

# Farm Family Resource Initiative

Over the past few years, especially since the pandemic began, the topic of mental health has become even more important in our daily lives. Constant change, constant stress, and constant unknowns have left many people feeling depressed or extremely stressed out to the point it might affect their health. Farmers and those involved in agriculture face these challenges too and are not immune. Help is here and it’s only a phone call away.

Champaign County farm families and others involved in agriculture now have a resource to help them when feeling overwhelmed, stressed out, or in crisis. The Farm Family Resource Initiative is here to help and has expanded statewide. In 2020, Senator Scott Bennett (D-Champaign) led the charge to fund the Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI), which created a network of support and resources including a helpline to assist with farmer, and farm-related issues that include mental and physical health needs. The initial program started by serving Illinois farm families in six counties: Christian, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Morgan, and Sangamon.

Success with the program



Karen Stallman  
Ag Resource Specialist

and more funding has led to the development of a statewide program. The Illinois Department of Agriculture and the SIU School of Medicine’s Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development are now partnering with the University of Illinois Extension to bring programs to all Illinoisans involved in agriculture. Program services currently include a helpline (1-833-FARM-SOS) that connects farmers to health professionals, webinars, and online resources.

Karen Stallman, FFRI’s Ag Resource Specialist, was featured on a 2021 CCFB Virtual Meeting (available for viewing at [www.ccfarmbureau.com](http://www.ccfarmbureau.com)) discussing the program at length. One take-away from the virtual meeting was

Karen’s excitement about the program’s growth including the creation of a texting and email option for users to get help. FFRI hopes to have the texting/email option up and running by this spring so users have another way to seek help. According to Karen, “FFRI contracts with Memorial Behavioral Health in Springfield, IL. The call center is staffed by bachelor and master level mental health professionals who are available 24/7.” This means you are talking to people living in Illinois who can relate to the local economy, weather, COVID statistics, and other daily stressors that might be specific to Illinois.

Utilizing the services offered by FFRI is simple and free as Karen points out, “We have offered educational webinars, a monthly blog, resources on our website [siumed.edu/farm](http://siumed.edu/farm), and the helpline. Less than 100 calls have been called in since the helpline’s launch. It is now statewide so we expect more. Hundreds have accessed our information and resources online. We had several calls right before the holidays but calls dropped off in December.”

Constant change and many unknowns can lead to feeling stressed out and worried daily. Karen, living on a farm in southern Illinois, is ready to tackle many of the stress-

ors on the horizon specific to farm families saying, “Covid continues to impact families which results in strains in relationship and economics. Right now tax season is always stressful for farmers. Going into spring planting the stress of input costs and availability of supplies/equipment/parts are also heavy stressors.”

Many stressful issues facing those in agriculture. Please check on friends, family members, and neighbors throughout this season. Spread the word about the Farm Family Resource Initiative and encourage others to reach out and talk to someone! It’s free, it’s confidential, and it may save the life of you or someone you know!

1-833-FARM-SOS



**1-833-FARM-SOS** (1-833-327-6767)

FREE | CONFIDENTIAL | 24/7  
**SOMEONE YOU CAN TALK TO**

Someone is always here to listen. Anytime. Anywhere. We know the struggles of farming and are here to help.

Visit [siumed.org/farm](http://siumed.org/farm) for additional mental health support and resources for Illinois farm families.

**Additional Crisis hotlines:**  
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255  
Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 74741






**FEBRUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> AT 8 AM**  
**CHAMPAIGN CFB\***  
Hosted by: Champaign County Farm Bureau

Champaign County Farm Bureau  
Breakfast at 7:30 am  
Register by Feb 17, 2022

Learn more about trucking regulations to help you stay legal and safe when you hit the road.

Attendance is open to all Illinois Farm Bureau Members  
REGISTRATION OPENS MON., JAN. 17TH.  
Please contact your local County Farm Bureau to register.  
\*Virtual option available





# February Report



Paul Hunsinger, CCFB President

## President, Paul Hunsinger

Well we got the new year off to a good start with January. It sure has gone by fast. One of the topics I talk about a lot is Waters of the US. This topic is very important to us as farmers because it will directly impact how we farm and take care of the land that we so deeply care for. The newly proposed rulings will greatly over step how the government can regulate water, wherever it is. The Illinois Farm Bureau has put out another Call to Action for opposition letters. If you haven't signed up to be a part of this program please do. To sign up all you have to do is text "FARM" to 52886 or go to the Illinois Farm Bureau website and sign up for FB ACT. With the FB ACT program, IFB already has the letter composed and all you have to do is sign it and it will be sent to your local legislators.

Hope everyone stays warm and safe this month!

