. He pointed out the big demand for hygiene and contactless food preparation, especially since the pandemic.

“Nala is touchless,” he said. “Food can be prepared in a perfect environment.”

Labor shortages are another challenge.

Unlike Nala’s human counterparts, the robot can cook 24/7 and doesn’t need to take breaks.

And remote locations no longer are an impediment to recruit talented chefs. Nala Robotics is working with a client located in a remote town in the Canadian Rockies where it is hard to find talented staff.

Sunkara explained a

chef located anywhere in the world could supply recipes for Nala to prepare in the remote town.

“A chef in London could open a restaurant in a small, remote Illinois town and it would serve his same, delicious meals,” Sunkara said.

Sunkara envisioned farmers using Nala to prepare foods right on the farm, reducing the need to ship them for processing and packaging. That would decrease the potential for food spoilage and waste, he added. “It is key for farmers to know this technology is available,” Sunkara said, adding smaller units are available.

Nala offers an extra pair of hands for food preparation, but the robot chef isn’t coming to take people’s jobs, Sunkara stressed. “We’ve seen that same argument in the software industry. The robots will improve the quality of life. It can actually help solve problems and provide huge benefits,” he said, adding that artificial intelligence will create more quality jobs and entrepreneurs.

“The food preparation industry has been a little slow (in technology advancement). The pandemic slowed that,” Sunkara said. “There’s always a golden era for every technology. Food preparation is catching up, and I see this as key growth.”



Nala Robotics’ chefs prepare dishes without human intervention. Using artificial intelligence and machine learning, the robot can cook any type of cuisine and learns to perfect its product. (Photo courtesy of Nala Robotics, Arlington Heights)

Recipe of the Month:

## Mushroom Medley & Angel Hair Pasta

Gibby’s Gourmet Mushrooms, LLC

### Ingredients

- 3 T butter
- 1 med onion, diced
- 1-2 large garlic cloves, minced
- ½ lb Chestnut Mushrooms
- ½ lb Shiitake Mushrooms (don’t use Shiitake stems, save for stock)
- ½ lb Oyster Mushrooms
- Fresh Oregano to taste
- 1 package Angel Hair Pasta, cook to package directions
- olive Oil
- 8-10 oz fresh spinach
- medium jar artichokes with juice
- fresh Lemon
- 1 small jar Alfredo Sauce
- 1 lb Chicken Breast Tenderloins, add Italian seasoning and Parmesan, pounded thin, sautéed 2 – 3 minutes each side.

In large pot, melt butter and sauté onion. Add mushrooms and continue to sauté until tender. Add spinach, stir through and add garlic, continue to sauté another 2 minutes. Keep on low heat and stir occasionally. Prepare Angel Hair pasta to package directions. Drain, place in large bowl or platter, drizzle (or drown) in Olive Oil. Heat Alfredo in saucepan. Stir in artichokes and juice and cook on low-medium heat, until hot. Plate pasta and add large scoop(s) of Mushroom Medley. Top with Chicken Tenderloins. Drizzle Alfredo to desire. Squeeze fresh Lemon and add fresh shaved Parmesan. ENJOY!

2022 Recipe Collection Booklets are available!



To receive a free copy:  
Email: [membershipdebbie@cookefb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookefb.org)

Download a digital copy at:  
<https://cookefb.org/discover-local/recipes>

Call the Farm Bureau at  
708-354-3276



# Farm Bureau Partners with Lincoln Park Zoo



Visitors to Lincoln Park Zoo's ag literacy table enjoyed making Soil Sammies to grow at home and took home educational bags with additional activities, including My Little Seed Houses, pipe cleaner bees and outdoor adventure flip books. If you are hosting an event and would like ag literacy materials or information, email [aitc@cookcfb.org](mailto:aitc@cookcfb.org).



Zoogoers at Lincoln Park Zoo tested their knowledge of pollinators, conservation, and farm facts at the Cook County Farm Bureau's pollinator tent. Trivia questions included: "True or False. Smits Farms, a local farm in the south suburbs, sells produce at the Green City Market" and "Farmers use conservation buffers in their fields to improve soil, water, and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and create scenic landscapes. Yes or no."



With the assistance of Illinois Farm Bureau®, Cook County Farm Bureau® joined with the Lincoln Park Zoo to recognize the importance of pollinators and the tremendous efforts of farmers in the area of pollinator preservation. Zoogoers were able to create soil sammies at the agricultural literacy craft table as well as take home additional activities and resources.



The Shop Local directory provides simple yet powerful search tools to connect growers, buyers, sellers, and consumers. Get listed and expand your reach to thousands of new customers.

**How to set up your Shop Local business profile:**

**STEP 1** Get started at any Shop Local partner website. Visit [Specialtygrowers.org/ShopLocal](https://specialtygrowers.org/ShopLocal) or visit your county Farm Bureau Shop Local website.

**STEP 2** Register and create a login.

**STEP 3** Set up your business information.

**STEP 4** Join networks and choose your business affiliations. Adding affiliations makes your business more searchable. Don't forget to add Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Specialty Growers Association, Buy Fresh Buy Local Illinois, and any other business affiliation you belong to.

*It's important to know that you will need your Illinois Farm Bureau membership number to add your affiliation. Not a member? Contact your county Farm Bureau or visit [myifb.org](http://myifb.org) to join today!*

**STEP 5** Congratulations, your profile is set up and your business is listed. Login and access your account as often as you need. You can also add an e-commerce store or link to an existing store.

- Visit <https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/shop-local/online-directory> for info.  
 - For technical support, contact [rscavuzzo@ifb.org](mailto:rscavuzzo@ifb.org).  
 - For recording of ShopLocal webinar, email [membershipdebbe@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbe@cookcfb.org).



## Master Gardener Resource Center is Available for Member Use

The Cook County Farm Bureau® and the University of Illinois Extension continue to partner on a project that benefits local Farm Bureau members and the general public. During the growing season (April – November), Master Gardeners are available to answer questions from members and the general public related to gardening and horticulture.

Master Gardeners are available through the Cook County Farm Bureau by emailing [mastergardener@cookcfb.org](mailto:mastergardener@cookcfb.org) (preferred) or by

calling the Cook County Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276. The Master Gardeners continue to work effectively responding to members through remote service.

General topic areas that can be addressed include soil test recommendations, plant disease issues and treatments, horticulture related questions, pest identification and treatment, and more. Commercial related questions will be forwarded to the University of Illinois Extension professional staff.

## Vilsack Introduces Framework, Funding to 'Transform' Food System

by Timothy Eggert, FarmWeek

The Biden administration plans to spend more than \$2.5 billion to "transform" the country's food system. Called the "Food System Transformation framework," the wide-ranging strategy ultimately aims to improve food production, processing, distribution and consumer access.

It includes money — stemming from the American Rescue Plan and other relief legislation — for more than a dozen new and existing USDA programs that invest in small and mid-size operations and expand organic and urban agriculture.

