



Champaign County Farm Bureau News

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“Champaign County Farm Bureau will strive to assist families in agriculture by recognizing and responding to issues of concern while strengthening partnerships and improving farm family life for this and future generations.”

Getting to Know Champaign County Government

By: Lesley Gooding



Paula Bates

Meet Champaign County’s Supervisor of Assessments, Paula Bates. Paula is a life-long resident of Champaign County living in rural Tolono with her husband of 30 years, Mark. Mark and Paula have two wonderful children, Tyler and Jenna.

Paula has a long work history with the Champaign County Assessment office saying “I began working in the Champaign County Assessment office in 1992. From 1992 through 2004, I was employed in the positions of Clerk, Mapper, Appraiser and Chief Deputy. From 2004 to 2006, I worked

in the City of Champaign Assessors’ office. I also was the Crittenden/Pesotum Assessor during this time period and performed real estate appraisals. In 2007, I was appointed as the Supervisor of Assessments in Piatt County and continued that position until 2016. In 2016, I was appointed as Champaign County Supervisor of Assessments.”

Paula’s tenure at the county assessment office gives her the ability to lean on a great deal of institutional knowledge and experience. For those not familiar with the assessment office, many are left wondering what the assessment office does and how it fits in with county government. Paula lays it out for us, “The County Assessment Office assists the nineteen Township Assessors of the County. Onsite field support is provided by the Assistant Deputy/Appraiser, internal office support is provided by the Assistant Deputy/Sales Analyst and property divisions and mapping changes are maintained by the Tax Map Technician, processing of parcel ownership changes, exemption applications and related clerical functions are provided by the three full-time Clerk positions. Our annual budget is \$368,775 all but \$46,330 is personnel. \$31,500 is allocated to publication of yearly assessments changes in the local newspapers and printing of assessment notices, which are required by statute. The Office of Assessment currently has an office staff of six employees which includes three Clerks, one Tax Map Technician, an Assistant Deputy/Appraiser and an Assistant Deputy/Sales Analyst.”

According to Paula, the responsibilities and functions of the Assessment Office include “monitoring and directing the countywide valuation of real property for the purpose of real estate taxation. Our office has many responsibilities, which include assisting the Township Assessors and monitoring all functions for compliance with state statutes. We are also responsible for applying all tax exemptions and preferential assessments. Staff also analyze sales data, prepare sales ratio and neighborhood studies, and apply equalization factors. We notify taxpayers of assessment changes with mailed notices and publications. We prepare the bi-annual abstracts for submission to the Illinois Department of Revenue. Staff maintain the parcel

identifying number system and update county tax maps. Office staff maintain taxpayer name and addresses for real estate tax bills. We also provide clerical assistance to the Board of Review.”

Township Assessors are vital to the County Assessment office. Paula points to a strong relationship with township assessors and that relationship even gets Champaign County a pat on the back for being on time with the annual tax cycle! Paula states, “I am very proud and honored to work with all of the Township Assessors. We strive for good working relationships and teamwork. Our goal is to provide the assistance that they may require. I am proud to say because of their hard work and timeliness they aid Champaign County in being one of the few counties in the state to be on time with the annual tax cycle.”

Property tax bills will be sent out to Champaign County residents soon. CCFB is interested in learning about the process for gathering information and preparing these bills and went straight to the source asking Paula several questions so we could gain a better understanding of the process. Paula says, “Generally, the property tax cycle is a two-year process. During the first year, property is assigned a value that reflects its value as of January 1 of that year. During the second year, the tax bills are calculated, mailed and payments are distributed to the local taxing bodies. For example: at this point in time we are assisting the Assessors with their 2018 work which will be billed in 2019.”

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Illinois Farm Bureau & Affiliates Youth Conference



Above L to R: Bethany Musick, Fisher FFA; Kia Freese, Unity FFA; Sarah Meneley, Unity FFA; Kaitlin Marry, Fisher FFA; Illinois FFA Vice President, Rob Janssen; Abby Schlueter, St. Joseph-Ogden FFA
Photo Credit: Catrina Rawson, IFB Photographer

“Three hundred Illinois FFA members from 78 counties across the state participated in the 2018 Illinois Farm Bureau & Affiliates Youth Conference “Be Bold” April 16-17 in East Peoria. Attendees, who are juniors in high school, gained leadership, teamwork and communication skills through five different breakout sessions and keynote speakers Keith “Doc” Patterson and Amberley Snyder. The conference Opportunity Fair offered students the chance to network with nearly 20 different colleges, universities and agricultural organizations. The conference is coordinated by the Illinois Farm Bureau & Affiliates Youth Education Committee and sponsored by Illinois Farm Bureau, GROWMARK, Inc., COUNTRY Financial, the IAA Credit Union and Prairie Farms.”

The task of keeping an up-dated mailing list sounds tedious, but Paula is quick to point out “We require an address change form in writing and provide that form on our website. Most of our return bills are taxpayers who move but have an escrow account so their mortgage company pays their real estate tax bill. Without the taxpayer notifying us of their move, we do not know where to forward the bill if their forwarding time has expired.”

If the address on file is correct you will receive your tax bill, but what if you open the bill and disagree with the cost of the bill. Is there an appeals

process? Paula says, “Once you receive your tax bill there is not an appeal process. The tax bills are for the previous year assessed values. The assessor values the property as of January 1. The taxpayer receives the assessment change notice. If a taxpayer disagrees with the new assessment, the dates to appeal are July 1-September 10 with the Board of Review. I would encourage all taxpayers to check their tax bill for any exemptions they may be qualified to receive.”

