

Kane County Farmer



**KANE COUNTY
FARM BUREAU®**
Farm. Family. Food.™

Enhance the quality of life for member families;
Promote agriculture, farms & food; and,
Advocate good stewardship of our land and resources.

VOL. 85 NO. 5 MAY 2020

KCFB Foundation announces 2020 scholarship recipients

The Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation will award \$18,000 in college scholarships this year to 15 future Ag industry professionals. After a review of applications, the FOUNDATION Board of Directors has awarded one President's Scholarship, five general agricultural scholarships and one general scholarship. The Foundation also administers the John Buck Memorial scholarships (2), Chuck Swanson Memorial Scholarship, and five scholarships for AGCO; two AGCO Parts Division Scholarships, two AGCO GWN Scholarships and an AGCO Platinum Scholarship.

"This year we had a smaller pool of candidates for our scholarships," said FOUNDATION Vice President Wayne Schneider. "We at Farm Bureau are certainly proud of the students who plan on going into agriculture related careers. Our county will be well represented in the future!"

As a not-for-profit entity, the Foundation solicits and distributes private funding for scholarship, education and leadership training, Ag-in-the-Classroom programs, Ag Literacy, charitable activities and research. The Foundation was established in 1989 by the Kane County Farm Bureau to carry out charitable work in the advancement of agricultural literacy and preparing students for careers in the agriculture industry. In its history, it has awarded hundreds of thousands of dollars in college scholarships and internships.

Foundation scholarship applications are submitted by Feb. 15 each year and recipients are announced in April. Prerequisites and more details on scholarship requirements are available at www.kanecfb.com.

KCFB Foundation hopes to recognize scholars in a ceremony later this year.

The Foundation Board extends congratulations to these young leaders of tomorrow and best wishes in their academic pursuits.



**Erin Kettelkamp
awarded AGCO Parts
Platinum Scholarship**

Erin Kettelkamp, daughter of Karl and Julie Kettelkamp of Elburn, has been named recipient of the AGCO Parts Platinum Scholarship for \$2,500. This scholarship is awarded to a student who resides in Illinois and who is pursuing higher education in an agriculture related field. The scholarship is funded by the Employees of AGCO Parts in Batavia, IL.

Kettelkamp, a 2013 graduate of Kaneland High School, and currently a senior at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, is working towards her doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. In college, she has been involved in many different organizations and groups. As a first year member of the Production Medicine Club, she was hired to be the Vet Med Research Farm Sheep Flock Manager, is now the President of the Illinois Student Chapter of the American Association of Equine Practitioners, and has been heavily involved in the FARMS department through the college. She was placed at Carthage (Illinois) Veterinary Service and had the opportunity to learn how to organize and complete a research trial in a field setting. She also presented at the American Association of Swine Veterinarians (AASV) on the efficacy of different aerosolized chemical disinfectants and decontamination practices on swine farms.

After obtaining her doctorate in Veterinary Medicine, Erin's primary goals are to either begin practicing as a production ani-

mal veterinarian, or to begin a master's or PhD program involving livestock system health. She looks forward to seeking opportunities to grow in her professional career and guide production management systems to help promote how agriculture works to provide safe and ethical food sources.

in May 2020 from Kaneland High School. She plans to be a Journeyman Farrier and will pursue certification at Troy Price Horseshoeing School in Indiana.

Her high school experience includes Kaneland FFA, FFA Vice President and participation in Vo-Ag Fair and 4-H wood-working. She has also been involved in her family's hobby farm and credits her agriculture involvement for shaping her life and goals. After college she plans to use her farrier skills on ranches and farms in the west.



**Keifer and Rios
awarded Buck
Memorial Scholarships**

Brennan Keifer (left) and **Maria Rios** have each been awarded the John Buck Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship will provide \$1,500 for tuition and fees, in support of higher education in an agriculture related field.

2020 marks the 19th year since the scholarship was founded, with scholarships being awarded to students in the seven county service area around the Buck Bros./J.W. Turf John Deere dealership in Hampshire. It is made possible by gifts from the family and friends of the late John Buck, who established the company in 1977.

Brennan Keifer, son of Doug and Renee Keifer of Maple Park, graduated Kaneland High School in 2019 and is currently attending Three Rivers Community College in Missouri, majoring in Ag Mechanics.

He was a farm plot manager for FFA in high school and participates in rodeo events.

Brennan comes from a farming family and his experience with operating and maintaining equipment on the farm makes him excited to pursue his degree with the benefit of his John Buck Scholarship. He hopes to one day have his own field service company.

Maria Rios of Elburn is the daughter of Daniel and Janice Rios of Elburn, and is graduating



**Geneva senior receives
President's Scholarship**

The Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation has awarded its \$1,500 President's Scholarship to **Willem Vandermeij**. This honor is reserved for the high school senior with the most outstanding combination of scholastics, activities, goals, and ACT score. Willem's parents are Gerardus and Jill Vandermeij of Geneva.

William attends Geneva Community High School with plans to attend Cedarville University in Ohio. He has been active in various band activities including marching band and jazz band, as well as German Club, the National Honor Society and the ACES team. In addition, he has been on the high honor roll, won and placed in math contests and been a 4-H grand champion 10 times in robotics, vegetable gardening, cooking and creative writing and been a Kane County 4-H Ambassador.

His goal of becoming a computer engineer with an eye on his interest in agriculture will be greatly helped by this KCFB Foundation President's Scholarship.

Your odds just got better!

One reality of the forced cancellation of Touch-A-Tractor for 2020 is improving odds for holders of a KCFB Foundation Vintage Truck Raffle ticket! Touch-A-Tractor is the not-for-profit Foundation's biggest annual opportunity to sell tickets for this annual fundraiser for college scholarships and ag literacy programs and it's can-

cellation means fewer ticket sales, and therefore greater odds of winning!

The grand prize winner in the annual raffle will take home a 1969 Chevrolet C-10 pickup truck. Second prize is \$500 in groceries and third prize is \$500 in fuel.

Tickets are \$15 each, 2 for (continued on page 6)

Save for FREE admission to
Touch-A-Tractor
April 17, 18, 19 2020 | St. Charles

VINTAGE TRUCK RAFFLE

Kane County Farm Bureau FOUNDATION

Proceeds benefit college scholarships,
Ag literacy programs & local FFA chapters

2020 GRAND PRIZE
1969 CHEVY C10 PICKUP OR \$3,500 CASH
\$15 EACH 2/\$25 5/\$50

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2020 VINTAGE TRUCK RAFFLE

18 or older to enter. Winner need not be present to win. Winner responsible for all local, state and federal taxes associated with prize chosen.

Vintage Truck Raffle KCFB Foundation

Please send me _____ tickets (\$15 each, 2 for \$25 or 5 for \$50)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

City, State, Zip _____

Return with check made payable to
Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation,
2N710 Randall Road, St. Charles, IL 60174 **or** charge my:

Visa MC # _____ Exp ____/____/____

Signature _____

Date ____/____/____



Planting time!

Kane County farmers have taken to the fields and will plant an estimated 90,000 acres of corn and 60,000 acres of soybeans as weather permits, during what may be some of the most uncertain market conditions many have seen in their lifetimes. This comes following a period where net cash farm income declined by 61%, from 2012 to 2017, according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture (the latest figures available on farm income).

KCFB announces scholarship winners

Swanson Memorial Scholarship awarded to Jackson Kettelkamp



The Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation has named **Jackson Kettelkamp** of Elburn as the recipient of the \$1,000 Chuck Swanson Memorial Scholarship. Jackson is the son of Karl and Julie Kettelkamp.

The Chuck Swanson Memorial Scholarship was established by the family and friends of the former Farm Bureau Director and long-time volunteer to provide awards for students residing in Kane County, pursuing a degree in an agriculture-related career field.

Jackson graduates from Kaneland High School in May, 2020 and plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, majoring in Soil and Crop Science.

His activities include being a treasurer in Kaneland FFA, membership in the National Agri-Marketing Association and being a volunteer fireman on the Kaneville Fire Department. He won a Fireman of the Year Award from Kaneville Fire Department in 2018-19.

Jackson has worked with his father on their Kaneville farm, baling hay and raising grain crops. He also worked at Helena Agri-Enterprises over the summer as an intern. He looks forward to pursuing his degree at University of Wisconsin-Platteville.