Food processing and distribution programs will see \$1.3 billion, while \$300 million will go

toward helping farmers transition to organic agriculture. Another \$230 million will be spent to boost urban agriculture and increase grocery options in cities and rural areas that are labeled food deserts.

### Food processing

At the core of USDA's framework is hundreds of millions of dollars to beef-up local livestock processing capacity.

USDA will deploy \$375 million in loan guarantees through the Food Supply Chain Loan Guarantee Program for independent meat and poultry processing plant projects. About \$275

### Growing Our Community Together

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





## 5 Questions for Melanie Senne, CCFB Operational Finance Manager

### What impresses you about the Farm Bureau and its Members, Board, Team, and coworkers?

It always amazes me how the people of the Farm Bureau step-up in a time of need without hesitation; almost as if we're family. Recently, it was heartwarming to see the people of the Farm Bureau provide comfort and offerings of help to those affected by the passing of one of our beloved Board Members. During COVID, our Food Pantry program assisted so many families in need which would not have been possible without the support from those of the Farm Bureau. We seem to come together not just through our programming but with everyday life. It truly is a Farm Bureau Family!

### What did you want to be growing up?

Apparently, I'm living my dream maintaining finances for the Farm Bureau, Foundation, and PAC as I always wanted to be in the accounting field. Numbers and money come naturally to me without a thought. As a child, my mom would

give me \$20 to get groceries for the week's dinners and I'd make it happen; sometimes with change back (shh!). Upon taking that first accounting class in middle school, I was hooked...luckily for the Farm Bureau.

### What is your favorite job within the Cook County Farm Bureau?

So, I've acquired this side gig here, "Maintenance Mel" which is not my ideal thing (see the question below) until the weather warms up and outside building maintenance is in its prime. Just last week, I was in my glory out there placing the flowers in their beds on the Farm Bureau grounds. It's nice to get away from the desk for a bit...and the tan is a nice perk!

### What job do you prefer to avoid?

Is it possible that your favorite job is also the one you like to avoid? Yes, it is! During those winter months, Maintenance Mel is not so much fun with the shoveling and salting. Then there's the unpleasantness of anything related to the bathroom.



And the contractors - there's not enough space here for that list. It sure makes for interesting days though.

### What is your favorite tractor?

From a very young age, my Pops instilled in me that the Sennes are a Deere family;

bust out that green and yellow. One of my fondest memories of my Dad was being in the field when the tractor stalled and he told me to go get the lil' Deere to bring the fuel can. I was so excited to drive it by myself that I brought him an empty can!

## Intergovernmental Cooperation

### Improving efficiencies for our nearly 7,000 units of local government

While governed under state statute, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act (5 ILCS 220/), Article VII of the 1970 Illinois Constitution authorizes, and even encourages, the use of intergovernmental cooperation by all units of government. The constitution declares that "the state shall encourage intergovernmental cooperation and use its technical and financial resources to assist intergovernmental activities." As formal as that sounds, these agreements can also be informal and, in some cases, temporary. A simple handshake between two units of government can lead to big savings for the taxpayer.

Local governments can take advantage of intergovernmental cooperation to tackle issues like the need for expensive technology and equipment and improve on the delivery of services that alone would be difficult to provide. For example, expensive pieces of road maintenance equipment that see limited use throughout the year can be shared between road districts - particularly those that have relatively few miles of road to maintain and/or limited budgets.

There are other examples of counties owning a specialized piece of equipment they share with township road districts. County highway departments can also arrange volume equipment purchases that benefit not only the

road districts, but the county as well.

Intergovernmental cooperation is not limited to equipment sharing. Agreements can be applied to an array of other cooperative efforts, such as volume materials purchasing, professional services, shared emergency medical services, joint youth or senior programs, combined planning efforts, etc. There's almost no limit to what two or more units of government can share if they can forge a mutually acceptable joint governmental agreement.

Municipalities can get in on the act, too. For example, a county can contract with a municipality to operate the county's zoning program. That way, one set of personnel and one office with computer equipment can operate two separate zoning ordinances.

Check with units of local government in your own county to learn whether they're taking advantage of this approach. It could be well worth your effort in finding savings for taxpayers.

Our own Illinois Farm Bureau policy supports this concept. Policy #106 is all about intergovernmental cooperation and encourages us to work with all interested groups and organizations to identify methods which can be implemented locally to encourage local government cooperation.

## Southland Reactivation Program Signed into Law

Senate Bill 3189 now P.A. 102-1010 amends the Property Tax Code to provide that certain properties located in Bloom, Bremen, Calumet, Rich, Thornton, or Worth Townships may be certified as 'southland reactivation property'.

Statute provides that, beginning with the first tax year after the property is certified as southland reactivation property and continuing through the twelfth tax year after the property is certified as southland reactivation property, the property shall be valued at 50% of the base year equalized assessed value. It provides that

the base year is the last tax year prior to the date of the application for southland reactivation designation during which the property was occupied and assessed and had an equalized assessed value. It sets forth the maximum aggregate tax liability for property that has been certified as southland reactivation property.

This change was a priority of Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi. A copy of the statute is available at <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=102-1010>.

## August 1 – Sweetcorn Appreciation Day in Illinois

In 2022, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation recognizing August 1 as Sweetcorn Appreciation Day. The day commemorates all sweetcorn growers and farmers across the state. Stop by your favorite farm stand or farmers market to grab a sack and plan on enjoying the sweet taste of summer! Check out the Illinois Farm Families website <https://www.wachusgrow.org/blog> for sweet corn prep hints and other great recipes.



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



# Fun Adventures

## AWAIT YOU



**Fun Family Adventures Await...use your CCFB Discount Deals Today!**





**Santa's Village, Dundee**  
**Single Day Tickets:** Use the discount member link platform to get an ANYDAY ticket to Santa's Village for only \$27.99 (regular price \$34.99), visit [santasvillagedundee.centeredgeonline.com](https://santasvillagedundee.centeredgeonline.com)  
**Discount Ticket Bundle:** \$24.99 (\$10 discount ANYDAY Ticket) for 20 ticket minimum purchase. Call Santa's Village directly at 847-426-6751 to order. Perfect for 4-H, scouts, birthday parties, church groups etc.

**Raging Waves Waterpark**  
**General Admission Ticket:** \$21.00 member price (regularly \$44.99). 2 and under are free. Limited supply of tickets. Call CCFB to order at 708-354-3276 or stop by office. Single day ticket valid Memorial Day weekend through September 5, 2022.

**Discount Tickets SOLD on Tickets at Work Platform**  
Sign up at: <https://www.ticketsatwork.com/tickets/>  
**Use Member discount code: CCFB**  
Tickets at Work, a CCFB discount, gives you access to 20- 70% off on movies, hotels, shows, concerts, sporting events and SIX FLAGS tickets online!

**Visit benefit details online at <https://cookcfb.org/membership/member-benefits> or call the CCFB Member Center at 708-354-3276.**





Diane Merrion, CCFB Director of Ag Literacy

## Ag Lit Bit

### Onto the Next Chapter

All good books must come to an end, although many stay with you forever. My role at the Farm Bureau

is also ending this month although the memories will remain forever. It's been a wonderful journey started by Haley and Bob along with Jill and all my current and former peers.