Paula provided a great deal of information regarding exemptions for the property owner that might benefit you. Read over the exemptions mentioned below that could benefit you or someone you know, “Owner-occupied residences are eligible for a *Homestead Exemption*

Limited up to \$6,000 EAV (Equalized Assessed Value). You must be the owner and occupant on January 1 of the tax year.

The *Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption* is for persons age 65 or older who meet ownership qualifications similar to those described for the Homestead Limited Exemption. Eligible applicants can receive a \$5,000 reduction in EAV. You may apply during the year in which you turn 65 years of age. A copy of your deed and proof of age are required. Eligible seniors may also qualify for a Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze Homestead Exemption if their gross household income is \$65,000 or less. This exemption exempts assessed value added between the original base year and eligible year. This does not freeze the amount of your tax bill. This is an annual exemption and you must occupy the residence at least two January 1sts in order to qualify.

A *Homestead Improvement Exemption* is available to taxpayers when their assessment is raised due to an improvement to an existing structure. The property must be owned and occupied by the taxpayer. The use must be exclusively for a residential purpose. The amount is limited to \$25,000 EAV added by the new improvement. This exemption will continue for four years from the date the improvement is completed and added to the assessment. The *Returning Veterans’ Standard Homestead Exemption* is a two-year \$5,000 EAV reduction for the taxable year and the year after in which a veteran returns from active duty from an armed conflict involving the U.S. Proper documentation is required. The veteran must own and occupy the property on January 1.

The *Disabled Veteran Standard Homestead Exemption* is available to disabled veterans with a service-connected disability. Exemption of 2,500 EAV for 30% to 49% disability, exemption of \$5,000 EAV for 50% to 69% disability and if 70% disability or more, then the disabled veterans’ residential property is exempt from taxation up to \$250,000 EAV. Proper documentation is required. The veteran must own and occupy the property on January 1.

The *Disabled Persons Homestead Exemption* is available to disabled persons who meet eligibility requirements. Exemption of \$2,000 EAV available to those who qualify. The disabled person must own and occupy the property on January 1.”

The assessment process requires work from several county government offices working together to meet deadlines. Lines of communication need to stay open among the entities working together. Paula took time to explain how all this information flows together, “The Assessors value property as of January 1 and turn in the work into the County by June 15. We enter all of the changes into our tax system. Notices are mailed to the taxpayers reflecting the changes and equalization factors. Assessment changes are published in the newspaper. We then mail the tentative abstract into the state. The Board of Review accepts appeals on assessments from July 1 thru September 10. Our office enters any changes made by the Board of Review into our tax system. We then prepare the final abstract and mail to the state. The County Clerk works with the levying bodies and prepares the tax extension. The Treasurer mails the tax bills and distributes taxes to the taxing districts.”

Have you recently remodeled or are you thinking of adding an addition to your home? This will affect your property

tax bill at some point too. Paula let us in on the finer details, “Property is assessed as of January 1 of the tax year. If you build an addition in June of 2018, it will not be assessed until 2019. You would first pay tax for the addition on your 2019 tax bill payable in 2020.”

Many of us own homes, but what about other property you own and how is it assessed, specifically farmland? The Farmland Assessment Formula provides valuable information for our large number of “M” members in Champaign County. CCFB asked Paula to explain this to us, “The farmland assessment applies to tracts of property that have met the legal definition of a “farm” for the previous two years. Farmland is assessed according to its agricultural economic value (i.e., its ability to produce income) rather than on 33 1/3 percent of its fair market value. The agricultural economic value is a calculation of an average of prices paid for agricultural products, production costs, and interest rates charged by the Agri-Bank over a five-year period. The State Farmland Technical Advisory Board provides income, productivity, and yield data. The Illinois Department of Revenue compiles the data and calculates the agricultural economic value for each soil productivity index. The Illinois Department of Revenue certifies the values to the Supervisor of Assessments offices by May 1 of each year. The County Farmland Assessment Review Committee holds a public hearing by June 1 implementing the certified values.”

Calculating the value of home or farmland parcels is not left to up to chance. Paula stresses, “Assessors value a home by calculating the RCN (Replacement Cost New) by using square footage, story height, type of exterior construction (frame or brick), number of bathrooms, garage, basement or crawl and other amenities and then subtracting depreciation. Market Value= Land Value + (RCN-Depreciation). The Illinois Department of Revenue provides all Counties with Cost Schedules for Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Farm Buildings.”

Neighboring farmland and home sales do impact the value of neighboring home and land parcels. According to Paula, Champaign County “uses Sales Ratio studies based on three years of sales to determine if townships are assessed at the state mandated level of 33 1/3% and to determine assessment uniformity. It all depends on how many valid sales occur within that three-year period. Farmland sales are not included in our sales ratio studies because farmland is assessed according to agricultural economic use, not market value.”

Assessing new energy generators such as wind and solar power that are popping up in Champaign County is different from home and farmland assessment. Paula points to state legislation that takes the guessing game out of the formula, “Fortunately, legislation was passed in 2007 establishing wind energy device valuations. There are currently two bills in the Illinois legislature to establish solar energy valuations, House Bill 5284 and Senate Bill 486.” There are challenges in every industry as life constantly changes, the assessment office is no different, “Moving forward the biggest challenge will be utilizing new technology and the updating and digitizing of assessment records,” states Paula.

Give Your Driving Skills a TUNE-UP! Register for a Defensive Driving Course at Champaign County Farm Bureau!

Tuesday, May 22 and
Wednesday, May 23
8:00 AM to Noon
BOTH days!



Champaign County Farm Bureau
Auditorium: 801 N. Country Fair Drive

RESERVATION DEADLINE: May 18
Call: (217) 352-5235 to reserve a spot!

