

Young Entrepreneur Covering Ground in Champaign County

Champaign County native, Lexi Murray, was born with agriculture in her veins. Now she is striking out on her own, making her own way. Lexi, a senior at Fisher High School, has launched a new business called Murray Cover Crops. Champaign County Farm Bureau is proud to see its young members excited to pursue careers in agriculture. We are looking forward to the future of agriculture and how today's youth will impact the industry. Let's meet Lexi...

"My name is Lexi Murray; I am from Fisher, IL. I am a seventh-generation farmer, and the oldest of three girls. My dad and grandfather, Chris, and Jack Murray are my greatest role models, and supporters. I am a strong supporter of agriculture and have always been someone that understands the importance of our industry. I am a senior at Fisher Jr. /Sr. High School and I am a proud member of the CEO program and Fisher FFA."



Lexi Murray

Thanks to Lexi for taking some time to answer questions and give an in depth look at her ideas, entrepreneurial spirit, and challenges that come with starting a business.

How did you become interested in starting this business?

Lexi: I have been following my dad around since I was a little girl. I have watched the love and respect that my family and I have for this land, community, and everything we have learned, and accomplished in our wonderful community. My freshman year of high school I started focusing on being a part of my family's operation. With that I noticed our soil starting to change, and started noticing fields by my house having something green on it during the winter. People that know me know that I am a very curious person, whenever I noticed that there was something on farm ground that was not corn or beans, I went down a whole new rabbit hole. This brought me to cover crops. I started talking to my dad and asking questions, doing research, subscribing to different research magazines, and talking to people who already were involved. I did some research and found a company that supplies cover crops called Midwest Grass and Forage. I believe that they are a great company, I respect them because they are a very tight knit operation, which I can relate to. I got working with them, and became a seed dealer, then I got to work absorbing all the information I possibly could. Now here we are and I have started my own company trying to help our soil one field at a time with my company Murray Cover Crops.

How long did it take you to get it off the ground, what important steps did you take?

Lexi: I think it took me around two years. I first started learning the information I could. I wanted to make sure that I knew everything I could so that when I had my company off of the ground, I would be able to have answers. I believe that the most important part of my business is that my priority before starting anything is doing my best to become an expert in what I was trying to do. I took all of the products that Midwest was selling at the time and tried to learn. Then I was given the opportunity to be a member of the CEO program which is for young students who want to be and learn more about being entrepreneurs. When I joined the CEO program, I was more than excited to use the lessons and skills in the class in my business. But I knew from the beginning that it would prepare me and help to build my knowledge to build me into a strong entrepreneur. Now I am using those lessons, and skills to grow



Lexi Murray and her family from L to R: Chris Murray, Lexi Murray, Patti Murray, & Jack Murray

Murray Cover Crops to be your best option as a cover crop seed dealer. After around 6 months of being in the program I decided that I would like to get my company more into operation past a few people asking for some odds and ends, and make this a full-time operating company. I would say the most important steps I took were being patient, not expecting Murray Cover Crops to blow up immediately, using my network and getting advice and most importantly being humble and learning before trying to market as a professional.

What are your plans for this first year? What are your hopes/plans for the future of your business?

Lexi: My plans for this first year are to keep meeting people, and learn about them and their business and how to help them, and their operation. I would like to see my sales grow and

Continue Lexi Murray, page 2

Thank You Brenda For Your Service To The Champaign County Farm Bureau!

Brenda Wood, Champaign County Farm Bureau Administrative Assistant, will be retiring at the end of April. Members are invited to an open house celebrating Brenda on

April 27 • 2-4 p.m.

Champaign County Farm Bureau Auditorium.

CCFB staff and members wish Brenda the best of luck and congratulations as she enjoys retirement! Thank you for your dedication and service to the Champaign County Farm Bureau.

April Report



Paul Hunsinger, CCFB President

President, Paul Hunsinger

With planting season getting close I hope everyone is about ready and excited for it to be here. I know I am. It has been a busy month in the Champaign county office as well as in the Illinois Farm Bureau. There is a lot getting talked about in the general assembly right now dealing with agriculture. I know I talk about soil and water legislative issues quite often but it is one of the most important things to Farmers. Illinois Farm Bureau staff have been working with legislators on a soil and water conservation bill to draft language for it that is understandable and protects the farmer and our soil and water rights while still keeping soil health as a top priority. As with this issue and all the other ag issues out there, we have to let our legislators know what our position is on these issues and the best way to do that is to sign up for the FB ACT program through Illinois Farm Bureau. They keep you on top of issues that need our voice to be heard. So I urge you if you haven't already please sign up by going to their website or texting "FARM" to 52886. It is important that our voice be heard.