Some 'chapters' of note along the way include:

- Our amazing Ag in the Classroom Presenter Team! The face of our Ag Literacy efforts are the presenters that I have been fortunate to collaborate with. I so have appreciated your hard work, humor, and dedication. Nothing would have been possible without each of you who all brought something special to every classroom. Thank you to Jim, Kathy B., Joan, Linda D., Toni, Sheri, Kathy L., Diane, Wendy, Valerie, Sarah, Amy, Linda S., Mike, and Wayne. What a team!!
- Farm Camp! I will always have a special memory of the crazy idea Jill Drover and I embarked upon called "Passport to the Farm Camp". Another one of those projects we had to ask ourselves, are we crazy or should we go for it. We did and pulled in some willing volunteers along the way including our Camp Counselors extraordinaire Carole Scannell, Cathy Malloy, and Linda Dunn. It took an army to conduct the program for several years but provided many endless memories.
- Being involved with the Chicago High School for Ag Sciences. What an honor. Having no prior knowledge of the school, I still remember my first visit there with Haley. While the animals

surprised me, the experiences with the students will be what I cherish the most. They took the lead on teaching at farm camp, impressed heads of companies during Farm Shadows, and were willing volunteers for Farm Bureau events over the years. The students and their teachers formed a bond through the unique topic of agriculture that seemed second to none.

- Summer Ag Institutes. I couldn't wait to plan the agenda and introduce teachers to ag professionals in our industry. My excitement was shared by teachers who helped me every step of the way and showed such enthusiasm. They couldn't wait to go back to their classrooms armed with new lessons and knowledge about ag. Exhausting, but unforgettable times.
- Food Checkout Day will hold a special place as the outpouring of generosity that school after school showed through their food collections for our Ronald McDonald outreach efforts. It melted my heart. To all the teachers, counselors and principals that coordinated your school efforts, I will never forget you.

I thank the Board of Directors and my Ag Literacy Team and Chairs including Mike and Tim who never wavered in their support of me and all our outreach efforts. I also thank Kevin Daugherty for enduring my endless questions and requests, along with providing the best ag literacy educational content there is. Special thanks to my husband Dave and sons Brian, Eric, and Joe for supporting my Farm Bureau life for many years.

It's time for a new author and a new book, featuring Katrina who we welcome to the Farm Bureau. I can't wait to read her stories and watch each new chapter unfold.

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

## Stop by the Ag Literacy Family Stations at the Party for Pollinators

- Fun with Plants
- Wiggly Worms Compost and Exploration Table
- How Honey is Made
- Pollinator Habitats
- What is a Pollinator?
- Visit the CCFB's Pollinator Garden



5:30 to 6:30 p.m.  
Wednesday, July 13  
At the CCFB  
Bottom Level Parking Lot

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

## The Next Director of Ag Literacy



My name is Katrina Milton, and I am excited to have been named the next Director of Ag Literacy for the Cook County Farm Bureau. Diane Merrion will leave some pretty big shoes to fill, and I am working closely with her until her retirement to learn the ropes of the role.

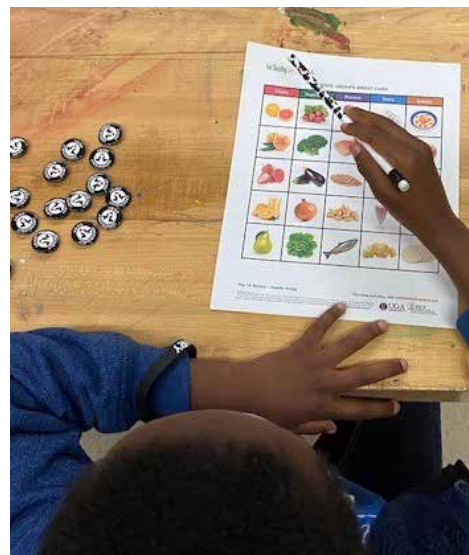
I grew up in Leland, a rural village in LaSalle County, surrounded by cornfields and gravel roads. I graduated with degrees in English and Classical Civilization from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and I completed an internship with Catholic Charities.

For the past 10 years, I have been a reporter and photographer for Shaw Media publications, including The Daily Chronicle, The Valley Life, and The MidWeek newspapers and The DeKalb County Ag Mag. I also have years of experience as a substitute teacher.

In my spare time, my hobbies are nature photography, cooking, traveling, and spending time with my dog Gracie and rabbit Hershey.

I look forward to bringing ag literacy and sharing my love of agriculture and education to the teachers, students, and parents of Cook County residents.

## Youth Camp



This summer, our Ag in the Classroom Program conducted several youth camps along with interns from the Midwest Dairy. The topic of our presentation was "Choosing a Healthy Plate," where we discussed the origin of fruits, grains, vegetables, proteins, and dairy. Participants enjoyed creating a healthy snack using ingredients from each food group. The program ended with a fun game of BINGO with prizes donated by the Midwest Dairy. Our thanks to the Cook County Sheriff's Department for offering another year of engaging and fun activities for local youth.

## Presenters Celebrate



Ag in the Classroom presenters gathered last month to celebrate their outreach efforts in Cook County this school year. Teachers praised the efforts of presenters and program content with comments such as, "The students loved it! They now understand Agriculture in Illinois." Pictured back row: Wayne Kolweier, Sarah Koukol, Kathy Lesser, Jill Drover (AITC Assistant), Linda Schaeffer, Jim Bloomstrand. Front row: Diane Merrion, Katrina Milton. Presenter Mike Galassini not pictured.

Part One



Part Two





Scan the codes to explore the wacky, weird & wonderful world of plants



# Agriculture Adventures for Families

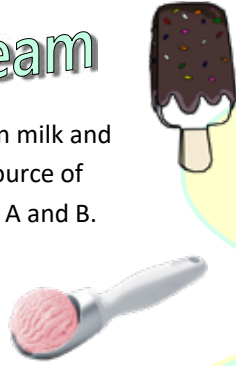
## Get the Scoop on Ice Cream



There's more to America's favorite frozen dairy treat than milk and sugar. In addition to being a sweet treat, ice cream is a source of proteins, phosphorus, calcium, phosphorus and Vitamins A and B.

About 70% of the ingredients in ice cream come from milk.

As ice cream freezes, the cold mixture is whipped and blended to create a creamy texture. Often, there are no added preservatives needed, because ice cream is preserved naturally by freezing.



Q: Why do ice cream cones always carry an umbrella?  
A: In case there's a chance of sprinkles

Q: What is a horse's favorite flavor of ice cream?  
A: Straw-berry



## Fun Facts



July 17 is National Ice Cream Day.

Ice cream must contain a minimum of 10% milkfat.

Flavored ices were popular with the Romans in the 4th century B.C.

The first ice cream parlor in the United States opened in New York in 1776.