“Check Your Calendar!” May - 2018

9	Premier Ladies Marketing	9:30 AM
10	Prime Timers	10 AM
10	YAL Harvest for All Social (See Page 3)	6 PM
18	Defensive Driving Deadline	
19	Women’s Committee at “Play it Safe”	
22 - 23	Defensive Driving	8 AM - Noon
28	Memorial Day - Office Closed	



June 2018

7	Young Ag Leaders - Lynn Doran’s House	6:30 PM
11	Women’s Committee	9:30 AM
12	Young Ag Leader’s 4-H Operation LEAD	
12	Premier Ladies Marketing	10 AM
13	COUNTRY Financial/Farm Bureau Succession Planning	
14	Prime Timers	10 AM
18	Women’s Committee Cooking Class	

*Note: Most committees do not meet during May due to planting season:
Please e-mail your committee chair or call 352-5235 if in doubt.

Mini Golf for Harvest for All

May 10, 6 PM - 8 PM
Old Orchard Lanes



The May Social is mini golf at Old Orchard Lanes in Savoy. We will be hosting a 50:50 golf contest. There is a \$10 entry fee and the winner of the evening will get half of the entry fees and the other half will be donated to a local food pantry for Harvest for All.

Winner's will be determined by low point score. In the event of a tie, best scores from pre-determined holes will be used to pick a winner.

Guests and general Farm Bureau members are welcome! Green fee is \$3.50. Active Young Ag Leader members who RSVP will have their green fees covered.

RSVP not required, but encouraged so that we can guarantee the right reservations with Old Orchard. RSVP to Dave at david@ccfarmbureau.com or call into the Farm Bureau office: 217-352-5235

The Decline in Pollinators

By: Lesley Gooding

Butterflies are beautiful insects that dot the Illinois landscape during the summer months. Monarch butterflies are known not only for their beauty, but also for their vitality to the ecosystem. Sadly, monarch butterfly populations are declining. According to recent studies, the monarch butterfly population was at a high in 1977 with 682 million butterflies and dropped to a recent low of 42 million in 2015. There is uncertainty about the exact causes of the decline in the world's population of monarchs.

Monarch butterflies spend the winter months in Mexico. Monarch butterflies travel north from Mexico to the Corn Belt, the eastern USA, and Canada. Two to three generations of the monarch butterfly occur here, but a single generation travels back to Mexico for the winter. Monarch larvae can only feed on milkweed. Looking for milkweed to lay eggs on and nectar to feed on as adults brings the butterfly to Illinois and the Corn Belt, which is at the heart of their summer region. According to University of Illinois researcher David Zaya, approximately one half of the monarch butterflies that make it back to Mexico are from the Corn Belt Region.

David Zaya has taken on the task of studying ways to help increase the monarch butterfly population and delving into the problems causing the decline by studying pollinators in Illinois. Working with farmers in several counties, including Champaign County, David and his team are working to address the issue of the reduction in milkweed. "We are questioning where milkweed plantings will be most helpful. Milkweed has definitely declined in Illinois, young monarchs need milkweed and as adults they eat floral resources." Researchers do point out the drop in the number of milkweeds in Illinois is not as large as the huge population decline in monarch butterflies making it back to Mexico.

David Zaya says "Conservation in Central Illinois starts with farmers. I am not sure what is causing the decline, but I am dedicated to working with farmers to focus on the science side of the issue and promote pollinators. We are working on a two year study focusing on monarchs and floral plants available to pollinators. Local farmers are helping us out by allowing us to place potted milkweed plants in CRP (Conservation Reserve Program) fields, with row crops, and in gardens at home sites. My team will be visiting these sites every 1-2 weeks looking for flowering plants with nectar, milkweeds with eggs or larvae, and bees. We will be trying to determine what types of plant mixes are most helpful, what pollinators will it help, and how important the density of milkweed is. We want to understand what has been lost for the monarchs."

Working with farmers is a natural fit. An increase in technology and knowledge has led to an increased understanding of the importance of milkweed. Increasing milkweed numbers can be part of the solution to increasing the monarch butterfly population. Researchers also believe that the monarch population drops on the way to Mexico possibly due to a lack of late flowering nectar sources along the route. The steep reduction in populations has the monarch butterfly being considered to be listed as an endangered or threatened species in 2019. Working together to revive this beautiful insect will benefit all of us.

David and his team are still looking for volunteers who have a corn or soybean field where approximately 30 potted milkweeds could be placed, a spacious garden or home site that could hold 30 milkweed plants, CRP fields planted in the pollinator mix (CP-42) approximately 2 years old and 4 acres in area, or CRP fields not planted in the pollinator mix. If you are interested in finding out more please email David Zaya at dza-ya1@illinois.edu or call 217-244-1946.

Women's Committee

June 11th

Business meeting at 9:30 a.m. at Smith House

****Lunch at Smith House in Tuscola****

The Champaign County Farm Bureau Women's Committee is open to all women members of the Farm Bureau. The women's committee meets every second Monday of the month (except May and October) at 9:30 a.m. with lunch to follow.

Next Meeting:

June 11

Mark Your Calendars! June 18th

6:30 PM

Kitchen Tips & Techniques with
Lisa Lewey-Shields

Open to all Farm Bureau Women

The Champaign County Farm Bureau Women's Committee will be at the "Playing it Safe", safety fair again this year! This is an annual free event and will take place on May 19th from 9:30 AM - 2 PM at the Leonhard Recreation Center, 2307 Sangamon Dr. Champaign, IL. The Women's Committee will be teaching rural road safety with their table-top display.