The Chuck Swanson Memorial Scholarship was established by the family and friends of the former Farm Bureau Director and long-time volunteer.

Congratulations and best wishes to our 2020 scholarship winners

KCFB CALENDAR MAY 2020

- 4 IFB Region 2 virtual Meeting
- 10 Mother's Day
- 14 Board of Directors, 7pm
- 25 Memorial Day

(The KCFB office at 2N710 Randall Rd., St. Charles will remain closed to public access for the duration of the Governor's order. Staff may be reached during office hours at 630 584-8660.)
(All meetings/events are at KCFB unless otherwise indicated)



Austin Brockmann **Jacob Larkin**

2 AGCO Parts Division Scholarships awarded to Garden Prairie and Pontiac, IL applicants

Austin Brockmann of Garden Prairie and **Jacob Larkin** of Pontiac have been awarded AGCO Parts Division scholarships.

The AGCO Parts Division scholarship was started in 2017 and provides \$1,000 college scholarship annually to students who reside in Illinois and who are pursuing higher education in an agriculture related field. The scholarship is funded by the employees of AGCO Parts, Batavia, IL.

Austin Brockmann is a 2017 graduate of Belvidere High School and is currently a Senior at University of Illinois, majoring in Agri-Accounting and Agri-Business. He is the son of Vicki and Gary Brockmann, and Austin credits his experience on the family farm with his involvement in 4-H and FFA and in influencing his choice of major. He had extensive high school involvement in livestock production and athletics and graduated cum laude from Rock Valley College, where he won awards including the American FFA Degree, Illinois State FFA Star Farmer and inclusion in the Rock Valley College President's List and Dean's List.

He hopes his career path will help him contribute to helping educate people about opportunities in the agriculture field.

Jacob Larkin, son of Dale and Jenny Larkin, graduated Pontiac Township High School in 2017 and is currently a senior at South Dakota State University, majoring in Precision Agriculture Technology.

He has been a SDSU Ag Engineering Precision Ag Club member, Collegiate Farm Bureau member and President and Treasurer of the Parkland College Ag Club. He graduated with honors from Parkland College in 2019.

He credits his experience with his father and grandfather on the family farm with instilling a desire to learn agriculture from the ground up.

After graduation, he plans to provide ag producers with the proper tools and knowl-

edge to reduce expenses, increase production and help sustain our ecosystem.

2 AGCO Global Women's Network Scholarships Awarded

Catherine Austin and **Kristen Hoffman** are this year's recipients of AGCO Global Women's Network (GWN) Scholarships.

Catherine Austin, daughter of Jeffrey and Linda Austin of Harvard, IL, graduated in 2018 from Harvard High School and is currently attending the University of Wisconsin in Platteville, double majoring in Agribusiness and Accounting.

She is involved in the UW-Platteville Collegiate Farm Bureau including her co-chairmanship of their 2019 Ag Day. Other achievements include being on the Chancellor's List and Deans' List at UW-Platteville, and being the 2019 Harvard High School class valedictorian and Illinois State Scholar. She credits her lifelong involvement with agriculture for inspiring her pursuit of an agribusiness degree. After graduation, she hopes to work for a food products or large equipment manufacturer.

Kristen Hoffman, daughter of Daniel and Jennifer Hoffman, graduated in 2017 from Hiawatha High School in DeKalb County and is currently a senior at Iowa State University, majoring in Agricultural Business.

She is a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and Agricultural Business Club. Her upcoming summer plans include an accounting/finance internship at Christensen Farms.

Growing up on a livestock and grain farm, she learned a lot about agriculture from her family. Her plans after graduation include being able to personally connect with local farmers to help improve their farm operations, while helping manage and be part of her family's farm.

The AGCO GWN Scholarship provides a \$1,000 college scholarship annually to each of two female students who reside in Illinois and who are pursuing higher educations in agriculture related fields. The scholarships are funded by the Employees of AGCO Parts in Batavia, IL.



Catherine Austin



Kristen Hoffman

FEATURED FOOD PRODUCT

Steakhouse Boneless Pork Chops

This month we're offering special steakhouse boneless marinated pork chops! Each box comes with 8 sealed 8 oz. chops to a box. These special Smokehouse Pork Chops are marinated in a balsamic reduction with mustard seed and just a hint of onion. They are a very popular, high quality meat ready for your grill.

The prices for the Smokehouse Boneless marinated Pork Chops for members are \$24.09 for PLUS members, \$24.90 for members, and \$28.00 for Non-members. These special pork chops are available while supplies lasts for the month of May at the Kane County Farm Bureau, Randall Rd and Oak Street in St. Charles.

Available when the KCFB office is reopened to the public.

See additional scholarship winners on pages 1 and 3

Welcome new members

You receive the *Kane County Farmer* because you are a Farm Bureau member. If you are a farm operator or owner, you benefit from a local, state and national organization committed to agriculture and your way of life.

If you do not have direct ties to farming, your membership helps promote local farms and farming, encourages wise use of our limited natural resources and preserves farmland and our agricultural heritage while allowing you to enjoy COUNTRY insurance and the many benefits of one of Illinois' premier membership organizations.

We appreciate your membership and continued support and we welcome your comments on the content of the *Farmer*. We encourage you to make recommendations about farm, home, food, natural resources, renewable energy or agricultural heritage and history-related topics for inclusion in future issues of the *Farmer*.

KANE COUNTY FARM BUREAU BOARD ATTENDANCE JANUARY 2019 THRU DECEMBER 2020

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
C. BRADLEY	X	X	X	*								
B. COLLINS	X	X	X	*								
C. COLLINS	X	X	X	*								
J. ENGEL	X	X	^	*								
G. GAITSCH	X	X	X	*								
B. GEHRKE	X	X	X	*								
W. KECK	X	X	X	*								
M. KENYON	X	X	X	*								
K. KETTLEKAMP	X	X	X	*								
D. LEHRER	*	*	*	*								
A. LENKAITIS	X	X	X	*								
N. LONG	X	X		*								
D. PITSTICK	X	X	X	*								
W. SCHNEIDER	X	X	X	*								
J. WHITE	X	X	X	*								

* Attendance by electronic means. ^ Attending IFB Leaders to Washington program.

Kane County Farmer

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Steven J. Arnold, Editor

Audre Pack, Bookkeeper

Elizabeth Polovin, Member Services Coordinator

Amy Cook, Ag Literacy Coordinator

Alice Macha, Communications Coordinator

Sindhu Saveen, Membership Assistant

OFFICE: Randall Rd. between Routes 64 & 38

Address: 2N710 Randall Rd., St. Charles

PHONE: 630-584-8660

info@kanecfb.com www.kanecfb.com

OFFICE HOURS: 8:30-4:30 Monday through Friday

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■ DISTRICT 1
Aurora, Sugar Grove,
Big Rock Twnshp.

Nan Long
11461 E. County Line Rd.
Big Rock, IL 60511
815-693-7214

Donna Lehrer
7S027 Jericho Rd.
Big Rock, IL 60511
630-556-3476

William Keck
P.O. Box 281
Sugar Grove, IL 60554
(630) 466-4030

■ DISTRICT 2
Kaneville, Blackberry,
Gen./Bat. Twnshp.

Bill Collins
1125 Lewis Rd.
Geneva, IL 60134
630-484-6852

Karl Kettelkamp
47W407 Main Street Rd.
Elburn, IL 60119
630-365-2713

Joe White
President
47W727 Main St. Rd.
Elburn, IL 60119
630-557-2517

■ DISTRICT 3
Virgil, Campton,
St. Charles Twnshp.

Andrew Lenkaitis
6N707 Corron Rd.
St. Charles, IL 60175
630-513-9980

Chris Collins
1143 Anderson
Elburn, IL 60119
630-934-4642

Dale Pitstick
2N118 Pouley Rd.
Elburn, IL 60119
630-816-0223

■ DISTRICT 4
Burlington, Plato
Elgin Twnshp.

Beth Gehrke
12N860 US Hwy. 20
Elgin, IL 60124
847-697-2538

Mike Kenyon
Secretary/Treasurer
1250 E. Main St.
South Elgin, IL 60177
847-741-1818

Craig Bradley
37W791 Orchard Lane
Elgin, IL 60124
847-888-2380

■ DISTRICT 5
Hampshire, Rutland,
Dundee Twnshp.