If we get a chance to start planting in April I wish you all the best and most importantly stay safe out there.

Sincerely,
Paul Hunsinger

Prime Timers Meeting

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED by April 10

Call the CCFB Office 217-352-5235

Meeting Date: April 13, 2023

Program & Entertainment:

Chrissy Sparks – MUSIC TRIVIA

Meal cost: \$8 per person

Important Information

• FRIED CHICKEN BUFFET

- 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.

Calendar of Events

April 10 @ 9:30 a.m. –

American Legion in Sidney, IL

Address: 212 S David St Sidney IL 61877

- Women's Committee Meeting will be held in the American Legion's conference room
- Tour of the Sidney Military Museum
- Lunch at the Sidney Saloon

CCFB Calendar of Events

April 2023

April 10	Women's Committee	9:30 a.m.
April 13	Prime Timers	10 a.m.
April 13	Full Board	6:30 p.m.
April 18	Governmental Affairs	7:30 a.m.

Lexi Murray continued from Page 1

join more programs, and groups in our area. In the future my hope would be to be a go to person for all cover crops, and make this a full-time job. My short-term goal would be to make a decent appearance in a few trade shows including our CEO trade show coming up the first week of May. My midterm goal would be to have this company support me through college. Long-term I would like to have a program with local FFA chapters to come and look at my cover crop plots and learn about the benefits and why I am so passionate about this. I am a huge supporter of agricultural education and I believe that even in agricultural communities there may not be a lot of kids knowing what is actually happening in their own backyard. That is what I would love my field to be a part of. Educating generations about their backyard and how to make it better. We have the best soil in the entire world right here in rural central Illinois. We need to harness, and cherish everything that this soil can do. Although if we do not take care of it like anything it will dissipate. That is why my number one goal is to educate everyone on everything that I have learned. I am an open book and I do not believe in gatekeeping.

Do you have any partners or employees helping you get the business off the ground?

Lexi: I have no partners or employees. But I have my family, friends and community. As my dad would say I am a very stubborn person, but I don't think I would say stubborn I would say passionate. When I believe in something I go for it, baptism by fire style. I wouldn't have it any other way either. I have my dad and grandparents, and my aunts and other close relatives and friends that saw my passion and kept pointing me in the right direction. That is why I love my tight knit community. Whenever I asked for advice or how to get to the light at the end of the tunnel. I had people to talk to and that had experience. I would say my biggest supporters were my aunts Lauren and Annie, my dad Chris, my grandparents Jack and Patti and my friend Shanna. They all were people that believed in me, gave me goals, and motivation. And were role models in how to be a good business person, for some of them how to be a woman entrepreneur. And how to "sell the fun"-Jack Murray. I could not have done any of this without them and they honestly deserve the credit. Even if they don't fully know it.

How can customers contact you? Do you have anything you would like your potential customers to know about you or what you are selling?

Lexi: I have a website murraycovercrops.com where you can go to the contact me page, and I hope to hear from all of you. I would like everyone to know that if you have questions, I promise I will do my very best to help each and every one of you reach your end goal. I sell everything from your average cover crop to sweet corn, road salt, and clover. If you want it, I have it or I can get it.

April is
**DISTRACTED DRIVING
AWARENESS MONTH**



**Designate your passenger as
your "designated texter."**

**Allow them access to your phone to
respond to calls or messages.**



RURAL NURSE PRACTITIONER

Scholarship PROGRAM



RIMSAP.com
Helping to meet the needs
of primary care in rural Illinois.

DEADLINE IS MAY 1

Maggi's Membership Corner

By Maggi Maxstadt, CCFB Membership & Outreach Coordinator

Hey, hey Farm Bureau members! A quarter of the year is gone, but we've got so much to look forward to.

Just a few days ago, our first trip group traveled to Myers Dinner Theatre for the Two by Two show. The next program is a Wednesday matinee to Grumpy Old Men at the CIRCA 21 Theatre. See what trips we have leaving through the rest of the year on page 7.