Sincerely,  
Paul Hunsinger

## CCFB Calendar of Events February 2022

February 10	Prime Timers	10 a.m.
February 14	Women's Committee	9:30 a.m.
February 15	Governmental Affairs	7:30 a.m.
February 17	Full Board	6:30 p.m.

## FOR SALE

48 ft Willrich Field Cultivator  
\$8000  
Call 217-202-7143

## Prime Timers Meeting

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

by February 7

Call the CCFB Office 217-352-5235

Meeting Date: February 10 at 10 a.m.

Program-Colin Vaughan, DNR Conservation Officer

Entertainment – David Fulton

Meal cost: \$8 per person

Important changes

### • FRIED CHICKEN BUFFET IS BACK

- Masks are required in the building.
- No walk-ins.
- Call to reserve your spot.

## WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

The Champaign County Farm Bureau Women's Committee is open to all women interested in agriculture.

### \*\*SCHEDULE OF EVENTS\*\*

February 14th – General Meeting  
9:30 a.m.

Featured Speaker

Alli Donald, atHome

with Clark-Lindsey Director

speaking about an overview of homeware

Lunch following at Olive Garden, Champaign

## WINTER AGRIBUSINESS SEMINAR –Virtual Option

COUNTRY Financial®, Illinois Farm Bureau Keep Farmers Updated on Improved Opportunities to Protect Farm & Crops in 2022

There is always uncertainty around what spring, summer and fall may bring. COUNTRY Financial® and Illinois Farm Bureau remain ready to assist farmers through every season. The organizations are again teaming up for regional meetings across Illinois to share updates on improved opportunities for farmers to protect their farms and crops in 2022.

There will be one more virtual presentation on February 9.

Meeting will include:

- Crop Insurance Update, including changes to federal crop insurance and new private products offered by COUNTRY, the #1 crop hail insurer in Illinois. (Doug Yoder, Crop Agency Manager for COUNTRY Financial)
- Crop Claims Update (COUNTRY Financial Crop Claims Representative)
- Market Outlook (Tim Tresslar, Grain Origination Manager for Growmark)
- Legislative Update (Illinois Farm Bureau)
- Opportunity for Audience Q&A with presenters

Contact the Champaign County Farm Bureau or visit on [ilfb.org/was](http://ilfb.org/was) to register today.



Join us in

# CELEBRATING NATIONAL FFA WEEK!

FEBRUARY 19-26, 2022






# Maggi's Membership Corner

By Maggi Maxstadt, CCFB Membership & Outreach Coordinator

Hello, hello, Farm Bureau members!

The Champaign County Farm Bureau held its 110th Annual Meeting at the end of January. The board elected new township directors, approved minutes from the 2021 annual meeting, and reviewed the events from the previous year. We will say “hello!” to our new board members in the next edition of the CCFB News.

February means the start of our meetings and programs for the year. Nearly all committees are meeting this month! You can find more information about each committee on our website at: [ccfarmbureau.com/get-involved](http://ccfarmbureau.com/get-involved). Check out page two for the dates and times of the Women’s Committee, Prime Timers, Governmental Affairs, and the board.

On February 24th, CCFB will host a Rules of the Road seminar in person and virtually! Look at the flier on page 1 for more details.

In 2022, we are celebrating the 100th edition of the Champaign Farm

Bureau News! Each month we are looking back at what Farm Bureau was doing throughout the history of the paper.

One thing CCFB has done for many years is Farm Bureau trips! Brenda has been working hard to organize, schedule, and finalize the details for each of the seven trips throughout 2022. You can find more information about all of the trips on page 8. The first one is in March, so be sure to book with Brenda or me soon!

As always, thank you for being a Champaign Farm Bureau member!



## A Look Back – 100 Volumes of CCFB History

2022 brings with it the 100th volume (referring to the number of years in publication) of the Champaign County Farm Bureau Newsletter! Throughout the upcoming year the Champaign County Farm Bureau is going to take a look back at past newsletters and reflect on the events, photos, and articles that made headlines.

**25 Years Ago – February 1997** – Front page news featured an *Alternative Crops and Marketing Program* brought to members by the Cooperative Extension Service and the Champaign County Farm Bureau. The article still rings true in 2022 as it states, “Rents are going up. Prices for the crops sure aren’t what we had hoped. All of this helps to squeeze profit margins even tighter. How many times have you thought about raising something besides corn and soybeans? How many of you have thought, about raising some specialty crops because you hear of revenue in the \$5,000 to \$6,000 per acre range? Interest in specialty crops is increasing in our area.”