Joe Engel
516 Sawgrass Ln.
Hampshire, IL 60140
847-347-5561

Gerald Gaitsch
10613 Brittany Ave.
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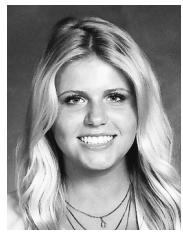
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\$1,000 KCFB Foundation scholarships awarded



Lauren Arbir of South Elgin, daughter of Christopher and Elizabeth Arbir, is a freshman attending the University of Missouri, pursuing a degree in Environmental Sciences and Sustainable Agriculture. She is a member of the Sustainability Club and the Soil & Water Conservation Society, and has volunteered for Feed My Starving Children and at a local soup kitchen. Her belief that agriculture affects everyone's life and is indispensable fuels her desire to contribute to sustainable agriculture practices.



University of Wyoming sophomore **Kyia Baldrige** is the daughter of Eric and Christine Baldrige of Elburn, and is pursuing a degree in Rangeland and

Watershed Management. Her high school experience included membership in the Wildlife Society, National Honor Society and stints as FFA Chapter President and Vice President. She was a 2019 Agriculture Student of the Year and has won awards in Swine Production and Agricultural Proficiency, as well as working with her landscaper father and at a local family farm. She plans to use her degree to become a Wildlife Biologist or work toward becoming a National Park Administrator.



Jessica Bowgren, daughter of Steve and Gaye Bowgren of Maple Park, graduated Kaneland High School in 2017 and is in her senior year at Illinois State University, pursuing a double major in Agbusiness and Agronomy Management. She was involved in FFA and Burlington Ag 4-H in high school, and her college achieve-

ments include being a Robert G. Bone Scholarship nominee, receiving the 2019 Chuck Swanson Memorial Scholarship and being on the Dean's List at Waubensee Community College. Her summer plans include an internship with Compeer Financial in their crop insurance division. She hopes in the future to be able to help farmers mitigate their risk through crop insurance.



Anastasia Kurth, daughter of Gregory and Regina Kurth of Geneva, will be a sophomore this fall at University of Wisconsin-Platteville, majoring in Soil and Crop Science and Environmental Horticulture. Her high school activities in the Agronomy Club and Horticulture Club served her well as she started her college career. In college, she has made the Dean's List and Chancellor's List. She is pleased with the

experience she is gaining, including competition in the American Royal Crops Contest and Chicago Collegiate Crops Contest and as a member of UW-Platteville's Crops Team. Her team placed second nationally at both contests and she placed fourth individually in grain grading at both contests. After graduation, she hopes to be involved in research for more efficient crop production.



Shelby Hannula, daughter of Jim and Laurie Hannula of Elburn, is finishing her sophomore year at Illinois State University, majoring in Agriculture Education. Shelby's interest in agriculture developed during high school involvement in Kaneland FFA, where she was Treasurer. She also was a Kaneland Volleyball Varsity Captain and has won awards. She wants to use these experiences to become an Agriculture

Teacher/FFA Advisor and encourage others to become more involved in Agriculture.



Kathleen White of Maple Park, daughter of Jason and Kelly White, is attending Waubensee Community College, gathering credits to pursue her goals in the medical field in Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Vascular Ultrasound. Her high school experiences as an Honor Roll student, Honor Athlete, Senior Student Ambassador, and participation in the Big Sister/Little Sister Ambassador program are assets in her pursuit of her degrees. Kathleen is proud of the prominence of agriculture in her home life and is the daughter, granddaughter and great granddaughter of a farmer.

See more scholarship winners on pages 1 and 2.

Beef, dairy farmers frustrated by market shift; milk dumped

By Daniel Grant, reprinted from FarmWeek

Beef cattle and dairy farmers continue to operate their farms as close to "normal" as possible, even as the majority of the population remains under shelter-at-home directives in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

But sales of meat, milk and other livestock products are anything but normal as major shifts in the market continue.

"As far as day-to-day operations, little things have changed (such as new procedures to acquire parts and other farm supplies), but not too much," said Shannon Welsh, a McDonough County Farm Bureau member who raises crops and cattle near Blandinsville. "We have to adapt to how things have changed."

The drastic shift in demand, which skyrocketed in grocery stores and fell off the table in restaurants and foodservice,

resulted in price declines ranging from 26% to 36% for dairy products and 25% to 30% for beef cattle.

Packer margins, though, climbed due to strong demand from grocers in recent weeks. Further complications arose this month as at least three beef packing plants (JBS in Pennsylvania, National Beef Packing in Iowa and Harmony Beef in Calgary) temporarily suspended operations due to reports of COVID-19 cases.

"We can't change that," Welsh, a member of the Illinois Beef Association's executive committee, said of the drop in cattle prices, which affect each farm differently. "There's always a lot of variables (to determine returns) including feed prices, which are low now, too."

The American Farm Bureau Federation and Illinois Farm Bureau responded by contacting

USDA to discuss market concerns.

"The frustration out here with our livestock producers is over prices they're receiving for live animals versus the retail cutout prices," Mark Gebhards, IFB executive director, told the RFD Radio Network. "I want producers to know that's being looked at in a very serious way."

IFB continues to work with Illinois livestock associations to move more products within the state to help bolster demand. There are more than 70 local meat processing plants in the state, according to the Illinois Association of Meat Processors.

U.S. consumers previously spent about 51% of their food dollars away from home, prior to the pandemic.

"Industry reports indicate that just finding a home for some restaurant type meat and poultry products has become difficult," authors of the CME Group's Daily Livestock Report noted. "Both beef and pork cutout values declined last week, especially pork, after climbing for four weeks."

Meanwhile, some dairy farmers were forced to dump milk in recent weeks. The loss of restaur-

demand and school closings hit that industry particularly hard.

"We have some producers dumping milk," Gebhards said. "It's extremely unfortunate, and frustrating as well, when we have several retail grocery outlets limiting what people can get in terms of a gallon or so of milk at a time (to reduce hoarding).

"We're seeing if there are ways we can move more fluid milk products," he noted. "We're trying to look at anything we can to improve the situation."

Farm Toy of the Month

This month's farm toy is a repeat of the sweet treat offered in April – your choice of a pink or red Pillow Pet **FREE** when you make any non-food purchase from our Farm Store. These squeezable, cuddly pets are perfect for pint-sized farmers to snuggle with while they dream of



spring planting. Get your **FREE** pillow pet with purchase while they last, (or, as soon as we reopen to the public!)



Farmers who produce milk, meat and specialty crops (fruits and vegetables) are among the first and hardest hit by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and a stay at home society. KCFB Directors and area dairy farmers Joe Engel of Hampshire (left) and Mike Kenyon of South Elgin granted interviews in mid-April to the Daily Herald and Kane County Chronicle, respectively, about the immediate and long term effects of the virus on their farm operations. The interviews were granted before news of shutdowns in beef, pork and poultry processing further roiled the industry, farm economy and consumers.



Photo credit: Sandy Bressner, Shaw Media

The current Covid19 situation requires that we humans should not congregate in large groups, but animals can still gather and there are some interesting names for such gatherings:
 A gaggle of geese • a glaring of cats • a bale of turtles • a sleuth of bears • a crash of rhinos • an army of frogs • a drift of hogs • a herd of cows • a pack of dogs • a shrewdness of apes • a colony of bats • a swarm of bees • a gang of bison • a crash of rhinos • a scurry of squirrels • a knot of toads.

SHARE THE ROAD 10x3 foot banner available

As spring planting begins across Northern Illinois the Kane County Farm Bureau reminds motorists to exercise CAUTION, SLOW DOWN and SHARE THE ROAD with large, slow moving farm equipment traveling between farmsteads and farm fields. A limited number of FREE 3x10 foot banners are available at the Farm Bureau office in St. Charles to do just that. They would be great safety reminders to place in farm field corners, at fire stations, banks, township offices and grain elevators in Central and Western Kane County. Banners, along with other farm safety and agricultural literacy resources can be picked up in the vestibule of the Kane County Farm Bureau between 8:30-4:30, Monday-Friday or call Steve at (708) 650-8661. (See page 8 for more info.)