The hand-crank freezer, patented in 1846, led to the establishment of the first commercial ice cream plant in Baltimore in 1851.

Neapolitan ice cream originally included the flavors of vanilla, cherry, and pistachio in honor of the Italian flag.

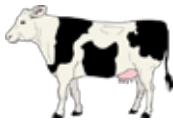
About 9% of cows' milk in the United States is used to make ice cream.

At any given time, 87% of Americans have ice cream in their freezer.

Chocolate ice cream was invented about 15 years before vanilla and was inspired by hot chocolate.

The most popular flavor is chocolate, followed by vanilla.

There are more than 1,000 different flavors of ice cream, including lobster, sweet potato, corn, avocado and macaroni and cheese.



It takes 12 pounds of milk to produce one gallon of ice cream.

Americans eat an average of 48 pints of ice cream per person every year, making the United States the country that consumes the most ice cream.

Facts from Undeniably Dairy, www.usdairy.com.

## Make Ice Cream at Home in 5 Easy Steps

### Supplies Needed:

- 1 small resealable plastic bag
- 1 large resealable plastic bag
- 1 cup half and half
- 2 tbs. granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups ice
- 1/3 cup kosher salt



### Steps:

In a small resealable plastic bag, combine half and half, sugar, and vanilla. Push out excess air and seal.

In a separate large resealable plastic bag, combine ice and salt.

Place the smaller bag inside the bigger bag, and tightly seal.

Shake the bags vigorously for 10 minutes, until ice cream has hardened.

Remove ice cream from the bag and enjoy with your favorite toppings, such as chocolate syrup, sprinkles and a cherry on top.



### 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 2022 and your name is automatically entered into an "End of Year" drawing for a gift basket full of ag themed goodies.

## July Word Search

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

Cherry  
Chocolate  
Cow  
Creamy  
Dairy  
Freeze  
Gallon  
Milk

Neapolitan  
Parlor  
Sprinkles  
Strawberry  
Sugar  
Toppings  
Treat  
Vanilla

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

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

Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

(Membership # is located on front of paper)

If you were to win, check your preference:

\_\_\_Beggar's Pizza GC \_\_\_HRI GC \_\_\_Movie Tix  
(If a choice is not made, Movie Tickets will be sent)

Deadline is the 20th of each month.

## Last Month's Word Search Winner Is..

Mary Ayola

## Family Farm and Food Bytes

### ILLINOIS FARM FAMILIES WINS NATIONAL

**AWARD** - The Illinois Farm Families (IFF) coalition's consumer engagement campaign to build trust in Illinois farmers and their farming practices was the recipient of the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) prestigious Silver Anvil Award in the "Reputation Management" category.

IFF was created by several Illinois commodity and agricultural organizations in 2009 to meet a growing consumer interest in how our food and everyday essentials are grown and made. The program gives a voice to the state's nearly 70,000 family farmers while answering questions around food and farming. Founding members of IFF include the Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Corn Marketing Board, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Pork Producers Association, Illinois Soybean Association, and Midwest Dairy.

The award's judging criteria weighed heavily on measurable results and changes in audience attitudes and behaviors. IFF's efforts have resulted in young Illinois parents' "farm-to-table IQ" growing to more than twice the national average and building trust in local farm families to an unprecedented 90%. In 2021 alone, IFF communications reached 10+ million people with nearly half a million social media, video, and digital engagements. A popular video series that explored how farmers are a part of the solution to some of the state's biggest environmental challenges is just one of the ways that helped consumers understand the relationship between farmers, the environment, and the everyday essentials farmers provide for us all.

### ILLINOIS FSA ACCEPTING APPS FROM

#### ORGANIC, ORGANIC TRANSITIONING

**FARMERS** - Certified organic farmers and handlers and those who are transitioning to organic farming may apply for the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Organic and Transitional Education Certification Program (OTECP) and Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) covers the cost of organic certification and other related expenses. The application deadline for both is Oct. 31.

Cost-share funding for certification is available for crops, wild crops, livestock, processing/handling and state organic program fees.

The program was launched to help organic farmers cope with market impacts from the pandemic. OTECP covers 25% of certification costs for organic farmers and handlers, \$250 maximum per category; 75% of eligible expenses for transitional farmers, including fees for pre-certification inspections and development of an organic system plan, \$750 maximum; 75% of registration fees for educational events, \$200 maximum; and 75% of soil testing, \$100 maximum. OCCSP covers 50% up to \$500 per category of certification costs in 2022.

Farmers may receive cost-share dollars through both OTECP and OCCSP for expenses incurred from Oct. 1, 2021, to Sept. 30, 2022. To apply, producers and handlers should contact FSA at their local USDA Service Center. To complete OCCSP applications, applicants need to provide documentation of their organic certification and eligible expenses.

Organic farmers and handlers may also apply for OCCSP through participating state agencies.



Monarch butterflies have started arriving back in Illinois from their Mexican wintering grounds. Winter numbers increased 35% Mexican officials recently reported. (FarmWeek file photo)

### MONARCHS UP 35% IN MEXICO (BY

**KAY SHIPMAN FarmWeek)** - More monarch butterflies spent the winter in Mexican mountain forests compared to the previous year, Mexico's Commission for Protected Areas reported recently.

Known as the eastern monarch population, the monarchs that overwinter in Mexico migrate north through Texas and the Southern Plains, up through the Northern Plains, Illinois and the Midwest before moving into the Great Lakes region.

Mexican officials reported a 35% increase

in the forested area where the butterflies stayed. The population covered 7 acres of trees compared to 5.2 acres the previous year. The annual butterfly count doesn't measure numbers of individual butterflies, but the area they cover when clumped in trees.

Illinoisans can support monarchs by planting flowers, such as coneflowers and black-eyed Susans, for adult butterflies. Their larvae depend on milkweeds and only grow on plants in the milkweed family.

### RURAL, URBAN UNITE ON STEWARDSHIP

**(By KAY SHIPMAN FarmWeek)** - Rural and urban, nonpoint and point sources met on common ground ON June 7 for the same goal - nutrient stewardship. That real-world situation involves 13,000 Fulton County acres owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago. For a fifth year, people from a range of backgrounds gathered to hear about stewardship research. The field day was hosted by the Fulton County Farm Bureau, along with Illinois Farm Bureau, MWRD, University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) and the Illinois Nutrient Research and Education Council.

A theme of partnership and collaboration resonated as leaders addressed the crowd and scientists highlighted their studies, noting the multiple entities funding their research. Many acknowledged the widespread nutrient challenge facing Illinois.

Overall, the state seeks to lower all nitrogen and phosphorus moving into water by 45% compared to average 1980-96 levels. Interim goals include a 15% nitrogen reduction and a 25% phosphorus reduction by 2025.

Released in 2015, the statewide Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy offers voluntary actions to lower nitrogen and phosphorus coming from urban runoff, diffuse nonpoint sources that are predominantly agricultural and specific point sources that are mainly municipal wastewater treatment and industry.