Plat books have been absolutely flying off the shelves. In one week alone, I sold nearly 50 copies! A cool feature of the 2023 book is a historical view of each township as it was in the 1929 plat book. The current and historical views can be found on adjacent pages for easy comparison. We've had a lot of people purchase more copies, especially if their families have been farming the same ground for generations.

As I've been alluding to these past couple months, 2023 is the year of big changes for the CCFB office. The first of which was Brad leaving in January, and the latest is Brenda. After nearly 22 years of service to the Champaign County Farm Bureau, Brenda is retiring. She will be greatly missed by all, and especially me! I wish Brenda and Larry all the best in their well-deserved retirement. More details about Brenda's retirement celebration can be found on page 1.

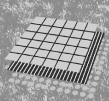
In the next newsletter you'll hear about the new assistant manager, starting this month. During this time of transition for the CCFB, I ask for patience as you visit and call the office.


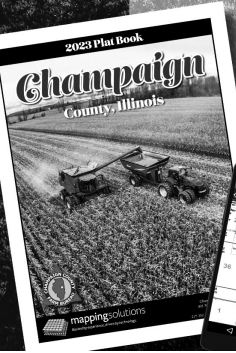



2023 PLAT BOOKS AVAILABLE NOW!

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY ILLINOIS

Plat Book • Wall Map
SmartMap
eBook • And More

mappingsolutions
Backed by experience, driven by technology.





For purchase info, contact
Champaign County Farm Bureau
at 217-352-5235
www.ccfarmbureau.com

Also available for purchase online at mappingsolutionsgis.com

Be safe as you start preparing for planting!

AFBF Books Distributed

Various members of the FB Women's Committee delivered copies of the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) book of the year, "I Love Strawberries" by Shannon Anderson to libraries in Champaign County recently.

Stella Smith, granddaughter of Women's Committee Chair, Marilyn Whalen helped deliver the AFBF book of the year to Jeanne Daly, Librarian at the Sidney Library.

Spotlight On A Women's Committee Member...Sara Hiser

Personal Agriculture History -words from Sara Hiser

I was born and raised on a farm located a mile and a half west and a mile and a half south of Ogden. The first acres were purchased in 1849 from the government of the United States. Growing up, soybeans and corn were the primary grain grown on the farm. Wheat was grown in the early days. There was even a short time when lima beans were grown. I can remember they bused in workers for that crop and as a small child I would talk to the workers. Currently we are a grain farm, growing soybeans and corn.

My father raised chickens and cows and sold milk from the cows also. At one point in time, he sold eggs to Burnham City Hospital in addition to individuals buying eggs. I have a pride in the history of family ownership of the farm.

As to the differences I have seen with the farm. I have old film of my father cultivating corn and the space between each stalk and the rows were much wider than now. The size of the equipment is far larger than his. His David Bradley wagon could fit inside the ones used now with great space to spare. He decided to have power steering installed on tractor and that was a large step forward. The chemical use has changed. My uncle who worked for FS in another county encouraged my father to use urea on his crop. My father and another neighbor helped each other at harvest. The neighbor asked him, "Chet, I think you are bringing in a bigger harvest and we are working more than on mine." My father replied, "I put urea on the crop at the advice of my brother-in-law." The neighbor was impressed. At the time of my parents' purchase of farmland from my grandmother's estate, my father worked nights as security at Lincoln Square Mall and my mother was employed as secretary at the Ogden Grade School for 11 years.

Over the years, I have seen changes in the ownership of farmland in the area. Many families inherited farmland and chose to sell it for various reasons. Perhaps they wanted to purchase land elsewhere or had simply moved out of the region and were less involved in the farm.

I appreciate and respect those who choose a career in agriculture. Now so many opportunities have opened up for both men and women to use their varied talents to prepare us for the important—though unknown right now--changes to come.

About Women's Committee...From Sara Hiser:

How long have you been a member of the Farm Bureau Women's Committee?
I began just before the pandemic started.