**50 Years Ago – February 1972** – *Comedian Harry “King” Cole Entertains* was one of the featured photos in this month’s newsletter as members would converge at the county annual meeting. “Champaign County FS Inc. and Champaign County Farm Bureau are indeed fortunate to secure leading comedian, Harry “King” Cole, for entertainment during the planned annual meeting. Harry is recognized not only nationally but internationally, for his talent has taken him to many foreign countries having performed in excess of 225 shows, flew over 100 thousand miles, and received special citations from both the U.S. and foreign governments for his morale building activities.” Many of you may recognize Harry “King” Cole from his time on the TV show *Hee Haw*.



**75 Years Ago – February 1947** – This month’s newsletter featured a photo of the Executive Committee at CCFB’s 35th Annual Meeting.

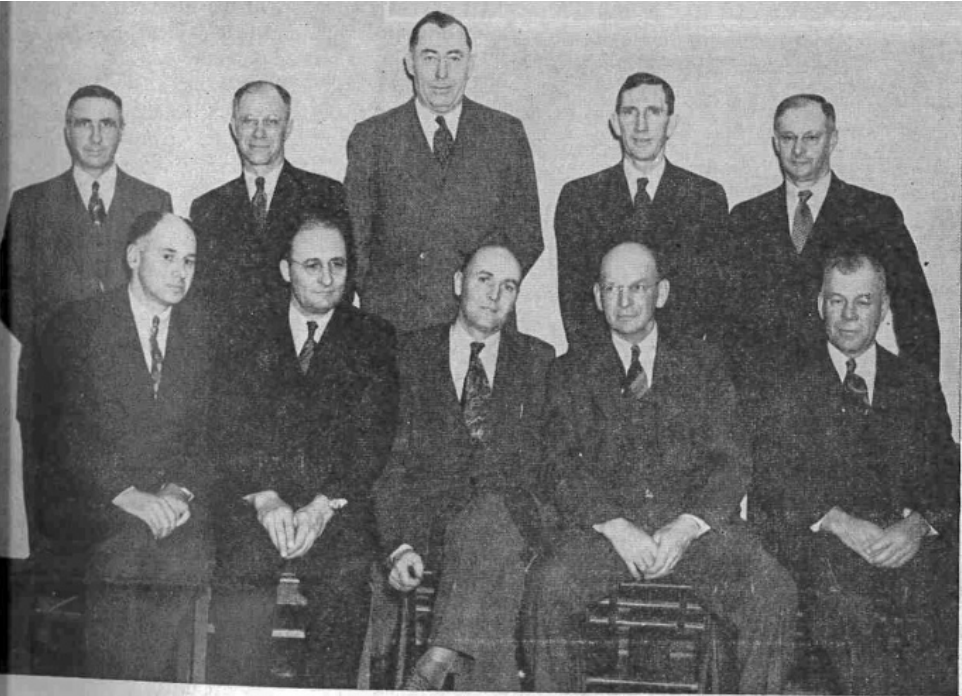


Photo — Joe Blessman, News-Gazette

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

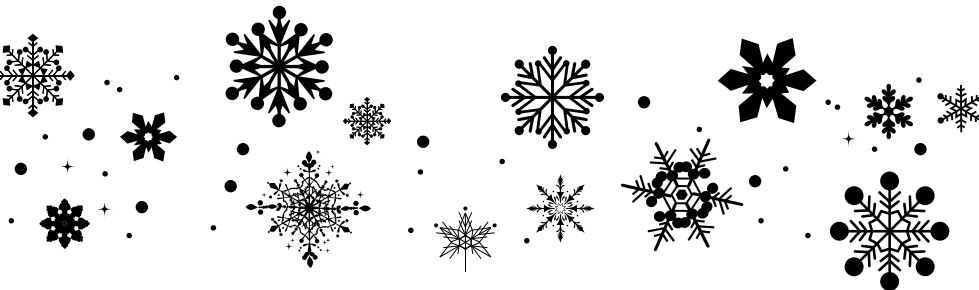
Reading from left to right, Seated: Orville Leischner, 2nd Vice-President; George Maxwell, 1st Vice-President; E. C. Herriott, President; H. F. Love, Secretary; and H. J. Eichhorst, Treasurer. Standing: W. E. Green; Luther Bickers; Roy Douglas; George W. Mayes; and Clark E. Wise—Directors. Roy V. Edwards absent.

**91 Years Ago – February 1931** – A look back at this month in history had many Illinoisans facing a possible wave of a measles outbreak. The headline is similar to something you might read in today’s paper as it sounds the alarm, *Measles Epidemic Probable*. The article is warning members to get ready for an outbreak and begins, “The next few weeks probably will bring to Illinois an epidemic wave of measles. Prevalence of this disease was unusually low in 1930. Low prevalence years are almost always followed by high prevalence years. Furthermore, disease reports have increased rapidly since the middle of November. A community-wide outbreak has already swept Jacksonville, extending well out into Morgan County and sharp epidemics have developed in St. Clair and Vermilion Counties. Case reports in general now average 500 weekly.”