Marketing Update

By: Todd Hubbs, University of Illinois

Todd Hubbs is an agricultural economist specializing in commodity market analysis and risk management. His research focuses on commodity price analysis in the agricultural sector. He writes the Weekly Commodity Outlook for the farmdoc website that can be found every Monday at <http://farmdocdaily.illinois.edu/>. He received his doctorate in agricultural economics from Purdue University. Todd had the pleasure of being a professor at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and working in the farm economy branch at the Economic Research Service before coming to the University of Illinois.

Corn

A strengthening trend in corn consumption, lower corn acreage, and the developing production issues in South America signify a positive outlook for corn in 2018. The expectations for corn prices in the 2018 crop year hinge on lower production leading to decreased ending stocks in 2018-19. Domestic corn demand shows strength in exports, ethanol production, and other domestic uses. Corn exports presently lag the pace of last marketing year's 2.29 billion bushels and are projected at 2.25 billion bushels by the end of the current year. A change in trade policy holds the potential to impact corn exports over the next year. Worsening South American production and continued moderate prices signal growth in corn exports moving forward. Corn used for ethanol production during this marketing year continues to show tremendous consumption potential. An estimate of corn use for ethanol places use sits at 5.75 billion bushels. An expectation of small increases in gasoline consumption in 2018 and 2019 combined with growth in the ethanol trade balance provide support for corn use in ethanol. Feed and residual use is set to decline slightly next marketing year as the livestock herd comes down from recent levels. Planted acreage projections for corn sit at 88 million acres in 2018. Assuming a trend yield near 171.4 bushels would result in a 2018 crop near 13.8 billion bushels. A projected total use of 14.6 billion bushels would result in the 2018-19 marketing year ending stocks near 1.6 billion bushels, a decrease from 2017-18 projection of 2.1



billion bushels. Prices are expected to average near \$3.35 during the current marketing year and near \$3.80 during the 2018-19 marketing year.

Soybeans

Soybean prices received support from crop issues in Argentina, and lower than expected projected planted acreage in 2018 despite growing ending stocks. U.S. soybean ending stocks continue a pattern of growth with 2017-18 ending stocks projected at 555 million bushels. Ending stocks may increase as we move through the remainder of this marketing year due to a mixed picture of soybean demand. Weak export numbers driven by lower than expected exports to China set current projections at 2.065 billion bushels during this marketing year with the potential for further erosion as the year progresses. Soybean crush margins remain strong due to reduced production in Argentina. Expect to see growth in soybean crush over the next marketing year. Planted acreage of soybeans is projected to decrease moderately from last year to 89 million acres in 2018. A poor start to the planting season may see soybean acreage expansion and bears monitoring. A yield near 48.5 bushels would result in a 2018 crop at 4.3 billion bushels at current acreage levels. With total use projected at 4.2 billion bushels, a further increase in U.S. stocks is expected by the end of the 2018-19 marketing year. Prices are expected to average near \$9.40 during the current year and \$9.35 during the 2018-19 marketing year.



KIRK BULTA
Executive Director



MYLA MUNRO
Earth Partners Coordinator

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/CCFB_FOUNDATION

Farm Bureau Foundation Extends Scholarships to Area Students

Join Us in Congratulating Our 2018 Crop of CCFB Foundation Scholars!

Noah Benedict	Madison Mitchell
Emily Bluhm	Cole Mohr
Andrew Borbley	Megan Myerscough
Emma Carmien	Bailey Parks-Moore
Maddie Cender	Allie Place
Brookelyn Childers	Brent Pruitt
Max Daly	Matthew Raab
Lindsey Decker	Ashley Rice
Courtney Delaney	Reese Richardson
Kinze Ehmen	Calli Robinson
Jacob Felsman	Carson Robinson
JT Franey	Collin Rohl
Maddie Fugate	Morgan Rothermel
Stanley Godia	Josie Runck
Hannah Hires	Michael Sage
Grace Holben	Jacob Schluter
Sophia Hortin	Claire Smith
Alex Izard	Alayna Stalter
Andrew Johnson	Jenna Straub
Riley Knott	Kylie Terven
Brendan Kuhns	Maddie Wilson
Kristen Kurtz	Hannah Young



As demand for agricultural professionals grow, one in seventeen careers in Illinois are directly related to agriculture; and in Champaign County alone, the industry boasts an employment of nearly 2,800 residents. Driven to support an industry thirsty for agricultural professionals, the Champaign County Farm Bureau Foundation recently extended over \$60,000 in scholarships to Champaign County students.

The Foundation's 2018-2019 scholarship recipients will receive a minimum of \$1,000 scholarship to assist in defraying the rising cost of a college education. Scholars, college freshman through senior, will be honored at a scholarship luncheon in May.

Supporting students financially also encourages students to pursue a degree, and ultimately a career path, in agriculture. However; Foundation Executive Director Kirk Bulta says there's more to the Foundation's scholarship program than cash. "The relationship with our scholars doesn't end when the scholarship funds are deposited in their account. It's our goal to connect students with industry mentors and resources that impact the education, and career outlook, of our scholars." This is accomplished through a year-long, and perhaps life-long, connection between student and scholarship donor.

All 44 of this year's scholarship recipients are enrolled in an accredited college or university in an agricultural or food-related curriculum. Next fall, Foundation Scholars will study at 11 different colleges or Universities in five states.

Fisher Teacher Lends Voice to Ag Industry

By Jennifer Boberg, Fisher Ag Teacher & FFA Advisor

Every day, I see the importance and impact agriculture has on students. I constantly encounter misunderstandings about the agriculture industry in the classroom, at the grocery store, and from friends and family. We are facing a world with a disconnect between the agriculture industry and the general consumer. This is evident in our daily lives as we are bombarded with media and propaganda that often shows agriculture in a negative light.