Calling All Ag Entrepreneurs: Apply For Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge \$165K in Startup Funds Available

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is seeking entrepreneurs to apply online for the 2024 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge. Now in its 10th year, this national business competition showcases U.S. startup companies developing innovative solutions to challenges faced by America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

Farm Bureau is offering \$165,000 in startup funds throughout the course of the competition, which will culminate in the top 10 semi-finalists competing in a live pitch competition in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives at the AFBF Convention in January 2024 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"The future of agriculture and rural communities depends on successful innovation," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "Through the Ag Innovation Challenge, we're pleased to recognize start-up companies that provide solutions to problems facing rural America and support farmers in their mission to provide the food, fuel and fiber we all rely on."

Applications remain open through May 12, and the 10 semi-finalist teams will be announced Sept. 12. Each of the semi-finalist teams will be awarded \$10,000 and a chance to compete to advance to the final round where four teams will receive an additional \$5,000 each. The final four teams will compete to win:

Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Winner, for a total of \$50,000

Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Runner-up, for a total of \$20,000

People's Choice Team selected by public vote, for an additional \$5,000 (all 10 semi-finalist teams compete for this honor)

Prior to the live pitch competition, the top 10 semi-finalist teams will participate in pitch training and mentorship from Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business faculty, and network with representatives from the Agriculture Department's Rural Business Investment Companies.

Recent winners of the Ag Innovation Challenge include NORDEF, a company that developed technology to produce diesel exhaust fluid at the point of use (2023 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner) and Grain Weevil Corporation, a grain bin safety and management robot that improves farmer well-being by controlling risks and costs (2022 Ag Innovation Challenge Winner). Other examples of successful Ag Innovation Challenge participants, as well as detailed eligibility guidelines and the competition timeline, can be found at fb.org/challenge.

Entrepreneurs must be members of a county or parish Farm Bureau within their state of residence to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit <https://www.fb.org/about/get-involved#join> to learn about becoming a member.

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on May 12.

Why did you join the WC?

I had read about the activities in the Champaign County Farm Bureau newspaper and thought it looked like an interesting group.

What's your favorite part of being a member of the committee?

I was welcomed, felt included immediately, and enjoy meeting new people with farming ties.

The WC is involved in opportunities to volunteer for local charitable organizations. What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

I have had to cut back a bit, but there is heart satisfaction in volunteering interacting with others.

Are you currently employed or retired?

I was employed as a secretary at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign until the time of my retirement.

What do you enjoy most about the WC meetings?

The speakers have very interesting subjects. Also enjoy hearing report about the projects of the Champaign County Farm Bureau.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to learn more about the Farm Bureau membership benefits and/or the Women's Committee?

Just come! You will like it.

What's one thing — either ag related or not — have you learned or benefitted from in the last few months attending the WC meetings and/or being a member of the Farm Bureau?

I appreciate and respect those who choose a career in agriculture. Now so many opportunities have opened up for both men and women to use their varied talents to prepare us for the important—though unknown right now--changes to come.

Provided by Marilyn Whalen, Chair CCFB Women's Committee

Feeding our Future.
Fueling our Industry.

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Ag in the Classroom

2022-23



WATCH NOW

A new face to the Ag in the Classroom lessons on WCIA 3. Julie Adcock joined Jacob Dickey for March lessons. They air on Mondays at 6:30am and 9am.

<https://www.wcia.com/agintheclassroom/>

chicks

Chicks have hatched all across Champaign County in the schools and even in the office. Schools with incubators: Robeson, Westview, Kenwood, IPA, St. Thomas Moore, Pleasant Acres, Eastlawn BTW, MLK, and CCPD.



grow tower

Gardens are growing indoors with our new hydroponic grow towers. Schools participating are: Yankee Ridge 5th grade dual language and Bottenfield 3rd grade.



Spring Lettuce

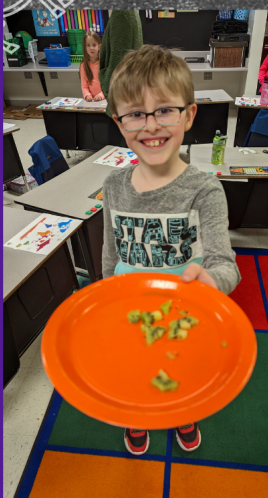


Sigma Alpha is an agriculture sorority for women at the University of Illinois that is visiting the schools with an engaging Farm Safety Lesson.

Strawberries are a favorite of students. They will learn how they grow and what insects are good and bad for them.



Where does sugar come from? Students learn the different types of sugars from sugar cane to sugar beets.



www.ccfbfoundation.com/aitc



Champaign County Ag in the Classroom

Connect with us

Will YOU be the lucky winner?