IFB and county Farm Bureaus remain involved and invested in nutrient stewardship efforts. Since 2015, IFB has invested \$2.4 million in stewardship education, research and outreach, Lauren Lurkins,

IFB director of environmental policy, told the crowd. Part of the organization's effort includes nutrient stewardship grants that have supported 100 projects involving 70 county Farm Bureaus including Cook County Farm Bureau efforts.

### FREIGHT COSTS CONTRIBUTING TO HIGHER FOOD PRICES (By DANIEL GRANT, FarmWeek) -

U.S. consumers are paying for record fuel prices in more ways than each time they fill up their personal vehicles or machinery. Freight and distribution costs have skyrocketed due in part to higher fuel prices, which are putting more pressure on the price of everything from meat to home goods.

The index for general freight trucking increased 39% from January through April this year and by 52% compared to January 2021, according to the CME Group's Daily Livestock Report. Labor costs are also compounding the situation.

U.S. food prices are projected to increase 7-8% at home and 6-7% away from home this year. That includes a possible 6-7% increase for pork, 9-10% increase for other meats and a 19.5-20.5% spike in egg prices, due in part to the loss of about 38 million layers resulting from the outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza.

A key way to improve food availability and drive down costs is to reduce waste.



Credit: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers / CC BY 2.0

**About Family Farm and Food Bytes:** This is a collection of articles gathered from other Farm Bureau and 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.

## Pesticides Support Food Security



More often than wars, global trade disputes or extreme weather events, insects, diseases and weeds threaten the nation's food supply with relentless consistency, season after season.

Beetles eat corn silks, preventing full pollination of the ears. Stem rust disease can devastate wheat production. Weeds compete with food crops for the same air, sunlight, soil nutrients and moisture. We have a variety of tools to reduce the impact of these pests, with world crop losses already estimated at 40% lost to weeds, insects and diseases, according to the United Nations. Without pesticides, that loss could double.

Pesticides, sometimes called chemicals and crop protection products, are critical to attaining a plentiful, affordable and diverse food supply, especially significant when fewer than 2% of people grow food for 100% of the population. Conventional and organic farmers alike have pesticides in their arsenal, whether man-made or naturally derived to kill pests, including insecticides for insects, fungicides for diseases and herbicides for weeds. And those products are taken seriously to ensure safety.

Pesticides are tested and approved: FDA, USDA and EPA test each product and must deem them safe before allowing commercial use.

Applicators must be licensed: More often than a license to drive, farmers and hired applicators routinely train and take an exam to attain mandatory certification before allowed to buy and apply the products.

Farmers try to use less: About 95% of the spray tank is water and only about a soda can's worth of active ingredient is applied across an acre, equivalent to the size of a football field. Changes in farming practices, such as adoption of GMOs has reduced my farm's insecticide use by half in the last 25 years while producing nearly 50% more corn per acre. In recent years, we have adopted cover crops, which helps control weeds to reduce herbicide needs.

Likewise, advancements in the technology to apply pesticides makes their use more accurate and effective than ever. As one of the most technologically advanced pieces of equipment on the farm, modern sprayers have automatic flow controls and shutoffs, droplet size adjustments, spray pattern variations and available sensors to scan crop health and weed infestations. Applicators pair these features with guidance technology and an in-cab computer system to prevent over-application, minimize off-target movement and enhance precision in placement and quantity, all to attain the goal of allowing food crops to thrive

*About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family in West-Central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and cover crops and raise beef cattle, backyard chickens and farmkids.*



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# Cook County Commissioners Approve Pay Increase

Last fall Cook County Commissioners directed the Bureau of Human Resources to complete a compensation and market survey to determine if the current compensation provided to the Cook County elected officials is appropriate or if increases are warranted beginning in December of 2022 and December of 2024.

According to the study, a contributing factor to the significant variance versus market is the lack of annual increases over a 20-year period since the Cook County rates were established through the Elected Official Salary Resolution.

The consultant hired by the Bureau of Human Resources recommended two salary increase approaches: across-the-board or market aligned increases. An across-the-board increase would increase each position and the Finance Chair premium by 10, 20, or 30%. A market aligned increase would bring each position to the peer 25th, 50th, or 75th percentile with adjustments for the President, Commissioner, and Board of Review. By bringing each position to the peer 50th percentile it would bring each position to the peer median and then adjustments can be made for certain offices.

The Bureau of Human Resources engaged the services of a consultant to analyze the peer group that reflects current county population, annual county budget, number of districts or similar within the county, and similar data that illustrates the size and complexity of peer county operations to validate the compensation and market data collected and assist in determining recommendations of elected official compensation data.

In April, Commissioners "received and filed" the report, which is a procedural step intended to conclude the process. By "receiving and filing" the report it does not automatically grant anyone a pay raise. A separate ordinance was introduced to implement pay increases and an automatic yearly increase. For fiscal year 2023 salaries will be as follows:

Position	Current Salary	FY 2023 Salary
Sheriff	\$160,000	\$176,000
Clerk	\$105,00	\$115,500
Treasurer	\$105,00	\$115,500
Commissioner	\$85,000	\$93,500
Finance Committee Chair	\$90,000	\$99,000
President	\$170,000	\$187,000
Board of Review	\$100,000	\$110,000
Assessor	\$125,000	\$137,500
Circuit Court Clerk*	\$105,000	\$105,000

\*Circuit Court Clerk's increase does not occur until fiscal year 2025, aligned with the beginning of the new term.

According to the Fiscal Impact Note, total salary increases in fiscal year 2023 over fiscal year 2022 are \$241,500. Year-over-year salary increases are \$79,695, \$92,586, and \$88,013 in fiscal year 2024, fiscal year 2025, and fiscal year 2026 respectively.

Concerns regarding the automatic increases were raised by the League of Women Voters. Those concerns, as well as concerns about whether or not the salary levels were appropriate, were raised by the Civic Federation.

The roll call resulted in the following commissioners voting no: Frank Aguilar, Luis Arroyo Jr., Dennis Deer, and Sean Morrison and the following commissioners voting yes: Alma Anaya, Scott Britton, John Daley, Bridget Degnen, Bridget Gainer, Brandon Johnson, Bill Lowry, Donna Miller, Stanley Moore, Kevin Morrison, Peter Silvestri, and Larry Suffredin.

Farm Bureau's policy on compensation of public officials is null on this topic (language provided below). Members with comments are concerns on this issue or Farm Bureau policy 96 are encouraged to contact Bona Heinsohn at bona@cookcfb.org.

## 96. COMPENSATION OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

We support:

1. Legislation requiring Congress and the Illinois General Assembly to vote by a roll call vote on any legislation that would increase their pay or pension of its members.
2. Pay and pension legislation being voted on separately and not being tied to unrelated legislation.
3. Legislation that would deny all state employment-related benefits to any state employee who is convicted under any federal, state, or local law of theft, embezzlement, or accepting bribes in connection with the employee's service as a state employee. We support an amendment to the Illinois Pension Code and/or other current law to the extent necessary to implement this proposed legislation.
4. Capping the pension amount that a state legislator can receive regardless of their length of service or the position(s) they hold with the state after leaving the legislature.
5. Enabling elected local and state officials having access to a 457 plan rather than a taxpayer-funded pension.
6. Requiring public employees to contribute a greater amount to their own pensions.
7. Legislators only receiving compensation for the days they are in office.