A photo on the front cover of the February 1931 issue highlighted members in the District Play Tournament.



Champaign County was represented in the District Play Tournament by the group from the Scott Unit. The above picture is one of the casts in action. From left to right they are: Gwendolyn Cain, Donald Teare, and Mrs. Fred Wendt.





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# Ag in the Classroom

## Sigma Alpha Partnership

Partnerships, isn't that what agriculture is all about? Ag in the Classroom has partnered with the Sigma Alpha Sorority on the U of I campus for the last six years. The sorority's national philanthropy is Agriculture in the Community, allowing members to give back and spread the word about agriculture. If you put that with the Foundation's mission to communicate the importance of agriculture to our community, it can be a powerful way to reach the students in Champaign County.

This semester, Taylor Talbert and Hannah Tappendorf will be serving as the Ag in the Classroom co-chairs. Their collaboration will increase our ability to reach students in our county with engaging, accurate, and hands-on lessons.



Sigma Alpha  
SORORITY

## District IV Coordinator Meeting

In December, Ag in the Classroom hosted a professional development event for District IV coordinators. Coordinators met with Professor Jill Craft, Chef Carter Phillips, and Jedi Brown, Food Service Administrator in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at the College of ACES. Each presentation showed how students and faculty are working to promote a safe, nutritious, accessible, and affordable food supply that will meet our needs now and in the future.



## New Ag Mag Available NOW



SCAN ME

Connect with me! sarah@ccfarmbureau.com



Mrs. Kaper's  
Classroom



Champaign County  
Ag in the Classroom

Over  
EDGE  
Champaign-Urbana

Join Us!

Friday - April 1, 2022

Hendrick House  
904 W. Green - Urbana, IL



Have you always wondered what it would be to rappel down the side of a building like a superhero?

**Here's your chance! Don't Miss It!**

Spots are limited so don't wait!

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN**

Extremely Safe - No Experience Necessary  
No Age Limitations - Must Weigh 100-300 lbs  
Individual or Team Participation



[www.OverTheEdgeCU.com](http://www.OverTheEdgeCU.com)



All About...

**Hendrick House**

Our Building Partner for  
Over the Edge CU



Hendrick House is a University of Illinois Private Certified Student Housing Facility located at 904 W. Green Street at the corner of the UI campus. Owned and operated by the Hendrick family for 70 years, Hendrick house is committed to providing students with the academic environment and personal living experience that they need to succeed.

Hendrick House is well-known for its great food all over campus and around the CU area. In addition to providing its residents with top-notch dining, Hendrick House has provided food service to other privately owned residence halls, fraternities, sororities, and private catering clients for over 25 years.

A key feature of Hendrick House food services includes fresh seasonal produce produced at their 10 acre farm and rooftop garden. Through the farm they provide seasonal organic produce to the residents of Hendrick house, contracted catering clients, and those eating at Betsy's Bistro locations. Hendrick House also offers a community supported agriculture (CSA) program. In the CSA program customers (members) "buy in" to the farm, paying an upfront cost for weekly or every-other-week fresh boxed vegetables June through October.

The Champaign County Farm Bureau Foundation is proud to be partnered with Hendrick House for Over the Edge CU! For more information about Hendrick House residences, dining services, or their CSA program visit their website: [www.HendrickHouse.com](http://www.HendrickHouse.com)

## Mark Your Calendar!

April 1, 2022

**Over the Edge CU**  
Hendrick House - Urbana, IL



June 17, 2022

**CCFB Foundation Annual Gala**  
Pear Tree Estate - Champaign, IL



August 4, 2022

**Golf FORE Ag**  
UI Golf Course - Champaign, IL







**Nathan Hubbard**  
COUNTRY Financial  
Agency Manager



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**Keith Garrett**  
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469-9800



**Jim Nelson**  
892-4479



## Taboo Topics: It's OK to Admit You Don't Know Everything About Money

by Carrie Skogsberg, [countryfinancial.com](http://countryfinancial.com)

Do your kids often ask questions you don't have the answers to? Questions like, "Why is the sky blue?" "Are aliens real?" Or, "How does investing work?"

You may turn to search engines or a smart app for the answer, or do what many parents do – change the subject and avoid the answer altogether. If "avoiding" is your strategy, you're not alone, especially when it comes to talking about money with your kids.