AG LITERACY CORNER

By Amy Cook, Ag Literacy Coordinator



Plant a seed – everywhere is a classroom now.

“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.”
— Audrey Hepburn

We can't be in classrooms or offices right now, but learning can still happen all around us. Spring is the perfect time to plant a seed and watch something grow – an activity we can do indoors or outdoors, in a tiny pot or a large backyard garden. Even if you're currently not able to physically get together with the children in your life, consider simultaneously planting a few seeds in a pot and watching the plant grow together via an occasional video call.

It's well established that planting a garden helps kids learn academic areas such as science and math, but there are numerous other benefits. Studies have shown that gardening can improve:

- **Academic achievement:** Gardening has been shown to improve performance in math, science, writing, social studies, and overall attitudes toward learning. Gardens promote direct, experimental, inquiry-based approach to learning.

- **Healthy lifestyles:** As rates of childhood obesity rise, growing food has a positive influence on kids' nutritional awareness and practices. Growing food improves knowledge about and attitudes toward eating vegetables. Kids can be more willing to try certain vegetables if they have planted, cared for, harvested and prepared their own foods. Gardening also requires physical work – get those kids off screens and go pull some weeds, dig some holes, haul that hose around!

- **Environmental stewardship:** Kids gain an understand-

ing of water usage and the effects of over or under watering. To conserve water, consider using a rain barrel. Kids can also learn about different methods of pest management, composting food scraps, and mulching.

- **A sense of community:** A “sense of place” within the community can be gained through the garden. Gardening can help teach kids about habitat, weather, soil composition, geology, cultural traditions and history. Why do we grow what we grow here? What did the native people in our area grow?

- **Social development:** Growing a garden teaches teamwork, decision-making skills, problem solving, leadership, communication skills, flexibility, focus, patience and self-discipline.

- **Creativity:** Gardens needs signage; here's the kids' chance to be creative in marking which bed contains peppers and which has tomatoes. Rocks can be painted and used as decorative borders. Perhaps there is a fairy or gnome village in the corner of your garden.

Need more inspiration of activities to do with kids? Try one of our favorites activities pictured at right, “Beanie Babies,” which demonstrates germination.

To see what's happening inside a seed, try “Inside Out.” You'll need a large bean, such as a fava, lima, pinto or scarlet runner, and a magnifying glass.

1. Soak the bean in water for at least 8 hours or overnight.
2. Split the soaked seed in half. To do this, slide your fingernail along the thin edge of the curved side of the seed, allowing it to split naturally. Gently pry apart the 2 halves.
3. Use the magnifying glass to look at the inside of the seed. See if you can find the root, the

shoot, and the baby leaves. See if you can find veins inside the baby leaves.

To learn about your soil and water retention, create “Soil Horizons.” You'll need a clear plastic or glass quart-size jar with lid, a hand trowel, soil and water.

1. Fill the jar about 2/3 full with water.
2. Use the trowel to remove about an inch or so of soil. Then dig out soil from underneath and fill about half of the jar with soil, then top off with water.
3. Seal the jar and shake vigorously.
4. Leave the jar undisturbed for at least 24 hours, checking it to observe changes.
5. After leaving it undisturbed, you should see different layers of soil at the bottom of the jar. Gravity causes the different-sized soil particles to separate. For instance, you may see that the bottom layer is sand, next up is silt, and the top layer is clay.
6. Compare soil in different parts of your garden, or in different gardens. Different types of soil retain water differently. Clay-rich soil retains moisture and nutrients for longer periods of time than sandy soil, which drains more rapidly. You can use this information when try-

ing to determine how frequently to water your garden.

We'll check back in with you in July and see how your gardens are progressing!

(Inside Out and Soil Horizons activities adapted from Gardening Projects for Kids, by Whitney Cohen and John Fisher)

Beanie Baby

Now that you know how soybeans grow, why not grow your own?

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Jewelry size resealable bag (found in craft stores)
- Crystal Soil (Found in plant nurseries or from Flinn Scientific 800-452-1261)
- Hole Punch
- Water
- Measuring spoons
- Soybeans
- Yarn



1. Punch a hole in the top of your bag, above the zipper seal.
2. Place ¼ teaspoon of Crystal Soil into the bag.
3. Drop 1-2 soybeans into the bag.
4. Add 1 tablespoon of water.
5. Seal your bag.
6. Insert the yarn into the hole to make a necklace.

7. Use the yarn to hang your beanie baby around the room to chart the effect of various exposures to light and heat. You might want to wear it around your neck and under your shirt to provide constant heat for your Beanie Baby!
8. Check your Beanie Baby several times a day to watch the process of germination.
9. Record the growth on a chart.

Helping you protect what matters most



Bob Effner CLF®, LUTCF
St. Charles/Elgin
Agency Manager
630-584-0001



Edward Stuehm
Geneva
630-845-8245



Bob Riedel
West Dundee
847-428-5434



Todd Wilcox
St. Charles
630-762-1326



Deb Stob
Geneva
630-208-0890



Gary Bolger
West Dundee
847-531-6110



Bobbi Boston
St. Charles
630-485-5155



Michael O'Brien
Geneva
630-762-0852



Sherri Schramer
Elburn
630-365-9500



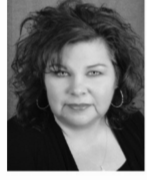
Keith Eakins
St. Charles
630-762-1324



Jeff Jones
Geneva
630-492-5293



Dominick Davero
Elburn
630-365-3737



Kelly Landorf
St. Charles
630-762-1328



Victor Alvarado
Elgin
847-742-0003



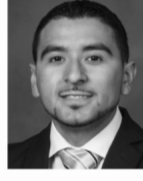
Chuck Quick
Hampshire
847-683-2100



Donna Tonovitz
St. Charles
630-549-7694



Luke Fawkes
Elgin
847-742-0001



David Berreles
Hampshire
847-683-2100



Orazio Difruscolo
St. Charles
630-549-7696



Sherry Lochen
Elgin
847-742-0001



Dan Cooper
Sugar Grove
630-466-9600



Ashraf Gerges
Aurora
630-898-3750



Bob Kearns
S. Elgin
847-888-3200



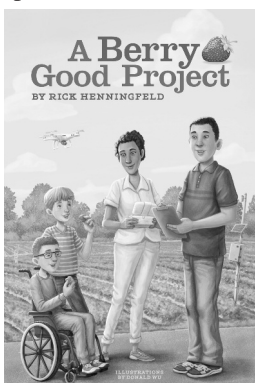
Ted Schuster
Sugar Grove
630-466-9600

Book of the month

This is a FREE downloadable book from Feeding Minds Press, a project of the American Farm Bureau Foundation for Agriculture. Search for “Feeding Minds Press A Berry Good Project.”

When Rowan's 4th grade class is put in charge of the strawberry field this year, he thinks it will be all sweet rewards. However, he quickly learns that humans aren't the only ones around that love strawberries. With the project's success on the line, Rowan's class must think fast how to save the strawberry crop.

The book helps students understand farmers' choices related to pest management. It also introduces students to careers in agriculture including extension agent and strawberry farmer. Ms. Renee, the extension agent, explains that her job is to help farmers when they have



A Berry Good Project by Rick Henningfeld

questions about raising strawberries or other field crops. Farmer Bower says, “I don't usually have too many questions, but when something goes wrong in my fields, I can ask Ms. Renee to help figure out the problem and then help me find the best plan to fix it.”

The farmer and extension agent tell the children that the goal is to grow as many strawberries as possible, and that the class will have to make a lot of decisions about how to manage the strawberry patch.

The kids take a field trip ... to the field. They examine the strawberry plants for signs of insects or disease. Ms. Renee tells them about good insects, which are natural enemies to bad insects.

The kids learn about technology such as smart sensors, which send information to the farmer's phone telling when the crop

(continued on page 6)



Farm Facts @ Fun

Compiled by Amy Cook, Ag Literacy Coordinator



Grow goodness!

Top left: Declan Cook, a 7th grader at Geneva Middle School North, plants cherry tomato seeds in a mason jar to learn how plants grow – and to have tasty tomatoes at the ready. He will thin the seedlings when they are about 2 inches tall. Flowers will appear in 6-7 weeks, then the small green tomatoes will turn red and be ready for eating.