Representative Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz (17th district) joined Cook and Lee County Farm Bureaus for an Adopt-a-Legislator® visit to the 17th district. Representative Gong-Gershowitz (pictured left in blue) along with Farm Bureau toured the Grove in Glenview before visiting with researchers at Northwestern University and touring the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian. Representative Gong-Gershowitz has been "adopted" by Lee County Farm Bureau since first being elected in 2019.

# Manifolds, Manolos, and Manure



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

One hot summer night when my farmer and I had recently started dating he persuaded me to help him spray our Crain Road fields. On the surface it was date night. Farm style. Complete with a tractor. Self-stable food. And a pull behind sprayer. In reality, he wanted someone to climb in and out of the tractor after each pass to count rows and point a flashlight at the row where he needed to turn. As a twitterpated teenager, I was happy to help. Even happier to stay out past curfew.

I'm not sure I even kept count of the number of times I climbed in and out of the tractor cab that night and into the early morning. What I remember clearest is when we had to mix the next load of crop protectants.

The first and largest ingredient was water. Lots and lots of water. Then like a couple of mad scientists out of a cartoon strip we donned our personal protective equipment: gloves, masks, and goggles. We added Dicamba. Exceed. LA 700. And more water. To this day I still giggle at the names of crop protectants. We have Strut, Mustang, Calisto, Pounce.

That was over 25 years ago. Remember when inflation was 2.34%. A gallon of gas costed \$1.22. A new car ran you just under \$17,000. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (the book not the movie) debuted in the United Kingdom and then the United States. Princess Diana died suddenly in a car crash. A civil jury panel found OJ Simpson guilty. And most related to the topic at hand, Dolly the sheep was cloned by scientists at the Roslin Institute in Edinburg, Scotland.

Agriculture has changed tremendously in the past 20 plus years. Like the industry, our personal farming practices have change. We adopted genetic modification. Deep tillage. New crop protectants. And several years ago, we began transitioning certain fields to organic.

My farmer will tell you that each growing method has its own set of tools. A tool available to both conventional and organic producers is *cover crops*. Simply put, cover crops are crops grown for the protection and enrichment of the soil. More boldly stated, *cover crops* can help



A combine (right) harvests the wheat while a baler (left) bales the stalks for straw. The soybeans, which were interseeded into the standing wheat remain.

Illinois' waterways.

For us we've planted clover ahead of soybeans. Then used the leftover seed in both our cattle and horse pastures. We've also used oats and radish ahead of corn.

We've used rye ahead of corn with little luck. The rye attracted army worms that made a meal of 100 acres of corn seed. On the note of rye, in 2021 we interseeded soybeans into it in hopes of using the crimped rye as a mulch to block out weeds. We also were hoping to use the remaining rye for rylage for the cattle. Rye is a very thirsty crop and sucked what little water 2021 bestowed on us to the detriment of the soybean crop. It goes without saying that particular rye crop was terminated, and the soybeans were replanted.

My favorite cover crop tool has been interseeding soybeans into wheat. Right as the soybeans begin to emerge, we use a crimper to "crimp" each stem in several places. The flattened wheat creates a mulch on top of the soil blocking out the weeds. Later in the growing season we come through with the combine and harvest the wheat. Candidly, the first time we tried interseeding soybeans we opted to go with a field in the far back, away from the road in case we failed miserably.

Farmers are amazing at amassing tools. Cover crops are another tool worth considering. We still opt to spray some fields and despite advancements in technology and science I still feel like a mad scientist when we mix the tank. But a safer mad scientist than 25 years ago.

Bona can be reached at Bona@cookcfb.org

# Nutrient Loss Reduction Remains a Priority of Farm Bureau

The Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy guides state efforts to improve water quality by reducing nutrient levels in our lakes, streams, and rivers. The strategy lays out best management practices for reducing nutrient loads from point sources (e.g. wastewater treatment plants) and non-point sources (e.g. agricultural lands), with long-term goals of reducing loads of total phosphorus and nitrogen by 45%, with interim reduction goals of 15% nitrate-nitrogen and 25% total phosphorus by 2025.

Since the Strategy's establishment in 2015, Farm Bureau has been involved in multiple levels of leadership and implementation. Together with Cook County Farm Bureau staff, Raelynn Parmely from Illinois Farm Bureau® discuss the strategy and current projects funded through Farm Bureau's Nutrient Loss Reduce Strategy Grant Program, including Cook County's project during this short video: <https://cookcfb.org/ccfb/policy-and-action/issues/article/2022/06/nutrient-loss-reduction-remains-a-priority-of-farm-bureau>.



Commissioners Chakena Perry (pictured left) and Eira Corral Sepulveda (pictured second from left) along with members of Metropolitan Water Reclamation District staff joined Cook County, Fulton County, and Illinois Farm Bureau for the fifth annual Fulton County Field Days. The Field Days is a portion of Cook County Farm Bureau's **Rural Urban Nutrient Exchange**. A follow-up portion will occur in August.



# Vilsack Introduces Framework, Funding to 'Transform' Food System

Continued from Page 1

million will go toward assisting processors who have had trouble getting credit from lenders.

The Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion will offer grants up to \$25 million for building and updating facilities. USDA already closed applications for the funds, receiving more than \$900 million in funding requests through 250 applications, Vilsack said.

USDA will spend another \$25 million on technical assistance for small processors and \$100 million to help train workers.

Topping the processing investment is \$600 million for improving food supply chain infrastructure outside livestock processing, including cold storage and refrigerated trucks.

"While major strides have been made in an effort to create a more resilient food system, additional investments are going to be needed to expand cold storage, warehousing and other components have an overall processing component of our food system," Vilsack said.

## Food Distribution

The ag department further plans to spend \$400 million to form regional food business centers to assist small and mid-size food and farm businesses with processing, distribution and aggregation challenges.

Another \$60 million will go toward increasing commodity purchases through farm-to-school

programs, and \$90 million will be spent to prevent and reduce food loss and waste.

## Organic and Urban Ag

Rounding out USDA's spending is \$300 million in a new Organic Transition Initiative that will cover farmer-to-farmer mentoring and assistance with conservation practices, crop insurance and market development.

Specialty growers will also have access to \$200 million in food safety certification programs to offset the cost of on-farm food safety expenses and to enter new markets.

Financial support for urban agriculture will grow, with another \$75 million from USDA for a range of purposes in 17 urban areas. At least \$20 million will be spent to reduce a backlog of applications for existing programs and \$10 million to increase available grant money.

Another \$40 million will back agreements with organizations to train and expand programs for urban farmers, while \$5 million will go to the People's Garden Initiative to support local production.