A recent COUNTRY Financial survey found that parents of kids under age 21 lack confidence in a number of personal finance topics, with nearly half rating their level of financial literacy at a grade C or lower. But who do Americans say they go to for questions about personal finance? More than half say their parents.

12% Give their financial literacy an A



An underwhelming report card.

### Honesty is the best policy.

"Parents are a safe place we can go to ask questions and not feel judgment," says Tim Harris, Vice President of Agency at COUNTRY Financial.

"But, according to the survey results, parents admit they don't have all the answers.

"It's not surprising that many Americans don't feel confident in many areas of personal finance. More than half (52%) of Americans say they didn't receive any financial education in grades K-12 or in college, and only 15% of those surveyed said they felt "very prepared" to handle their finances when entering adulthood.

Simple steps to educate yourself on money matters

Aside from your parents, who do you trust when it comes to talking about sensitive subjects like money? Harris suggests getting a gut check from Mom and Dad first, but then getting a second opinion from trusted friends, coworkers or your financial representative. "Most industry professionals will have intense training to help individuals define their financial goals and lay out a plan for success," says Harris. "Start by asking your friends or a trusted coworker for referrals to resources that helped them."

What's the worst thing to do? Letting your lack of knowledge paralyze you. "It's a cycle we see often," says Harris. "Parents don't want to admit what they don't know, so they don't teach their kids, and it continues on and on."



**Rhonda Wagner**  
Administrative Assistant  
Champaign Agency



**Bret Kroenke**  
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**Kolby Jackson**  
586-5030



**Chris Greenwold**  
355-8675



**Dan Duitsman**  
469-2033



**David Palmer**  
352-3341



**Austin Beaty**  
352-0012



**Steve Derry**  
352-2655



**Aaron Wheeler**  
586-6170



**Nate Lovekamp**  
352-0012



**Scott Jackson**  
359-9335



**Dawn Babb**  
892-4479



**Andrew Deedrich**  
359-3941





**KORY KRAUS,  
GENERAL MANAGER**

# From The Field

by Dr. Howard Brown

## NITROGEN MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Knowing the timing and amount of rain events in 2022 would provide enough information on when to apply the corn crop’s nitrogen (N) requirement with one application. However, since the weather remains an unknown, planning for multiple applications utilizing different sources, times of application, and placement is the best defense to minimize N loss, maximizing utilization.

**Start with a reasonable estimate of the amount of N required.** Nitrogen is the second greatest input cost in corn production and primary concern for water and air quality when not utilized. It makes sense to focus on its management from both an economic and environmental perspective. Start with the N Rate Calculator to establish a baseline application rate (<http://cnrc.agron.iastate.edu/>). The calculator was developed by seven Midwest Land Grant University nutrient research specialists and is based on local N Rate Studies over the past ten years. Use the calculator even if Fall N has already been applied. The N Rate Calculator considers the price of corn and the cost of N. The recommended N rate is determined by how much additional N will be needed to generate another bushel of corn. Use the number generated by the calculator simply as a starting point for an N Management Strategy. Visit the website, follow the instructions, and give it a try.

**Nitrogen rates in 2022 should be lower than 2021** due to the increased cost of N. There is a significant difference between maximizing and optimizing when it comes to N costs. Corn marketed for \$5.00 will buy 10 pounds of N at \$.50/pound N but only 5 ½ pounds at \$.91/pound. If the amount of N required to gain an additional bushel exceeds the pounds of N covered by \$5.00, there will be a net loss of net income. Visit the website on a cold winter day and give it a test run. There is no better way to determine a starting point for deciding total N to apply. (<http://cnrc.agron.iastate.edu/>)

### Sign-up for a **NuTRACKER Plus** Site in

**2022.** Even the best N Management Strategy can easily be compromised with an unexpected change in the weather. Will it rain? Will it stop raining? These are common questions echoed



at different times before or during the growing season. Participating in a **NuTRACKER Plus** Site creates a window into the soil that tracks the dynamics (behavior) of plant-available N. How many pounds of N are detected in the upper two feet? What is the form? Where is it located? How much is N detected before rapid growth? These are common questions that **NuTRACKER Plus** attempts to address. With seven years of tracking experience, there is a significant confidence level in interpreting the test results. Sound interesting? Want more information? Ask your local Illini FS Crop Specialist to sign-up for a **NuTRACKER Plus** site or visit our website at [www.n-tracker.com](http://www.n-tracker.com). Comments are welcomed.

**Are you planning for a dry 2022 growing season?** If a dry growing season is anticipated, N should be applied as early as possible and injected into the soil. All nutrients must move to plant roots, and N is no exception. Water comes from subsurface soil moisture under dry conditions. Placing N into the soil profile where water is still accessible to roots provides the best chance of getting it into the plant. Even with a significant amount of N in dry surface soil, the corn plant will still be short of N, expressing N deficiency symptoms (firing).