Right: Aidan Cook, (Declan's brother) waters a tray of microgreens daily. This is a "rainbow" mix of sango radish, purple kohlrabi and red cabbage. Microgreens can be harvested just 7 days after planting and are packed with nutrients.

Soil is at the roof of good crops

Farmers must take good care of the soil so they can grow the best food possible. Modern technologies allow the farmers to test the soil for adequate nutrients. By testing the soil, farmers use the exact amount of nutrients to maximize plant growth and maintain soil health.

Nitrogen is found in the air and the soil. Many crops use nitrogen. That means farmers and gardeners add more to the soil to replace what's been used. One way farmers add nitrogen to the soil is to plant different crops at different times of the year in

the same field. A farmer will grow corn in the field one year and plant soybeans in that field the next year. Growing corn takes nitrogen out of the soil, but growing soybeans puts nitrogen back into the soil.

Phosphorus helps plants store and use energy from the sun to make food for themselves. This process is called photosynthesis. Plants need large amounts of phosphorus as they begin to grow and when the weather turns cold. Phosphorus comes from mined rock phosphate, which is then processed

into a form that can be easily absorbed by plants. Phosphorous also promotes root growth and winter hardiness.

Potassium makes plants stronger, helps fruit stay fresher longer, and helps grass stay greener. Potassium helps plants survive droughts, diseases, and very hot and cold temperatures. It also helps plants produce starches, controls root growth, and opens and closes pores for water. Potassium is found in the soil but only a small amount is available to plants.

Strawberry rhubarb crisp with pecan topping

(adapted from The Gardener's Community Cookbook)

Rhubarb is one of the first items to become available in spring. If you're lucky enough to grow it or have a generous neighbor who does, here's a perfect spring dessert.

Filling

- 1 pound rhubarb stalks, trimmed and cut into 1/4 inch pieces (about 4 cups)
- 4 cups strawberries, hulled and halved

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp orange juice

Pecan Topping

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, room temperature
- 1 cup coarsely chopped pecans

Place flour, oats and sugar in a large bowl and stir to mix. Add the butter and mix with your fin-

gers or a pastry blender until moist clumps form. Mix in the pecans.

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. Combine the rhubarb, strawberries, sugar, cornstarch, and orange juice in a large bowl. Transfer to an ungreased 13x9 inch baking dish and dot the pecan topping over the fruit mixture. Bake for 35-40 minutes, or until topping is golden brown.
3. Cool slightly and serve.

Did you know?

Asparagus is one of the first crops harvested in the spring. It grows wild in areas all around the United States, but is also grown on over 100 farms in Illinois.

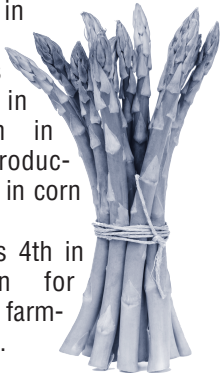
Onions are another spring crop. Sulfuric compounds are what bring tears to your eyes when you cut onions. United States farmers plant 125,000 acres of onions each year and produce about 6.2 billion pounds per year.

Also look for leafy greens,

such as spinach, kale and lettuce, radishes, peas, rhubarb and strawberries to become available in spring.

Illinois ranks #1 in the nation in soybean production and #2 in corn production.

Illinois is 4th in the nation for number of farmers markets.



Coffee filter butterfly

(makes 1 butterfly)

- 2 coffee filters
- Washable markers
- Water
- An eye dropper or small measuring spoon



- 1 pipe cleaner (12" long)

You will need two coffee filters for this craft. Place one inside the other so they fit together well. Place the coffee filters on a baking sheet to keep the mess contained.

Flatten out the coffee filters a little. They don't have to be perfectly flat, just flat enough that you can color on them.

Color your creative designs onto the coffee filters. You'll be coloring on two layers, and some of the marker will leak through to the bottom coffee filter.

Take an eye dropper or small

measuring spoon and drip water onto the design until the coffee filter is completely wet. If you add a big pool of water the colors will mix together too much.

Place the baking sheets outside in the sun to dry. If drying them indoors, it will take several hours, or even overnight, depending on how much water you added.

Once they are dry and you pull apart the two coffee filters, you'll end up with two very similar looking layers.

After they are completely dry, fold each one back and forth, accordion style, in about 1/2" folds.

Put the two folded strips on top of each other.

Twist a pipe cleaner around the middle so that the two ends point upwards in a big letter "V".

Pinch the end of each pipe cleaner & curl it outward to make a small spiral (like antennae).

Finally, pull apart the folds in the coffee filter to open them up and shape your butterfly.



Congratulations

Audrey Lancaster of Elgin is this month's winner! Her name was chosen from the entries received for correctly completing last month's Word Search Puzzle. For her participation, she receives an Earth Day themed prize. Thank you, Audrey, for reading the *Kane County Farmer* and continue to watch each month for more great opportunities from the Kane County Farm Bureau.

What did the mother worm say to her son when he was late for dinner?
Where IN earth have you been??

How many apples grow on trees? *All of them!*

Why did the farmer plow his field with a steam roller?
Because he wanted to grow mashed potatoes!

Planting time

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

ACREAGE
 AGRICULTURE
 CLIMATE
 CROP
 EQUIPMENT
 FARMER
 FERTILIZER
 FIELD
 GRAINS
 GROWING
 ILLINOIS
 MIDWEST
 NUTRIENT
 PLANTING
 RAIN
 SEEDS
 SOIL
 SPRING
 SUNSHINE
 SUPPLIES
 TRACTOR
 WEATHER
 WEED
 WORKLOAD

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone (____) _____ Email _____ Age _____

Return to: Kane County Farm Bureau, 2N710 Randall Road, St. Charles, IL 60174 by May 15, 2020 to be entered in our drawing for an planting themed prize. Prize must be picked up at the KCFB office.

- May is ...*
- National*
- Foster care month
 - Barbecue month
 - Bike month
 - Hamburger month
 - Photograph month
 - Salad month
- And very apropos right now ...*
- Nurses week (first full week of May)
 - Emergency medical services week (fourth week of May)
- Special days in May*
- May 1 May Day
 - May 3 Garden Meditation Day
 - May 4 Bird Day
 - May 5 National Teachers Day
 - May 8 World Red Cross Day
 - May 10 Mother's Day
 - May 12 International Nurses Day
 - May 15 Police Officer Memorial Day
 - May 16 Wear Purple for Peace
 - May 19 World Plant a Vegetable Garden Day
 - May 25 Memorial Day
 - May 29 Learn about Composting Day
 - May 30 Water a Flower Day

Ag in the Classroom learning continues online

Farm Bureau has been very active in the on-line space during the COVID 19 pandemic, creating and sharing content for parents, teachers and students for the duration of the Governor's Shelter in Place order. While content has been shared daily on the Kane County Farm Bureau and Illinois Ag in the Classroom facebook pages, it is also available in a convenient archive at <https://beyondthebarndoor.wordpress.com/> (so you don't have to search – or scroll through

endless posts!).

There you will find educational resources on a series of topics that the Farm Bureau began producing and releasing in early March. Categories include Everyday Agriculture; Illinois Eggs in the Classroom; Grow with Us and a segment called Right this Very Minute where young farmers share video snippets of their daily activities from farms and fields across the state.

The Illinois Farm Bureau will continue with daily

Everyday Agriculture “videos” with a simple lesson demonstration that links to a worksheet, website, and other resources. Recent topics included lessons about corn, pork, and the Illinois Eggs in the Classroom series about chickens and eggs, including daily reports and videos about incubating and hatching chicks. The series can be seen here: <https://beyondthebarndoor.wordpress.com/KCFB> will continue sharing these lessons on its Facebook page. If you haven't already, like and follow the page – you can find it by searching for

“Kane County Farm Bureau” on Facebook.

School teachers who had planned to bring 4th grade classrooms to Ag Days in March are reminded that they can access online and classroom lessons on farm & food related

topics that would have been incorporated in the Ag Days presentations, through the Illinois Farm Bureau's Ag-in-the-Classroom website: <http://www.agintheclassroom.org/TeacherResources/TeacherResources.shtml>.