A total \$370 million will fund another slate of programs aimed at increasing food availability and access to healthy foods. The pot includes \$155 million for USDA's Healthy Food Financing Initiative, which attempts to reduce food deserts, and \$100 million for schools to improve the nutritional quality of their meals.

Illinois Farm Bureau members receive  
**\$500 EXCLUSIVE CASH REWARD\***  
 ON ELIGIBLE NEW SUPER DUTY, F-150, RANGER OR MAVERICK

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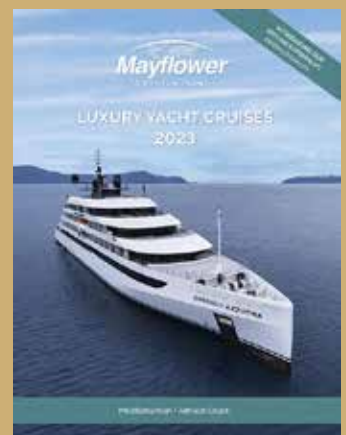
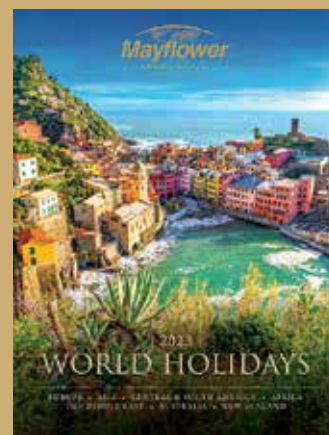
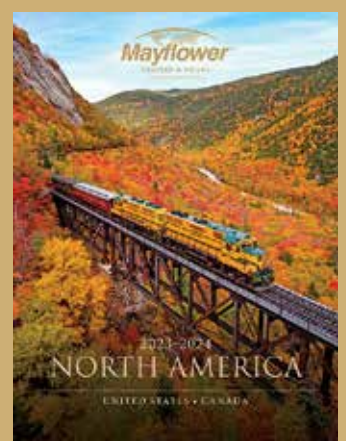
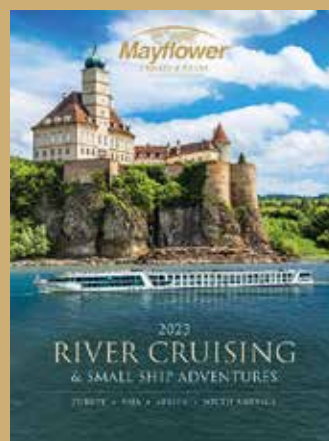
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# Cook County Financial Representatives of the Month

The Financial Representative of the Month program is designed by COUNTRY Financial Agency Managers of Cook County to recognize overall Insurance Leaders in Life, Disability, Auto, Home, and Health production during the month. The agent earns the award through efforts to provide quality service to existing and new clients. Listed below are the various agents honored by their agency manager with the Financial Representative of the Month designation.



### Eduardo Pereyra

Chicago North Agency, Victoria Nygren, Agency Manager

Eduardo Pereyra has been named Financial Rep of the month for May 2022. His office is located at 1426 Fullerton Ave, in Chicago, IL. His phone number is 773-427-4610. Eduardo has been a Financial Representative since April 2022.



### Tony Scalzitti

Chicago Northwest, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager

Tony Scalzitti has been named Financial Rep of the month for May 2022. His office is located at 15 Howard Ave., Ste 14, in Roselle IL. His phone number is 847-591-9944. Tony has been a Financial Representative since August 2001..



### Arturo Salto

Chicago South Agency, Jeff Maxson, Agency Manager

Arturo Salto has been named Financial Rep of the month for May 2022. His office is located at 2139 S. Laramie Ave., in Cicero, IL. His phone number is 773-306-4013. Arturo has been a Financial Representative since March 2020.



### Tim Hartnell

Orland Park Agency, Cary Tate, Agency Manager

Tim Hartnell has been named Financial Rep of the Month for May 2022. 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.

\*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.

For your comprehensive access to membership discounts & offers,  
**Go to [www.cookcfb.org/membership](http://www.cookcfb.org/membership)**

## \*Reminder\*



For your convenience, we provide Notary Public services to our members FREE of charge. Come into the Cook County Farm Bureau office in Countryside to have your documents notarized.

Please call the office at 708-354-3276 to verify that one of our notaries will be in the office before you stop by.



# ABC'S OF FOOD

At Cook County Farm Bureau, we love food... All types of foods in all types of shapes and all types of flavors. In this feature, we will be highlighting different types of food, primarily fruits and vegetables, from A to Z (we are not sure what to do with X yet!).

This month  
"F"

## FENNEL



*Fennel is a layered, bulbous vegetable that originated in the Mediterranean and has been used for centuries.*

**When raw, fennel has a crisp texture similar to celery and a fresh licorice flavor.**



**Fennel caramelizes as it cooks, taking on a sweeter flavor and tender, melt-in-your mouth texture.**

**Fennel is a member of the carrot family, though it's not a root vegetable.**

Above the bulb, at the tip of the stalks, fennel has light, feathery leaves that resemble dill. Though the stalks and leaves are edible, fennel recipes most often call for the bulb.

Fennel is low in calories, but high in nutrients like dietary fiber, potassium, and vitamin C.



**Fennel seeds may be listed as an ingredient in Italian sausage.**

### THERE ARE TWO VARIETIES OF FENNEL.

- The vegetable we eat and from which fennel seeds are harvested is called Florence fennel.
- The other is fennel called vulgare. The yellow flowers of this variety are crushed up into the spice fennel pollen.



Next month: Garbanzo Beans

Source: <https://www.loveandlemons.com> and <https://www.foodnetwork.com>. See websites for cooking and recipe options

## 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 months. 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

Above ground pool ladder, brand new, A-frame ladder with roll guard, have a receipt, paid \$438. Asking \$250. Call 708-654-2010.

17ft. Aluminum Canoe with outboard motor (mounted on side), with paddle & cushion. No leaks. \$450 or best offer. Call John 312-480-0747.

Sears Gamefisher 12ft aluminum boat with trailer. 2 newer oars & 2 new wheels & tires on trailer. \$480. Call 708-784-0746, if no answer leave name & number, I'll call back.

Pool table light \$80. Slate pool table \$200. 5' wooden ladder \$15. 4' Florescent light \$10. Steel rail sled \$40. Balsa wood type case \$5. Sony speaker \$25. GM 4 Barrel Carb \$25. Beer signs, 30 Cup coffee maker \$25. Schwinn scambler bike \$495. Old sit on train toy \$150. Little antique cement maker toy \$225.