I have been involved in agriculture since I joined FFA as a freshman in high school. I too had a lot of misconceptions about the industry, thinking agriculture was merely for farmers. I soon learned it was much more than that. If I had never taken an agriculture course and joined FFA in high school, I would have never understood the importance of agriculture to our daily lives. It provides us with food, clothing, and shelter that we need to survive. These necessities will continue to be of great importance as we move into an uncertain future. My passion for agriculture grew from there and I know the importance of educating people about this industry.

The Farm Bureau Foundation's Earth Partners Program excels at doing just that. I first became involved with Earth Partners while volunteering at education events with my sorority, Sigma Alpha, and the Agricultural Education Club at the University of Illinois. Now, I bring student volunteers from the Fisher FFA Chapter to teach lessons to Champaign County youth. Our chapter has also been involved in educating Fisher community youth with the Earth Partners in our Fisher Fair Farm Frenzy event, and teaching agriculture lessons during FFA week just a few weeks ago. This program has been very influential to the young members of Champaign County, as Earth Partners teaches about agriculture with a focus on production practices and informing kids about where their food comes from. Often, these students have had little to no experience with the agriculture



industry.

Earth Partners has also impacted the student volunteers, who gain invaluable experience in organizing lessons and public speaking. Through our Farm Frenzy event, students create their own lessons, practice them, and then present them to youth at the event. By creating these lessons, student volunteers are learning organizational and communication skills that shape them into excellent agricultural advocates. They will become the voice of the industry.

As a classroom teacher, I recognize the importance of educating our community on the topic of agriculture. Addressing misconceptions and connecting the consumer to agriculture will continue to be an essential step in growing the agricultural industry. The Earth Partners program is not only educating youth about the importance of agriculture, they are creating the set of agricultural advocates that we so desperately need as we look to the future of agriculture. Together, we can change the public's perspective on what we all consider to be part of daily life. Thank you to the Farm Bureau Foundation and Earth Partners for making it your priority to spark an interest in agriculture among the youth of Champaign County. Furthermore, thank you for allowing me and my students to partner with you in this journey.

Summer Teacher Workshop Turns Focus to Animal Science June 11-14, 2018

Each summer, Earth Partners offers a week long teacher workshop designed to increase our local teacher's knowledge of agriculture and help them incorporate agricultural education activities into existing curriculum. This year's Summer Ag Institute (SAI) will be held June 11-14, 2018 at Parkland College. The workshop, Advances in Animal Science, is designed to increase a teacher's knowledge of agriculture and also make them aware of the advancement of animal science through technology and innovation.

The workshop will be full of engaging programming that teachers can take back to their classrooms. Activities and resources shared throughout the week can be integrated into current curriculum while satisfying goals of Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards through hands-on lessons. Participants will also have the opportunity to tour Kilgus Farmstead, the Meat Science Laboratory and also the Poultry Research Farm on the campus of University of

Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Teachers will leave the workshop energized to bring agriculture into their classrooms through the resources we share!

Our SAI offers to teachers an opportunity to get 2 hours of graduate credit from University of St. Francis, as well as professional development hours.

For more information on the course or to request a registration packet, please call the Champaign County Farm Bureau Foundation Office or email Myla Munro, myla@ccfarmbureau.com.





**MARK THORNSBOROUGH,
GENERAL MANAGER**

Growing Season 2018

By: Dr. Howard Brown



seedling with a not-so-ready root system. Plants will express differences in their soil environment, such as traffic patterns, changes in organic matter, or areas of herbicide overlap (crop injury). A classic expression of this transitional period is “purple corn”. Sugar accumulates in the leaves during the day, but a lack of phosphorus uptake (used to make plant energy) creates a back-up of sugar. High leaf concentration of sugar triggers the pigment anthocyanin to temporarily be the dominant leaf pigment (red/purple), with the lower leaves expressing the color change. Normal plant color should return when the soils warm and root uptake of nutrients catch-up to plant demand. A cooler-than-expected early April will likely amplify this transitional stress, especially with corn-following-corn fields where all the N is knifed-in or side-dressed.

Uneven corn emergence may not be the result of uneven germination. Planting in a cooler-than-desired soil provides the opportunity for soil-borne pathogens or insects to injure the seed or young seedling. Injury to the endosperm, mesocotyl, and/or primary root system (seedling roots) will likely result in delayed early growth and uneven emergence. Dig up affected plants, wash the soil off of the young plant and look for evidence of infection or feeding. A seedling plant injured before nodal root development will have a compromised contribution to harvest yield. Look for chewing on plant parts above or below the seed as well as feeding or injury to the seed itself (loss of endosperm).

Spring-applied anhydrous ammonia into wet areas of a field may result in ammonia burn regardless of when it was applied. Applicator knives tend to cut through wet soils, leaving smeared sidewalls to the knife trench. The free space left by the knife is filled with ammonia gas. If the planter places the seed immediately above the knife trench free ammonia may escape into the seed zone, exposing the seed or young seedling roots to burn from free ammonia. Above ground symptoms usually appear in low, wet areas as uneven emergence. The primary and/or seminal root tips of affected plants will exhibit a brown discoloration, which essentially stops root development, slowing early growth. Although plants may survive injury, the plant’s contribution to harvest yield may be compromised. Spring-applied anhydrous ammonia should be offset from the planted row (guidance) or applied at an angle to the direction of planting to minimize the number of plants exposed to free ammonia from sidewall compaction.

Soybeans respond to soil residual N even though they are a legume (can fix N through a plant/bacteria symbiotic relationship). Nitrogen-fixing nodules will start providing the soybean plant N approximately two weeks following emergence. Until then, the plant relies on residual soil N until fixation is initiated.