Archive of videos, lesson plans and more at <https://beyondthebarndoor.wordpress.com/>



Planting presses through another unprecedented season

When the wall calendar changed in January, we looked to the 2020 planting season with anxious optimism. Our family, farm friends and even fields needed a fresh start after 2019. Last year's growing season was brutal, from its unprecedented widespread planting delays and trade wars to a muddy harvest that crept into the month of Christmas.

Then entered the novel coronavirus, a biological threat sweeping the globe and turning lifestyles and economies on their heads. We now begin another historic planting season with challenges beyond our control. As a business deemed essential, farm operations continue, and we stand determined to plant corn and soybeans in a timely manner while mindful of social distancing guidelines.

Hours in the tractor cab naturally isolate farm families like ours this time of year. We take comfort in this seasonal confinement and the priority task of planting, a welcome distraction from the troubling news of the world. I most enjoy the swift precision of the season. The planting

process takes a fraction of the time of harvest and resembles an incredible work of technological art. The tractor drives itself straight and hands-free. The high-tech planter places seed at precise spacing. Automatic sensors adjust ground pressure per planter row to sow seed at uniform depths. Software prescriptions vary the seeding rate with the guidance of global-positioning satellites. That guidance controls automatic row shut-offs on the planter to prevent overlapped planting of seed.

A machinery breakdown and overdue haircuts (even worse than in a normal spring season) will promptly remind us of the world's issues. With non-essential businesses shut down and essential agribusinesses closed to walk-in traffic, farmers forgo haircuts and order parts by phone to pick up in parking lots. Stresses will elevate if the pandemic infects any of us or the supply chain of parts, fuel, fertilizer, pesticides and other supplies or services necessary to plant crops. That includes grocery pickups to feed the planting crew.

At our farm's grain storage facility, a lit heart in the scale house window shares the universal message of togetherness and encouragement. It seems we have entered another year when we again hope that changing the calendar brings a better start.

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

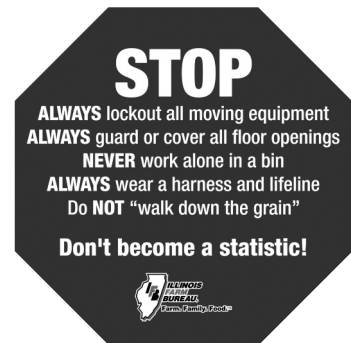
Don't be a statistic KCFB offers FREE grain bin safety stickers

Farmers everywhere know that a whole lot of grain went into storage in the fall of 2019 in less than ideal conditions. The tragic results in loss of life have played out on social media, in agricultural news and through local news stories in rural areas across the Midwest already this year.

Grain Safety Week was April 13-17, but Kane County Farm Bureau is still working to raise awareness about grain handling and storage hazards. We want to provide education and training, and convey best safety practices for farmers and grain handlers.

To assist in promoting grain safety awareness, Kane County Farm Bureau has FREE Grain Bin Warning decals available to area farmers. The die-cut decals are 12 x 12 inches and are over-

laminated vinyl for outdoor use. The decal lists prudent grain safety procedure.



Farm families wishing to get stickers can stop by Kane County Farm Bureau or call us at 630-584-8660. **Be safe!**

Grain entrapment statistics for 2019

- In 2019, 38 grain entrapment incidents were reported (27% increase from 2018). 61% of

those were fatal. Many more incidents remain unreported each year. (Source: Purdue University)

- Grain Entrapments were reported in 14 states in 2019.
 - 82% of all grain entrapment cases occurred in the Midwest, or Corn Belt.
 - All documented 2019 cases involved males.
 - The average age was 43.4 years old.
 - From 2010 to 2019, there were 330 grain entrapment incidents reported. 47.6% of those were fatal. (Source: Purdue University)
- They don't keep track of which cases happen on-farm vs. commercial grain facilities, but historically, 70% of entrapments have occurred on farms.

Book

(continued from page 4)

might need water or fertilizer. They see and learn how drones are used in farming. Their flight path can be programmed and

they have powerful cameras that can pinpoint a plant that needs help.

Through in-person and drone observation, the kids look for pests such as flower thrips and spider mites. When pests are

found, they need to make a quick decision to save the crop – biological or chemical controls, or both? Their strawberry crop is bountiful, and the class is able to hold their spring strawberry sundae fundraiser.

Better odds

(continued from page 1)

\$25 or 5 for \$50 and are available at Kane County Farm Bureau (2N710 Randall Road, St. Charles), from the Farm Bureau directors listed on page 2, with VISA or MasterCard at 630-584-8660, or by sending

payment with the ticket request form on page 1.

In 2019-20, over \$22,500 in tuition assistance was provided by the Foundation. For 2020-21, the KCFB Foundation has already approved \$18,000 in Scholarships. Your contributions through the annual raffle and other events throughout the year play a huge role in helping

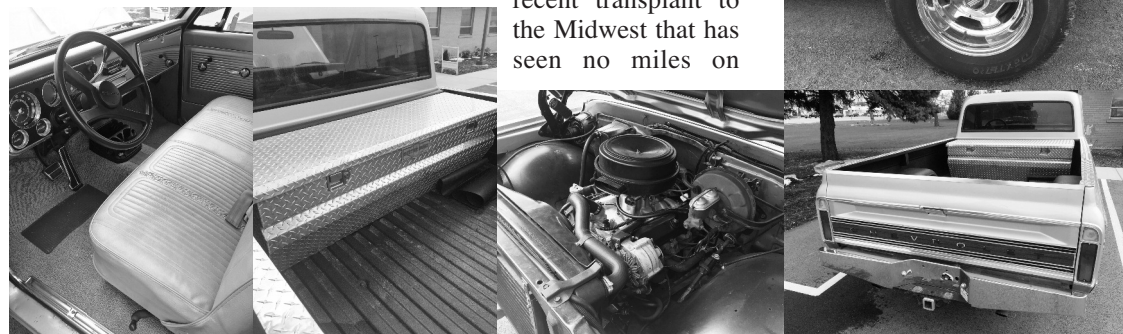
students attain their degrees, reach their goals, and assist in securing a bright future for farms and food.

For more information and rules on this year's raffle, scholarship programs or other KCFB Foundation programs and services, visit www.kanecfb.com or contact Steve Arnold at 630-584-8660.

One NICE truck!

If you've not yet seen the 1969 C10 Chevrolet pick-up

from the rust free floor and undercarriage that it is a very recent transplant to the Midwest that has seen no miles on



that the Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation is raffling off this summer to raise funds for college scholarships, you owe yourself a visit to the office on Randall Road in St Charles to check it out.

This truck from the “Summer of Love” is an excellent, rust free example that came from the American Southwest, and it is obvious

snow, ice and salt.

The truck is powered by a small block Chevy V-8 (350, 400?) with an automatic transmission and is as clean in the engine compartment as it is outside. The clean original interior is fitted with a new seat cover and carpet. The bed has a spray liner and the truck is fitted with armor plate bedrails and a matching cross bed toolbox. It

has a chrome rear step bumper with trailer hitch and rides on a set of American Racing chrome alloy wheels.

Tickets for this truck are just \$15. In quantity, they are 2 for \$25 or 5 for \$50. The winner, will definitely conclude it was the best investment he/she ever made!

Get yours today. (630) 584-8660.



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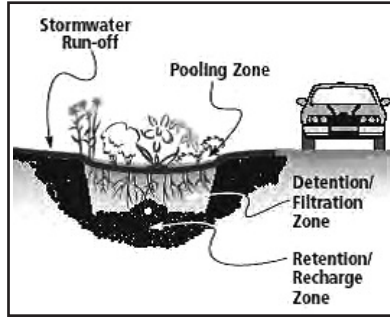
Pollinator/rain garden still generating buzz

Plans to plant a pollinator rain garden on the lawn at the Kane County Farm Bureau are still in place, the question, as with all public events in the current environment, is when? All we can say for now is that we still look forward to installing this educational improvement in 2020 and hope you will come out to help when we issue the appeal. We will do our best to inform members and the public of the installation date so they can stop by and lend a hand!

- A Rain Garden will:*
- Filter pollutants from runoff
 - Recharge groundwater
 - Conserve water
 - Reduce erosion
 - Remove standing water
 - Reduce mosquito breeding
 - Increase beneficial insects that eliminate pests
 - Reduce potential of flooding
 - Create habitat for birds & butterflies
 - Survive drought seasons
 - Reduce garden maintenance
 - Enhance property value.