## Wanted

Wanted LP Rock & Roll Album Records, call John 708-860-9562. Pre 1971 Baseball cards, call Gary 708-363-4559. Bbnut123@msn.com

Wanted: Part Time worker to provide periodic maintenance for 20,000 sq. feet, office building and grounds. Diverse skills in areas in HVAC systems, carpentry, plants and grounds, basic electrical and comfortable with hands-on labor. Hourly 8-12 hours per week. Send cover letter and resume to Cook County Farm Bureau, 6438 Joliet Road, Countryside, IL 60525

## 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



**LOCAL FARM STANDS ARE OPEN OFFERING FRESH, LOCAL PRODUCE TO COOK FRESH AND HEALTHY!**

**VISIT OUR MEMBER FARMSTANDS AND BUY LOCAL! LOCATE A MEMBER FARMSTAND OR FARMERS MARKET NEAR YOU USING OUR SHOPLOCAL DIRECTORY FOR BUSINESS PROFILES, THEIR LOCATION, HOURS, AND PRODUCT/SERVICE INFORMATION.**

**BUY FRESH, BUY LOCAL, EAT DELICIOUS!**

[HTTPS://COOKCFB.ORG/DISCOVER-LOCAL/SHOP-LOCAL/ONLINE-DIRECTORY](https://cookcfb.org/discover-local/shop-local/online-directory)

## Price Tops Consumers' Produce-Buying Decisions

Price is consumers' top consideration when buying fresh fruits and vegetables, according to FMI. The Food Industry Association shared its annual "2022 Power of Produce" report.

Other factors considered include appearance, ripeness and health benefits. Shoppers are also increasingly interested in locally grown food.

Of those surveyed, 56% said they want their local produce department to sell more locally grown fruits and vegetables, while 54% said they want produce grown in the United States. Preference for locally grown is most effective when paired with specific definitions, such as a certain mile radius or state border.

When deciding to buy, 25% of consumers ranked price as the top factor, followed by appearance and health benefits that both

received 19% and ripeness at 15%.

The newest survey results show changes in consumers' produce shopping habits. Previously, appearance and quality ranked first, but this year, price received preference.

Consumers see wellness benefits from buying fresh fruits and vegetables with 96% reporting those purchases as investments in personal health. Of those who pay a lot of attention to health and nutrition, one-third said fresh produce has a central role in their diets.

Convenience is still popular among shoppers with 45% frequently buying convenient vegetable options and 48% buying convenient fruit choices. When it comes to adding value, shoppers favor convenience from pre-cut to ready-to-serve produce.

## Farmers Needed to 'Adopt' Cook County Classrooms

A staple of Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom (IAITC) is returning and bringing a farmer's personal touch to classrooms across Cook County.

"We're bringing back adopt a classroom/adopt a teacher, and we need help surfacing farmer volunteers," Kevin Daugherty, IAITC education director, told county ag literacy coordinators attending a statewide meeting May 24.

IAITC suspended the program for two school years during the pandemic.

Through the program, agriculture writers are matched with specific classes and teachers in Cook County and exchange information throughout the school year. A goal is to help students and teachers better understand

how their food is produced and agriculture's importance to their lives.

From fall through spring, farm writers share what they are doing on their farms and farm life experiences. In addition to writing letters and sending emails, farm participants have sent photos and videos and visited their classrooms in person or virtually.

Exchanges with students may include crop samples, farm magazines, ag-related books, lessons and activities.

The students correspond with their farmer throughout the year and send questions and comments about agriculture topics or their farmer's farm.

For more information or to sign up, visit <https://iaitc.co/AAC22-23>.





## 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). Scan our QR for our Events Calendar.



### Party for the Pollinators

Join Cook County Farm Bureau and celebrate the tremendous contributions of pollinators during this educational and family-friendly free event. Activities will include crafts, honey tasting, and pollinator programming.

**Date:** Wednesday, July 13, 2022

**Time:** 5:30-6:30pm

**Location:** CCFB, Near the pollinator garden off of Stalford Ave.

**Price:** Free



### AARP Smart Driver 2 Day Course

The AARP Smart Driver course, offered by AARP Driver Safety, is the nation's largest classroom driver safety course and is designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. You'll learn the current rules of the road, defensive driving techniques, and how to operate your vehicle more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment. By successfully completing this course, you may be eligible for a discount on your COUNTRY Financial auto insurance. People over 55 who have not had a motor vehicle accident or violation within the past twelve months are eligible.

\*\*\*\* CDC COVID-19 Community Level being in the HIGH category just prior to course may result in postponement or cancellation.

**Date:** Tuesday, September 20 and Wednesday, September 21, 2022

**Time:** 9AM-1PM

**Location:** CCFB – 6438 Joliet Road Countryside, IL 60525

**Price:** The classroom course costs \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members. Non Farm Bureau members will also be charged an additional \$5 registration fee.

**Registration/Description:** Space is limited, so register now by calling 708.354.3276 or at our Member Center. Those attending should bring their AARP membership card, if members (phone app acceptable) and driving license as these numbers are entered onto the course completion record/certificate.



### Solar & ComEd Energy Efficiency Programs for Ag Professionals – Meeting and Box Lunch

Grab some lunch and hear from Solar and Energy experts about solar and energy efficient programs available for the Ag industry.

**Date:** Wednesday, August 31, 2022

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Location:** CCFB Meeting Room | 6438 Joliet Rd, Countryside 60525

**Registration:** Required - Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276; email: [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org); online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org).



### Farm Crawl – Cook County Ag Member Locations

The Cook County Farm Bureau is sponsoring its 6th member FARM CRAWL on Saturday, September 17th. The Farm Crawl is self-guided with no set schedules allowing members and the public flexibility to choose the farms and agri-businesses to visit during the CRAWL times. Full program details, and participating farms and business information will be available soon as well as on the Cook County Farm Bureau Events Calendar at <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/upcoming-events>

**Date:** Saturday, September 17, 2022

**Time:** 10:00-4:00 PM; hours may vary by location

**Registration:** None needed! To obtain a crawl passport Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276; email: [membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org](mailto:membershipdebbie@cookcfb.org); or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org), and we will email/mail before the crawl!



### 22nd Annual Giant Pumpkin, Dessert, Carving, Local Honey & Youth Contest

Giant pumpkin growers, bakers, carvers, and beekeepers this is the contest for you! Adult and Youth (under 16 yrs) divisions. Contest is free to members and registration is required. Cash prizes awarded to in all categories.

**Date:** Saturday, October 1, 2022

**Time:** 9:00 AM check in time

**Location:** Puckerville Farms, 13332 Bell Rd, Lemont

**Registration:** Call the Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276

or online at the Member Center at [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org). Registration form and full program details at: <https://cookcfb.org/stay-updated/upcoming-events>

COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU® FOUNDATION

## "Evening for Ag Education" Gala Fun'Raiser

Friday, July 22, 2022 from 6:00-11:00 PM

Crystal Grand Banquets  
12416 S. Archer Ave  
Lemont, IL

Ticket includes plated dinner, 4 hour beverage package, live band, live auction, truth or hogwash game, photo booth and split-the-pot raffle!

Featuring the band...**Libido Funk Circus!**

#### Tickets

\$100 pp (early bird)  
\$125 pp (after 7/15/22)  
\$1,000 for a table of 10

To purchase tickets, call CCFB at (708) 354-3276  
Only 250 tickets available



An evening of  
dining, drinks,  
live music,  
games and  
fun'raising  
opportunities!