High 2017 yields and a cold Spring has left soils with a minimal amount of N for crop utilization. Expect to see light green colored soybean fields early into the 2018 growing season. Illini FS has 10 On-Farm Discovery Trials with local farmers to test the value of nitrogen management for soybeans. We anticipate a significant early growth and color response to our treatments. All trials will be sampled for plant-available N throughout the growing season (N-TRACKER) and harvest yield will be recorded. Harvest yield and the Return-on-Investment will be included as part of the report.

Pythium is an early-season pathogen that tends to attack most planted seeds, whether corn or soybean. It is considered a water mold and requires saturated soil conditions to infect the seed or young seedling (swims to the site of infection). The disease is favored by saturated soil conditions coupled with soil temperatures at or below 50° F. Infected plants may emerge and die or die prior to emergence. Infected plants will have a water-soaked rotting appearance.



N-TRACKER is a N management tool that provides a window into the soil to watch the behavior (dynamics) of plant-available N over time. Over 95% of the N found in our soils is bound organically, making it unavailable to the plant. It takes soil microbial activity to release organically-bound N into a plant-available form. Since microbial activity fluctuates according to environmental conditions, the soil’s N contribution can be quite variable with each growing season. What is applied can also be acted upon by soil biology, making it nearly impossible to accurately model N dynamics over time (unique growing environment each year). Characterizing the dynamics of N at a point over time provides a way inventory, track and verify the amount of plant-available N in the upper two feet of the soil profile.

Plant-available N is not just nitrate-N, it includes ammonium-N. Both need to be tracked as we enter and move through the growing season. Plant-available N is not just about detecting nitrate-N in the upper foot of the soil profile, it is about the combined concentration of ammonium and nitrate-N detected in the upper two feet, the area from which water is extracted by the plants and the soil volume that is primarily explored by plant roots. The predominant form (nitrate or ammonium-N) as well as the position (0-1 ft. or 1-2 ft.) provide information that may help make better N management decisions.

The concept of N-TRACKER was first conceived in 2009 when some farmers in Southern Illinois were told they needed to re-apply nitrogen for their

crop following a wet 2-week period. They had applied anhydrous ammonia within seven days of the rains and were ready to re-apply N once the soil dried (close to 3 weeks later). A way to quantify the amount of plant-available N in the upper soil profile was created by Dr. Howard Brown, Manager of Agronomy Services for GROWMARK, Inc. The new testing tool identified the injection band and estimated there was still plenty of plant-available N in the upper soil profile at the site tested, giving farmers some comfort that their N was not lost. Some farmers applied supplemental N strips to check the outcome of the test and no yield difference was detected. Dr. Brown thought that if farmers could use a test to estimate the amount of plant-available N at a point-in-time with confidence, why not use the test to detect the behavior of plant-available N at a point over time. The new tool could provide a window into the soil to watch the behavior of plant-available N and help make N management decisions.... the birth of tracking plant-available N. There are over 160 N-TRACKER Sites across a five-county area in 2018. Soil samples collected are also being tested for other essential nutrients. The result of our nutrient discovery program is a topic to be shared later this year. It is exciting to review the data as it is logged and it will be more exciting to summarize the data (when time allows).

N-TRACKER is just a point in the field. It can be debated that it is only a point and does little to account for field variability. However, after developing and improving sampling protocol and data interpretation over the past five years, collecting several samples in the same field and watching changes in plant-availability, the tool can make a valuable contribution to improving N management decisions. Still not convinced? Give N-TRACKER a try and evaluate the tool yourself. The cost is minimal compared to the contribution it can make to help manage the 2nd greatest input cost, nitrogen. Visit with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist for more information or to sign-up for a N-TRACKER Site.



Illini FS has over 30 On-Farm Discovery Trials with local farmers that will address specific questions ranging from crop response to sulfur, zinc and/or boron to Pursuit of High Yield Trials for both corn and soybeans, including the economics of pursuing higher yield levels. Visit with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist for more information about our On-Farm Discovery Trials and to sign-up for the 2018 GROWMARK Mi-Field Summary of the FS System’s in-field trials from across Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin.

Planted corn seeds need approximately 110 Growing Degree Units (GDUs) to emerge, assuming the soil is warm enough for seed germination at the time of planting. Growing Degree Units are calculated by subtracting 50 from the average of the daily high and low temperature. The upper temperature limit is 86° F and the lower limit is 50° F. It is assumed that plants will not grow any faster above the upper limit and will not grow any slower below the lower limit.

A corn plant has two root systems, primary and secondary. The primary system is initiated upon germination. It is comprised of a radicle (first thing to emerge from the seed upon germination) and some seminal roots originating from the seed as well. The purpose of this initial root system is water uptake, although some nutrients enter the plant with soil water. Energy needed to develop the primary root system and the first 2-3 leaves originates from the seed’s stored food (endosperm). The secondary or nodal root system (also referred to as the permanent root system), appears soon after the first true leaf is extended and takes over the role of plant support when 3 leaves are fully extended (V3). The primary root system, although still attached beneath the secondary root system, is no longer significant once the secondary root system supports the plant.

The depth that the corn plant’s secondary root system is established is not based upon planting depth as long as the seed is planted more than 1-inch deep. Once germination occurs, the plants growing point is pushed toward the soil surface by extension of the mesocotyl. Once the tip of the seedling spear (coleoptile) sees light, the mesocotyl ceases to elongate and the protective coleoptile ruptures allowing the rolled leaves inside to unfurl above ground. The length of the coleoptile is about ½ to ¾ inch in length, placing the secondary root system at the same approximate depth regardless of how deep it is planted. Secondary root systems of plants placed less than ¾-inch deep will be established closer-than-desired to the soil surface, possibly delaying plant development, especially during dry periods.