A pollinator rain garden is coming to the Kane County Farm Bureau. Watch future issues of the Kane County Farmer for information on how YOU can help us recover pollinator populations and improve water quality.

Rain gardens are an inexpensive, simple to implement and environmentally sound solution to residential and urban storm water runoff. They gather and filter storm water to remove pollutants and percolate into the water table for groundwater recharge. Using plants to attract pollinators helps achieve several beneficial environmental goals in one aesthetically pleasing space!



What's new in the COUNTRY agencies?

St. Charles Agency, Bob Effner, Agency Manager
 ORAZIO DIFRUSCOLO has been named the Rep of the Month for MARCH 2020 in the St. Charles/Elgin Agency, as announced by Agency Manager, Robert J. Effner, Sr., CLF®, LUTCF. Orazio has provided tangible plans for addressing the immediate and long term insurance needs of his clients through COUNTRY Financial's diverse products and services: Auto, Farm, Home, Life, Business, Retirement. Let Orazio's expertise help you! You may reach Orazio at (630) 549-7696, orazio.difruscolo@countryfinancial.com, or https://representatives.country

financial.com/orazio.difruscolo/. Congratulations, Orazio!
Aurora Agency, Kevin Gomes, Agency Manager
 Zach Fox, Financial Representative with the Aurora Agency, is our Financial Representative of the Month for March 2020. Zach began his career with COUNTRY Financial in May of 2007 and services clients out of his office located at: 1920 Wilson Street, Batavia, 60510, (630) 406-6900. Zach's professionalism and vast knowledge of auto, home, life, commercial and financial products make him a great person to do business with. Congratulations, Zach!

Welcome to the next level!

This month we welcome the following KCFB members who joined our organization or reclassified their membership in August to *Regular or Professional Status:

Regular Members
 Alex Olson Maple Park

We remind you of added perks that accompany your new Regular member or Professional Status and thank you for supporting KCFB's efforts at advocacy, education and hunger relief:

- Professional networking opportunities & engagement with farmers

- Agriculture, farm & food news delivered to your door
- New subscription to *FarmWeek*, the largest weekly agriculture newspaper
- Access to FarmWeekNow.com
- KCFB voting rights & ILFB delegate opportunities
- Continuing subscription to the *Kane County Farmer* newspaper
- Free annual registration at one of 7 statewide conferences
- 302,000 member discounts, including Ford, Lincoln, John Deere, Case IH, restaurants, hotels & travel

- Discounts at the KCFB Country Store on in-house sales of featured local foods
- *KCFB Regular membership is required of all who join our association that have a vested interest in and receive income from the production of farm products as an owner or operator of a farm business. Professional Membership status is available for all those employed in agriculture-related occupations, even with no farm income. If you are interested in "next level" membership and the benefits it carries, please contact KCFB in St. Charles at (630) 584-8660.*

Recruiter of the Month

Each month we honor the person who signs the most members into our organization. This month, the honor goes to Sherry Lochen! Sherry has been a COUNTRY Financial Representative since November 2012. Her office is located at 1750 Grandstand Place, Elgin

and may be reached at: (847) 742-0004. Thank you for your continued support of the Kane County Farm Bureau and congratulations on your success!



Sherry Lochen

Ag Institutes tentatively scheduled

Once again, Kane County Farm Bureau has two exciting and educational classes planned for area teachers this summer. This is an excellent opportunity to earn college graduate credits from St. Francis University, as well as gather lots of lessons to take back to the classroom. Learn through hands-on experiences and meet farmers for first-hand knowledge of today's agricultural best practices.

Summer Ag Institute I is scheduled for 6 days: June 8-12, & 15, earning 3 graduate credits or 45 continuing education hours.

Our very popular summer class is a six day long look at the many different facets of agriculture in Kane County. This is your chance to tour local farms,

speak with individual farmers, tour agri-businesses, see how agriculture affects your daily life, and network with other teachers. Discuss and become knowledgeable about GMO's, sustainability, organic practices, and other hot topics.

Summer Ag Institute II is scheduled for June 29-July 2 with the theme "The Culture of Agriculture," earning 2 graduate credits or 30 continuing education hours.

A four day event focusing on the Culture of Agriculture is being offered this summer to graduates of any year's SAI I class. The class is being held Monday,

June 29, through Thursday, July 2. This is your chance to visit farms and businesses such as technological sites and agricultural businesses.

Please contact Amy Cook at aitic@kanecfb.com or 630-584-8660 (KCFB office) or 630-248-8080 (mobile) for more information about the Summer Ag Institutes or to register.



Not to be missed! Calling all teachers for KCFB's Summer Ag Institutes

Kane County Farm Bureau's Summer Ag Institutes are an excellent opportunity for teachers to learn about many aspects of agriculture and obtain ideas and lessons to take back to their students. Teachers then take tours of working farms and learn about agriculture directly from farmers. There are two institutes offered – the first is open to anyone, and the second is open to graduates of the first class.

Tri-County Master Gardeners host e-Help Desk this spring

Though University of Illinois Extension in-person office hours are suspended, residents can still get valuable personal gardening advice from local Extension Master Gardener volunteers this spring.

Each growing season, trained Extension volunteers field community questions through Master Gardener Help Desks in DuPage, Kane and Kendall counties. Homeowners can now get answers to their yard, landscaping and gardening question from Master Gardener volun-

teers via email. "Our Master Gardener volunteers still want to help their neighbors grow so they are volunteering from their homes," said Richard Hentschel, Extension horticulture educator. "Master Gardeners can advise on what needs to be done in gardens and yards during each part of the growing season. Popular questions now include lawn care, starting garden transplants from seed, and early season weed control, but they also can advise on care of trees, shrubs,

flowers, and vegetables." To connect with your county's Master Gardener Help Desk, email your question along with details and a photo, if appropriate, to: DuPage County: uiegm-dupage@illinois.edu, Kane County: uiegm-kane@illinois.edu, or Kendall County: uiegm-kendall@illinois.edu. For more information on the Extension Master Gardener program in the tri-county area, visit <http://extension.illinois.edu/dkk/horticulture>.

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 Classified advertising rates: 20 cents per word/\$20 minimum (60 words or less). DISCOUNTS for members: Associate members, 20%; Voting members, 30%; PLUS members, 40%. Advance payment requested. Ads due by the 15th of every month for the next issue. No advertising (classified or display) for financial or insurance services will be accepted. Call 630-584-8660.

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Covid 19 resources for farmers & consumers

Livestock Resources

The Illinois Department of Agriculture is issuing important alerts regarding animal health and welfare, including directives for veterinarians. You can find that information at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Animals/AnimalHealth/Pages/COVID-19.aspx>.

Pandemic Injects Volatility into Cattle & Beef Market

Rest assured, there is no shortage of meat in the U.S. Unfortunately, the pictures of empty grocery store aisles flooding social media are the result of a different problem: logistics. Meat at retail level on a typical day, was purchased by the retailer as many as three months before as they anticipate sales volume. This means, not a large volume of “unspoken for” meat exists in the market on a typical day because processors are working on “spoken for” meat sales. So when consumers were stockpiling and emptying meat cases, boxed beef cutout rose to never before seen levels as retailers raced to refill their shelves. This unprecedented buying pattern caused cattle futures to fluctuate in both directions – while cash markets spun out of control.

Milk Disposal

The dairy industry is facing surplus supply due to the abrupt closure of schools and food service outlets. As processors work towards changing production options, some dairy farmers have been forced to dispose of milk. Due to this unprecedented situation, the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service is prepared to allow flexibility as a way to meet increased retail demand due to changes in supply. Initially, these provisions will be implemented from March-May as needed, with requests made to local Market Administrator. Provisions include allowing adjustments of shipping and/or diversion limits, lifting amount of milk a producer-handler can purchase from and outside Federal Milk Marketing Order (FMMO), and requiring any dumped milk to be reported with the FMMO.

Although there are reports of dairy farmers disposing of milk across the U.S., this has not yet become a widespread issue in Illinois. However, farmers who may be forced into this situation should be aware of regulations surrounding milk disposal in Illinois. Proper disposal procedures must be followed in order to avoid Clean Water Act liability, even during an emergency.