**What happens to N not being utilized due to drought?** The drought of 2012 provided an example of what can happen when N is applied and not used. Over 200 fields were sampled for nitrate-N concentration following the harvest, but before any fall, N was applied. On average, enough N was detected in the upper 12 inches to meet the crop’s N requirement. Unfortunately, there was no crop to utilize it. As a result, elevated nitrate-N concentrations were detected in late winter of 2013 in several lakes. Fall-applied N **was not** the cause of the high nitrate-N levels. The primary reason was the 2012 drought and unused residual N from low-yielding 2012 crop, a fact that should not be forgotten.

**Are you planning for a wet Spring?** If a wet Spring is anticipated, N applications should be delayed as late as possible. Fall or early Spring-applied N will be the most vulnerable to loss processes. If the primary N requirement is applied pre-plant, a nitrification inhibitor (N-Serve, Centuro, or Instinct II) should be considered. A post-emerge strategy will limit N loss but increase the risk of not applying the N. Placement of post-emerge N can be injected, surface broadcast, or banded (Y-Drop). The window for post-applied N tends to be a challenge in wet Springs, so creating an N Management System that includes multiple applications is essential. Consider using urea treated with Agrotain (NBPT) broadcast post-emerge. Agrotain protects the urea-N from volatilization for at least 10 – 14 days. The use of a dry N product also provides an opportunity for a micronutrient application, such as born or zinc (Wolfrax Boron or Zinc DDP). Timing is everything. Plant ahead and let Illini FS make this application.

**Denitrification (wet Spring).** Denitrification occurs when soils are saturated (pore space is filled with water) for an extended period. The loss process only happens with nitrate-N. Most applied N is converted to nitrate-N within 1-2 weeks (UAN, Urea) or 2-3 weeks (anhydrous ammonia) after application. It takes approximately 24 -48 hours for denitrification to start. A loss of 5 -6% of nitrate-N per day is anticipated for each day the soil remains saturated.

The primary way N loss occurs in a wet Spring is by denitrification with medium-to-heavy textured soils.

**Leaching (wet Spring).** Leaching is the movement of nitrate-N with soil water as it leaves the application zone. Soil texture tends to determine the potential for leaching losses. Soils with a higher content of sand (considered coarse-textured) tend to leach more than the heavier soils (containing significant clay). The larger soil pores make it easier for water to move downward in the soil profile. Medium-textured soils (silts or silt loams) are also prone to some degree of leaching. The increased use of subsurface tiling to remove excess soil water from medium-to-heavy textured soil increases the probability of loss by leaching.

## HEDGE THE RISK OF N LOSS.

**Two-Pass Strategy.** Consider a combination of source, rate of application, time of application, and placement (the 4Rs) to create a Two-Pass N Management Strategy. Hedge the risk of dry weather with an early Spring N application (injected preferred). A nitrification inhibitor should be considered if applied well ahead of planting. Hedge the risk of wet weather by including a post-emerge application. Regardless of the efforts made (use of nitrification inhibitors), extended periods of saturation will result in N loss.

**Three-Pass Strategy.** Consider three N applications when Fall N is a part of an N Management System. Consider starting with no more than 50% of a crop’s N need with Fall applications, a consideration for the fall of 2022 at this point). Always include an N stabilizer when Fall applications are a part of an N Management System. Carry herbicides with UAN rather than water at a rate equivalent to 50 pounds N. Schedule a post-emerge application with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist. Urea with NBPT makes a good choice. A surface broadcast source of N will take advantage of the 0.5-inch rains by moving into the surface soil for quick plant utilization. Urea can also be used as the carrier for applying Wolfrax Boron or Zinc DDP. Get any post-emerge N scheduled sooner than later before last-minute demand exceeds the ability for timely application.

## APPLICATION OPTIONS

**Early Pre-Plant.** Early Spring N applications tend to be susceptible to saturated soil conditions before plant uptake. Consider using a nitrification inhibitor (N-Serve, Centuro, or Instinct II) for N applications made well ahead of planting time. Slowing nitrification (conversion of ammonium to nitrate) keeps the applied N in the stable ammonium-N form (not susceptible to denitrification or leaching) for an extended period.

**Pre-Plant.** A broadcast application of 50 pounds of N is suggested when injected with no regard to the planted row. The application provides the seedling plant a source of N during the early stages of stand establishment, especially when residue has been incorporated before planting, creating an environment for temporary N tie-up (immobilization).