The plant is under a significant amount of stress when the seed no longer provides energy to the developing seedling and it transitions from the primary to the secondary root system. Cold nights cause cool soils which delays root development leaving the



Nathan Hubbard
COUNTRY Financial
Agency Manager



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SPOTLIGHT

Dawn Babb



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328-0023



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Keith Garrett
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Jessie DeHaan
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Stan Ochs
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Terry Hill
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Jim Nelson
892-4479



Dawn Babb is the newest member of Champaign County's Country Financial team located at 426 East Champaign Avenue in Rantoul. Dawn is a Rantoul native who moved back home a few years ago after spending 13 years in Surprise, Arizona. She might miss the Arizona weather, but couldn't pass up the opportunity to move back to Illinois to watch her niece and nephews grow up. Dawn grew up on a farm in the Rantoul area and is still involved with her family farm operation, helping out when the chance arises. Dawn made a career change and joined COUNTRY Financial at the beginning of 2018. She worked in the service department at Sullivan-Parkhill Automotive for the past 5 years and an automobile dealership in Arizona prior to that.

Trying to fill big shoes left by her predecessors, Dawn has been tackling several tasks that make each work day fun and unique. Dawn has been spending time introducing herself to clients, getting reacquainted with people she hasn't seen in a long time, attending training sessions, and becoming familiar with COUNTRY Financial's team of experts dedicated to offering clients the best possible options. Dawn says her best piece of advice for new and existing clients is, "to express all of your needs and ask questions. It is my job to intently listen, ask the right questions to correctly understand the client's situation and uncover any gaps/needs not currently being met. I am able to work with the team of specialists at COUNTRY to verify I am offering our client's the most suitable options for insurance and investment products. When clients leave my office, I want them to know I have their best interest in mind and am working hard to create a plan for them, making sure they feel secure in their choices. Nothing is too big or too small to talk about. COUNTRY Financial is a great company offering so many solutions to life's constant state of change. It's important to sit down every year to review policies- goals change, farm equipment changes, family needs change! An annual review helps COUNTRY Financial provide the best life experience possible for our clients."

COUNTRY Financial Representatives are constantly learning as the industry constantly changes. Dawn says, "I am enjoying the process of learning and how to best utilize the tools and resources that COUNTRY Financial provides." COUNTRY offers solutions for all of a person's risks in regards to insurance and great options for financial security. In the beginning of Dawn's career with COUNTRY Financial a peer gave her great advice about COUNTRY's role in a client's life saying "We are here to help client's get their financial house in order."

An Illinois girl at heart, Dawn attended Rantoul Township High School, played softball at Illinois State University, and also studied at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. She enjoys golfing, hiking, and spending quality time with friends and family. Back home in Central Illinois Dawn says, "I love being back in this close-knit community surrounded by so many familiar faces."



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Scott Jackson
359-9335



Dawn Babb
892-4479



Andrew Deedrich
359-3941

Join the Prime Timers!
May 10 starting at 10 a.m.

Speaker: Trent Reeves

Illinois Conservation Police

Music: Marvin Lee



Gerald Henry, Prime Timers Chairman

- Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month

- Cost is \$8 to attend

- Call 352-5235 ahead of each meeting to reserve your spot

Mark your calendar - Don't miss a single Prime Timer date!

Prime Timers 2018:

June 14

July 12

August 9

Illinois Farm Bureau & Affiliates Youth Conference Experiences



Kia Freese, Unity FFA

The lessons I learned at this years FBYC will stick with me forever. The message Amberley Snyder gave impacted me the most. Amberley rode horses all her life and was very good at

competing. When she was only 18, she rolled her truck and ended up paralyzed from the waist down. Her main message about her story was that life will give you many options and paths to go down. You are able to pick some things but ultimately, you do not get to choose. From there, it is not about how you handle the situation but your attitude towards it. If something bad happens to change your life, if you have a bad attitude, it is going to make your life miserable. Instead, if you pick yourself up and make the best with what you got, your life will be enjoyable. Her message is very important in life and how you handle situations. No matter how small or large the thing is, your attitude can really change your viewpoint on it in order to better yourself.

Kia Freese

Kaitlin Marry, Fisher FFA

This April I got the privilege to attend the Farm Bureau Youth conference. It was an experience I will never forget. Throughout the conference I was able to make many connections with future colleges as well as learn more about agriculture companies that I may someday work for. I also had the opportunity to speak with other chapters and made some lifelong friends along the way. My favorite part of the conference was the break out sessions where we got to learn an aspect either about leadership or companies within agriculture. My favorite session was the cooperative learning session where we got information on what co-ops are and how they benefit the community. We got to design our own startup co-ops and pitch them to the rest of the group. It was a great learning experience for me because I have never had to deal with the business side of agriculture. I learned that I really like the creative aspect of business and was inspired to start my own cooperative through FFA in my community. Overall this conference is an experience that I am really grateful to have experienced and will be recommending to the my younger members

Thank you again for taking us to this wonderful conference. Sincerely,

Kaitlin Marry



Sarah Meneley, Unity FFA

While at FBYC I had many opportunities to be build my leadership skills and be BOLD. (Being BOLD was the main idea this year for our state meetings).Throughout the course of a few days I was able to attend many hands on sessions. They all taught me different things like how to budget, how to work as a team, and how to advertise. Each session had a group discussion and a game that went along with the topic. The minute-to-win-it discussion taught us that to be able to inform others through media about what is going on in agriculture that we had to do it in less than 6 seconds because that is the average time span that someone looks at a post for. We also need to make it interesting so that while someone is scrolling through their phone they want to stop and see what the post is about. The session called life taught us that whatever hand we are dealt with in life we need to be able budget our money and plan for emergencies. There was also a session were we had to work as a team to obtain an object out of a box that was locked up in several places. We had to be able to go through a bunch of clues that would lead us closer to our goal of unlocking the box. To be able to do this though we had to as team and carefully look through and examine each piece of evidence. Through all of these sessions I was able to meet new people and get out of my comfort zone and be BOLD.