Monitoring Processing Disruptions

Due to the current situation with COVID-19, food processors including meat and dairy, are preparing workplaces via guidance from Department of Labor and Department of Health & Human Services, including developing COVID-19 specific business plans. In many cases, food processors are revisiting sick leave policies for employees and following CDC guidelines to prevent workplace exposure. Food processing plants with an employee that has tested positive for the disease will follow protocols set by state and local health officials. It is important to note there is no evidence of COVID-19 being transmitted through food or food packaging.

Local Foods and Specialty Crops

On April 8 the Illinois Farmers Market Association released a

COVID-19 Toolkit with guidebooks and signs featuring best practice recommendations for social distancing and enhanced sanitation. The toolkit is helpful for Farmers Market Managers, Farmers Market Vendors, and customers. You can find those resources at <https://www.ilfma.org/resources>.

Health and Safety on Specialty Crop Farms

- Ohio State University released a video of safety tips for produce farms as well as a 2 page flyer that is available for the asking from Kane County Farm Bureau (contact steve@kanecfb.com for a copy by email).

H-2 Visa Applicant Processing

USDA has been working diligently with DOL, DHS, and State to limit the disruption in the H-2A workforce caused by COVID-19. The State Department took additional steps to increase processing of H-2 visa holders through consulates around the world, including:

- authorized consular officers to expand the categories of H-2 visa applicants whose applications can be adjudicated without an in-person interview.
- can waive the visa interview requirement for first-time and returning H-2 applicants who have no potential ineligibility.
- increased the period in which returning workers may qualify for an interview waiver.

USDA continues to work with DOL, DHS, and State to limit the disruption in the H-2A workforce while protecting the health and safety of federal employees and the individuals seeking entry under the H-2 programs. If there are specific labor-related questions please email aglabor@usda.gov.

Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA)

The Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) was enacted at the request of the fruit and vegetable industry to promote fair trade in the industry. PACA protects businesses dealing in fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables by establishing and enforcing a code of fair business practices and by helping companies resolve business disputes. The Agricultural Marketing Service within USDA administers PACA and recently released a COVID-19 FAQ for fruit and vegetable growers.

Direct-to-Consumer Sales

Illinois Farm Bureau wants to help members convey the message that Illinois farmers are open for business. Farming doesn’t stop, even during a pandemic like COVID-19. Crops must still be planted, and livestock must receive the care they need. We know that some of our members have food products readily available for sale. Did you know you can utilize resources available through the Illinois Specialty Growers Association to create an online presence for your business and sell your products online to local buyers? Check out the Market Maker system on their website <https://www.ilfma.org> and create your profile now.

USDA Food & Nutrition Service

USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers 15 nutrition assistance programs that leverage American’s agricultural abundance to ensure children and low-income individuals and families have nutritious food to eat. U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

Sonny Perdue announced additional support for states making it easier for children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities to get food during the COVID-19 national emergency and remove administrative roadblocks.

Finding Meals While Schools are Closed

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the launch of an online tool – the “Meals for Kids” Site Finder – to help families find meals for children while schools are closed during the coronavirus pandemic. This is the latest in a series of swift actions USDA has taken to keep children and low-income individuals fed during the ongoing health crisis.

The “Meals for Kids” interactive map directs people to local sites where kids can get free meals. The site finder currently lists more than 20,000 meal sites from 23 states, and more sites will be added as states submit data each week. The map is available in both English and Spanish at www.fns.usda.gov/meals4kids.

How does ‘stay at home’ order impact farmers markets?

With winter farmers markets in full swing, the March 20 executive order by Gov. Pritzker requiring individuals to stay at home has market managers wondering if they can stay open. The order considers agriculture an essential business, paving the way for growers and farmers markets to remain open at the time of this writing.

“All first responders, emergency management personnel, law enforcement personnel, health care workers and others working to support essential businesses and essential government functions, like grocery stores and

pharmacies are exempt from this stay at home order,” the order indicates. Agricultural operations currently allowed include “food and beverage manufacturing, production, processing, and cultivation, including farming,” and includes “cultivation, marketing, production, and distribution of animals and good for consumption,” the order further indicates.

Travel to and from food production areas and marketplaces may occur. Congregation of employees and customers must be done in accordance with social distancing requirement of six feet, and market vendors and managers may need to revamp current food safety rules and regulations to comply fully.

What vendors should consider

- As in all cases, employees should be healthy if they are at work.
- Clean and sanitize your booth and equipment on a regular basis throughout the market day. Cleaning means using soap and water and sanitizing means using a product labeled for sanitizing which can be used on food contact surfaces. Guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency are available. When in doubt, confirm that the labeling of the sanitizer is appropriate for use on food contact surfaces.
- Follow any guidelines from the Illinois Department of Public Health about product sampling. Although no final decision on product sampling has been made at the time of this writing, markets may wish to discontinue the practice.
- Have a hand washing station at your booth, and instruct all workers to use it on a regular basis
- Minimize the number of times the produce is touched, from on-farm harvest through mar-

ket sales.

- Designate a worker that is only responsible for taking money and require them to wear gloves for all transactions.
- Have all workers use disposable gloves when working with fresh produce and instruct them on how often to change gloves throughout the day.
- Do not allow the customer to pick up produce to test for ripeness or smell before buying.
- Growers may want to pre-bag produce prior to opening and explain to customers that this is for their own safety.
- Remind customers to wash the produce when they get home.

What managers should consider

- Practice social distancing. Extend the distances between the market booths and avoid shaking hands or any other physical contact.
- Follow any guidelines from the Illinois Department of Public Health about product sampling as previously discussed.
- Have hand washing stations throughout the market for the public to use and post signs reminding patrons to use soap and water for 20 seconds before rinsing and drying with a single-use paper towel.
- Limit or restrict animal access into the market.
- Temporarily eliminate seating areas within the marketplace to promote social distancing.
- Initiate customer educational programs through your market website, social media sites, and newsletters and advise people not to attend the market if they are ill.
- Have a sign prominently displayed at the market entrance or at each vendor booth promoting social distancing of at least six feet in public spaces.

Freesources—free resources for teachers, farmers and parents

If there is a silver lining in the COVID 19 pandemic cloud for organizations like ours, it is the time to take stock. Literally.

With the office closed to the public, we are finding time to go through 100 plus years of accumulation and to uncover usable classroom, home, school and farm safety resources, and a contactless way to make them available to the members and the public, so even if the stay at home order persists, you can grab them on your next trip to Costco!

The Kane County Farm Bureau has set up tables in the entryway of our office at 2N710 Randall Road in St Charles (next to Costco) to display these resources. Exterior doors to the

building will remain open during business hours (8:30-4:30, M-F), with interior doors locked.

These resources consist of classroom posters, books, DVD’s and AgMags (agricultural themed magazines for kids); Farm safety banners, bumper stickers, grain bin safety signs and pollinator habitat signs for farmers; and hats, t-shirts and sweatshirts for anyone. Oh, and picture frames, lots & lots of picture frames. Stop by and check them out. Feel free to take what only what you need for your family, farm or classroom, or are willing to share with others.

As this crisis continues and we find more time to sort through our “accumulation,”

we expect new resources to become available and existing resource to rotate. If you have questions about the available resources, please call Steve at (708) 650-8661.



IDOA provides online pesticide testing

The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) is providing a limited number of online exams for private and commercial pesticide applicator testing.

To request and register for an exam, email agr.clm@illinois.gov with the following information:

- First and last name,
- Email,
- Phone number
- Test(s) needed

Note: Companies with more than one applicator needing to test must submit requests in one

email to help administer the tests in a timely manner.

IDOA will contact you within one to two business days at the email address provided. The email will contain instructions and a secure link to the exam.

Upon completion of the exam, IDOA will notify you via email with your score. For individuals who pass the exam, the email will include a printable temporary license. Individuals who do not pass the exam will receive instructions on how to retest. It is only allowable to test

three times within a six-month period.

Any questions about the exam process or unique situations can be emailed to agr.clm@illinois.gov. If technology is an issue, testing can be done on a mobile device.

As a reminder, these exams are being offered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, all individuals who took an online exam and received a temporary license will be required to retest in 2021.