**Planting-Time.** A planting-time application (starter fertilizers) provides a readily available nutrient source to the young seedling. However, there is a significant investment in time and equipment to make this a part of an N Management Strategy. The cost vs. benefit of application timing and placement minimizes the adoption of this practice.

**Early-Post.** An application of N at the “early growth” stage (V3-V6) minimizes the opportunity for N loss due to an early wet Spring. The early-post application can be injected (UAN/anhydrous ammonia) or surface broadcast (urea treated with NBPT). Surface broadcast urea treated with NBPT will result in a faster crop response to the application due to placement.

**Late-Post.** Applications of N during the rapid stage of corn growth can be timely if N loss is significant pre-plant or early post. However, the risks associated with such an application should be considered. Plants are rapidly growing. An untimely rain could increase the risk of not making the application. High winds could tangle corn plants, making it impossible for a ground application (aerial N applications much more expensive). There is also a significant risk of not receiving adequate rainfall following application (cannot get the N into the plant).

Illini FS welcomes Austin McCarty (Figure 1) to the Illini FS Team. Austin received his B.S. Degree in Agricultural Business from Eureka College. He currently lives in Mahomet, Illinois. Austin joins the Illini FS Team with an extensive background working with agronomic field trials from New York to Texas. Austin will be working with Illini FS Crop Specialists at several locations over the next few weeks as part of his orientation. This fall, he will be pursuing his M.S. Degree in Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois while working as a Crop Specialist.



Figure 1. Austin McCarty, Crop Specialist



# No Time To Chill: Winter A Season Of Evaluation

On the six-hour drive home, we jotted down action items to improve the family farm. The list added to the workload that had accumulated while away from the farm office for the better part of three days. But nothing seemed unattainable. We had just left a farm conference packed with a lineup of brilliant speakers and creative thinkers, the type who can re-ignite the motivation that the pandemic and its policies had temporarily siphoned from us.

Farm conferences and annual meetings return this winter at hotels and conference centers across the nation after a two-year hiatus. The face-to-face networking, the sharing of knowledge and the trips south to warmer locations rejuvenate souls in the agriculture industry this winter season, traditionally a time for self-evaluation on the farm. Farmers, perhaps, evaluate more this year than in recent ones. The pandemic has been the annoying rock in our boot and record-high costs a rockslide challenging our path to profitability.

Fertilizer prices have more than doubled in a year. Roundup prices are up 300%. And while anyone who drives can relate to the pain at the pump, imagine filling up a 300-gallon tank in a combine. Supply shortages and soaring input costs challenge farm families like ours everywhere this winter, prompting us to store herbicide like toilet paper in case of a shortage. Our break even spreadsheets evolve and include approximate costs on products that retailers can't even price yet.

Thankfully, crop values are strong, and we take comfort in surrounding ourselves at these conferences with people who understand and possess the faith to persevere. The recent conference offered perspective on the future of food



and farming and the anticipated disrupters in the marketplace. Expert panelists discussed biofuels, global protein demand, soil microbes and carbon. They shared dialogue on commodity and financial markets, supply chain issues, crypto currency, farmland values and consumer mindset about food. Between sessions we met with vendors of innovative farm products and further quizzed experts on the topics most impacting our family farm.

For decades, farm meetings and conferences have sparked the adoption of innovation on the farm, helping operations of all sizes attain the ideal of continuous improvement. At these places, we discover new solutions to complex problems and make choices to advance methods for growing crops and raising animals. That said, the winter season provides limited time to chill.

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

## Rural Energy For America Program (REAP) Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Loan Guarantees For This Program Are Streamlined Under The OneRd Guarantee Loan Initiative

**What:** The Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing. Funds may be used for renewable energy systems such as biomass; geothermal for electric generation; hydropower; hydrogen; small and large wind and solar generation; and ocean generation. Funds may also be used for the purchase, installation, and construction of energy efficiency improvements including HVAC systems; insulation; lighting; cooling or refrigeration units; doors and windows; electric, solar or gravity pumps for sprinkler pivots; switching from a diesel to electric irrigation motor; or replacement of energy-inefficient equipment. Agricultural producers may also use guaranteed loan funds to install energy efficient equipment and systems for agricultural production or processing.

### CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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### Potential Applicants:

- Agricultural producers with at least 50 percent of their gross income coming from agricultural operations.
- Small businesses in eligible rural areas (with populations of 50,000 residents or less).

**NOTE:** Agricultural producers and small businesses must have NO outstanding delinquent federal taxes, debt, judgment or debarment

**How Much:** Grants up to 25% of total eligible project costs. There is a \$2,500 minimum and \$500,000 maximum for renewable energy system grants and a \$1,500 minimum and \$250,000 maximum for energy efficiency grants.