One session stuck out in particular though and will stick with me for the rest of my life. A fire marshal named Doc spoke with us about his life experiences and how he has overcome adversity. Throughout his life he was told that he could not do things because of his race, when he was hired at a fire station many of his coworkers had made racist jokes about him. They said he would not last long there and would soon quit. He was able to overcome that by being BOLD. He was the first African American to work at both of the fire stations he worked at during his time as a fire marshal. Not only that but he also was promoted to captain and lead his team honorably. He once was told that he was a crappy captain because he burnt the entire house down because the wind was so bad. His response was “ Ifbeing a bad captain means the my crew goes home every night than I am ok with that” . This is only a small example of him overcoming adversity. His story will encourage me to be a brave and BOLD leader. He now get to travel around the world and speak in front of large crowds of people.

Sarah Meneley



Abby Schlueter, St. Joseph-Ogden FFA

Farm Bureau Youth Conference 2018 was an amazing experience that taught me so much about being a leader and communicating effectively. The conference opened my eyes to several possible schools and careers for my future during the Opportunity fair that was held on the first day. I was able to meet so many FFA members from all over the state as well as catch up with a few friends that I had met at other conferences and conventions.

My favorite part of the conference was the team challenge. In this activity our team had to create a new product from an old object. We had several common resources like tape, construction paper, and balloons to use to help enhance our starting object. This activity helped us to get to know people on our teams better as well as feed our creativity and leadership skills. After we had created a new product, we had to give a two minute “infomercial” to market that product. My team’s invention, the Pin Palace, was marketed directly to FFA members and our infomercial was a true showstopper. Our team leader even did a backflip during our presentation.

I’m so happy to have been able to attend the Farm Bureau Youth Conference. It truly was a once in a lifetime experience that will continue to affect my leadership as I transfer back into my chapter. I hope that anyone who has the opportunity to attend this conference will take the leap. I promise, even if it seems daunting at first, the rewards you take home far outweigh the risks. ~Abby Schlueter, St. Joseph-Ogden FFA



Bethany Musick, Fisher FFA

This April I had the opportunity to attend the 2018 Farm Bureau Youth Conference in East Peoria. This conference is an excellent way to meet more students my age in FFA, grow deeper in my knowledge of leadership and career success, and network with companies and colleges around the area. My favorite workshop was the budgeting workshop with Country Financial. It was very helpful in making me more aware of what my realistic monthly expenses will look like and how I can plan ahead to ensure financial stability. This conference is perfect for any students looking to get more insight into personal development and for the chance to meet other students that can quickly turn into friends. Thank you to the Farm Bureau and all the sponsors and speakers for putting this great event together and to the Champaign County Farm Bureau for graciously driving us to and from the event. Your support and dedication is irreplaceable!

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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2018 IFB FARM INCOME AND INNOVATIONS CONFERENCE

Wednesday, August 1, 8:30 am - 3:45 pm
Normal Marriott Hotel & Conference Center
201 Broadway St., Normal, IL 61761

PRE-CONFERENCE EVENT

Tuesday, July 31 - 5-8 pm
Registered conference attendees
are invited to attend

Leadership Reception & Keynote Speaker TBA
Normal Marriott Hotel & Conference Center
Conference Registration opens in June.

Summer Job!



WHO: Anyone 14 years of age or older

WHAT: Pollinating, plot maintenance, data collection, disease inoculation, etc.

WHERE: Our Sweet Corn research fields just south of Savoy in Tolono, IL

WHEN: Late June through early August, must be available to work weekends in July

- Wages starting at \$8.25 + time-and-a-half for overtime
- Accommodating of summer camps
- No experience necessary
- Prizes awarded for working weekends!
- FREE sweet corn!



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CHRISTMAS IN BRANSON 2018

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU

NOVEMBER 2ND THRU NOVEMBER 5TH

11-2-18 8:00AM DEPART CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FB OFFICE

STOP FOR LUNCH AT SULLIVAN MO. THEN STOP AT ST JAMES WINERY

CHECK INTO DUTTON'S INN IN BRANSON

6:00PM DINNER AT GRAND COUNTRY BUFFET

8:00 DUTTONS SHOW



11-3-18 10:00AM TEXAS TENORS AT ANY WILLIAMS THEATRE



LUNCH ON YOUR OWN, 2:00PM DANIEL O'DONNELL

5:00PM DINNER AT JACKIE B GOODES UPTOWN DINER

7:30PM SAMSON AT SIGHT AND SOUND THEATRE:



11-4-18 LEISURELY MORNING

LUNCH ON YOU OWN

2:00PM NUMBER 1 HITS OF 60'S AND 50'S TOO



5:30PM DINNER AT GOLDEN CORRAL

7:30PM CLAY COOPER AT CLAY COOPER THEATRE:



11-5-18 BREAKFAST AT HOTEL THEN DEPART FOR HOME

STOP AND GET YOUR CHOCOLATE/SUGAR FIX AT RUSSELL STOVER'S
OUTLET. STOP FOR LUNCH (ON YOUR OWN) THEN RETURN BACK TO CHAMPAIGN
FARM BUREAU OFFICE.

Cost per person : \$527.00 per person DB - \$627.00 per person SGLE

Trip includes: Transportation, lodging, 5 meals and 6 shows

Deadline: September 28,2018

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2ND PLACE: \$10

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