Your \$100 ticket purchase supports the Scholarship and Ag in the Classroom programs of the CCFB Foundation!

GOLF CART RAFFLE



GRAND PRIZE 2023 E-Z-GO RXV ELECTRIC GOLF CART

48V Trojan Batteries
Street Legal Lights
Rear Flip Seat
Windshield & Mirror
Motor Braking System

20" Tires w/ Custom Hubcaps
Dual Weather Resistant USB Port
Sound Extreme 26" Bluetooth Soundbar

LED Underbody Lighting
Premium Seat Upgrade
Warranty & Charger

ADDITIONAL CASH PRIZES:
(1) \$250 | (1) \$500 | (1) \$1,000

Visit our website or scan the QR code to purchase your lucky ticket!

www.ccfbfoundation.com/golfcart



ONLY **300** TICKETS BEING SOLD
Drawing at the CCFB Foundation Annual Gala on June 8th
Do not need to be present to win.
Purchase tickets online or at the CCFB Office



Nathan Hubbard
COUNTRY Financial
Agency Manager



Rhonda Wagner
Administrative Assistant
Champaign Agency



Dan Punkay
217-328-0023



Keith Garrett
217-485-3010



Austin Beaty
217-352-2652



Jordan McDaniel
217-352-9817



Barry Karuzis
217-655-7176



Tanna Suits
217-892-4479



Tony Wesselman
217-352-3466



4 Ways to Help Keep Your Car Out of the Shop

by Christy McFarland @countryfinancial.com

Taking care of your car can save you money in the long run. We know life gets busy, and it's easy to prioritize your wheels last. So here are four simple steps you can take to keep your ride running smoothly.

1. Clean Your Battery

A corroded battery could keep your car from starting, which could lead to a tow truck and visit to the shop. Avoid that hassle and cost with a wire brush and a clean battery!

Here's what you do if your battery is looking corroded. Turn off your car. Remove your battery terminals (always start with the negative cable). Mix a little baking soda and water and use it to clean the top of the battery with a wire brush, then rinse it off with some water. Make sure the battery is completely dry before replacing the battery terminals.

2. Regular Oil Changes

Making sure you get your oil changed regularly and on time is vital to keeping your engine clean and running efficiently. They used to say to change your oil every three months or 3,000 miles. But, cars nowadays can usually go at least 5,000 miles. Refer to your owner's manual to find out exactly how long you should go between oil changes.

If you know how to change your own oil, great! Otherwise, oil change shops are usually pretty affordable. Many of them will even throw in a complete vehicle check for no additional charge!

3. Air Filters

How many times have you paid extra during your oil change to have them change your air filter? Did you know, it's really not that difficult (or expensive) to do yourself? All you need is the new air filter, which usually only runs about \$10.

Pop your hood and look for your filter. Check your owner's manual if you are having trouble finding it, but it's usually in a black box. Open up the box and take a picture of the filter. This will help you remember which way the filter fits into the box. Replace the filter and badaboom, you're done. Easy peezy.

4. Tires

Checking your tires regularly does more than prevent a flat. It could save your life. Imagine driving 70 mph down a highway and one of your tires gives out. Or, trying to stop on icy or wet roads with tires that have barely any tread left on them. You don't want to see how much life you can squeeze out of your tires if they're clearly ready to be changed.

Yes, tires are expensive. But, the alternative could be worse. Here's how you know if your tires are ready to be swapped out. Use the penny test! Point President Lincoln's head downward and insert a penny into the grooves of your tire. If any of Lincoln's head is covered by tire tread, your tires still have life left in them. However, if you can see Lincoln's entire head, it's time to invest in new tires.

If you notice any other issues with your tires, such as a bulge or bubble from hitting a curb or a pothole, you should take it in to be repaired or replaced.

We hope these tips help your car (and your wallet)!