**Deadline:** March 31, 2022

**How do we get started?** Applications for this program are accepted year-round at your local office.

Betsy Dirksen Londrigan, State  
Director  
2118 West Park Court, Suite A  
Champaign, IL 61821  
Voice: 217-403-6200  
Fax: (855) 832-8691

**Who can answer questions?** Contact your State Rural Development Energy Coordinator.

Callie Heidbreder  
USDA Rural Development  
2118 West Park Court, Suite A  
Champaign, IL 61821  
Tel: (217) 403-6217  
[callie.heidbreder@usda.gov](mailto:callie.heidbreder@usda.gov)  
<http://www.rd.usda.gov/il>



# 2022 CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU TRIPS AND TOURS ARE BACK!

Join CCFB in 2022 as we travel to shows across the Midwest! Registration deadlines for the first two trips are quickly approaching. Trips fill up fast so call 217-352-5235 today. Stay tuned to March's newsletter for a complete lineup of events!

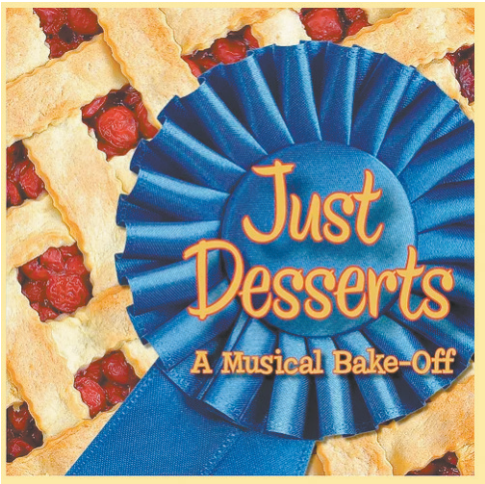
**March 30, 2022 (Wednesday Matinee)**

## Just Desserts, CIRCA'21 Dinner Playhouse, Rock Island, IL

It's sweet. It's savory. It's five strangers putting their hearts, reputations, and baking skills on the line to become the crème de la crème of bakers at a county fair. The heat is on to create three different types of desserts during the finals. A determined young woman dreaming of opening her own bakery. A sexy nail technician who wants to fit in. A shy school nurse who doesn't want to be there at all. A mysterious man from Brooklyn who arouses suspicion about his past. And the reigning champion who is confident she'll garner yet another victory this year. They'll all get their just desserts at the Jefferson County Bake-Off! There's a little mystery, a little romance, some potential cheating, and some back-stabbing — exactly what you expect when the competition is fierce — and the results are deliciously satisfying!

Price per person: \$106.00 – Gratuity included in price

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: February 21, 2022



**April 27, 2022 (Wednesday Matinee)**

## Forever PLAID, Myers Dinner Theatre - Hillsboro, IN

Four Young Singers Posthumously Take the Stage for One Final Gig In Forever Plaid. Forever Plaid is one of the most popular and successful musicals in recent memory. This deliciously fun revue is chock-full of classic barbershop quartet harmonies and pitch-perfect melodies! Once upon a time, there were four guys (Sparky, Smudge, Jinx and Frankie) who discovered that they shared a love for music and then got together to become their idols – The Four Freshman, The Hi-Lo's and The Crew Cuts. Rehearsing in the basement of Smudge's family's plumbing supply company, they became "Forever Plaid". On the way to their first big gig, the "Plaids" are broadsided by a school bus and killed instantly. It is at the moment when their careers and lives end that the story of Forever Plaid begins....Singing in close harmony, squabbling boyishly over the smallest intonations, and executing their charmingly outlandish choreography with overzealous precision, the "Plaids" are a guaranteed smash, with a program of beloved songs and delightful patter that keeps audiences rolling in the aisles when they're not humming along to some of the great nostalgic pop hits of the 1950s.

Price per person: \$89.00 – Gratuity included in price

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: March 21, 2022



## WOMEN'S COMMITTEE RECIPE OF THE MONTH Submitted by Joann O'Connor

### ITALIAN STEW

- 1 lb bulk Italian sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 cups beef broth
- 1 can (14-1/2 oz) stewed tomatoes, cut up
- 1 medium carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. dried basil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 package (9 oz) refrigerated cheese tortellini
- 1 small zucchini, sliced
- 1/3 cup chopped green pepper
- 2 tsp. minced fresh parsley
- Grated Parmesan cheese

### Directions

1. In a large saucepan, cook sausage and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink and onion is tender. Drain. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer.
2. Stir in the broth, tomatoes, carrot, basil, and oregano. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.
3. Gently stir in the tortellini, zucchini, green pepper and parsley. Cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes or until tortellini is tender. Serve with cheese.







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