Bret Kroencke
217-359-9391



Kolby Jackson
217-586-5030



Chris Greenwold
217-355-8675



Robert Lalumendier
217-352-3341



Steve Derry
217-352-2655



Andrew Deedrich
217-359-3941



Tim Osterbur
217-469-2033



Scott Jackson
217-359-9335



Tim Bridges
217-586-6170



Dawn Babb
217-892-4479



KORY KRAUS,
GENERAL MANAGER

From The Field

Spring is in the air, and soon the planters will be rolling before we know it! Before the spring planting season kicks off this year, I want growers to consider what new items they incorporate into their operations. Then evaluate what items will become standard practices. Growers should consider implementing new practices into their operations to take advantage of the latest technological advancements to maximize harvestable yields this fall. For the last several years at Illini FS, I have evaluated how the following concepts may increase yields with little operational changes to a grower's operations. These concepts generally don't require special equipment or the added expense of an extra application. Many growers have likely heard about one or more of these concepts. The following concepts have been evaluated in practical farming operations locally. But they are not small plots or even tested on a research farm like many other local retailers currently do. By testing these products and concepts on practical farming operations, we eliminate past treatment effects commonly seen on research farms and consider real field variability to validate if a product or concept will perform.

Illini FS's OFD Proven from 2 or more years of testing, including

1. Boron fertilization
2. Sulfur fertilization
3. Zinc fertilization
4. VT/RI Corn Fungicide and R3 Soybean Fungicide Applications
5. Planter Box Nutrition

Boron

Illini FS was the first retailer in the area that started making soil-applied applications of Boron to account for what was being removed by high-yielding corn and soybean fields. Before recent discoveries from Illini FS, most boron applications may only have been made from a foliar micronutrient mixture application.

Sulfur

Sulfur continues to show up in a big way in that it must be managed like nitrogen, applied to every crop, and applied yearly. Two great ways to utilize sulfur are ammonium thiosulfate (ATS) applications tank mixed with preemergent herbicide applications or in-season broadcast applications of ammonium sulfate (AMS).

Zinc

Zinc is different in how it reacts in the soil compared to sulfur or nitrogen; zinc is considered a cation. This means the risk of loss due to adverse weather conditions is not a concern like sulfur and nitrogen. Zinc concentration levels can be built up, much like phosphorus or potassium. I've seen the benefits of zinc fertilization from either in-season applications or applications in the fall with traditional fall dry fertilizer programs.

Foliar Fungicide

At Illini FS, we continue to see the benefits of foliar fungicides for both corn and soybean. Beyond controlling many problematic

plant pathogens, fungicides provide many other plant health benefits contributing to higher yields. We observed this last year during the micro drought conditions last summer. Last summer was not a big disease year, but across the area, Illini FS represents, Corn on an average yield of 7.9 bu/A, better when treated with a foliar fungicide. Soybeans yielded, on average, 3.7 bu/A better also when treated with a foliar fungicide.

Planter Box Nutrition

Most basic planter manufacturers require a seed flowability agent to ensure that the seed does not bridge in the planter box to help maximize seed singulation for the desired planted stand. Until recent years the application of a seed flow ability agent did not provide any yield benefit but only prevented yield loss from undesirable plant stands. Today, several new products in the marketplace provide the basic seed flowability agent required by all planter manufacturers but also contain key nutritional products. Adding plant-available nutrition to the seed is like the "starter fertilizer effect." We have observed quicker emergence, increased uniform emergence, and higher yields for corn and soybeans.

Implementation of On-Farm Discoveries

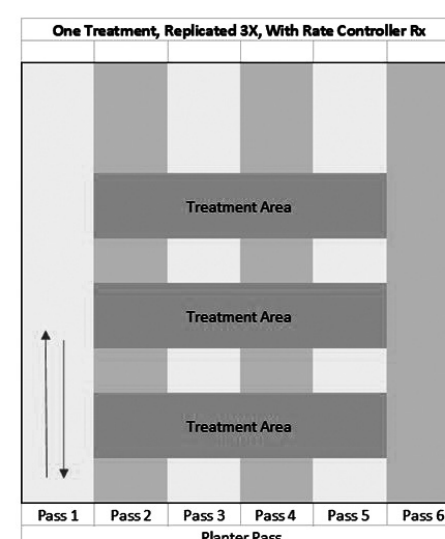
In the past, many On-Farm Discovery projects have been implanted by either splitting a field, strip trials, or even small, replicated plots. Now, while these testing methods have practical applications, it has been from my experiences that most On-Farm Discovery needs to be implanted in a different method to get the best real-world results. Implementation of replicated treatment zones, these zones need to be perpendicular to the normal traffic patterns. Please see the image below for an example. Moving to this treatment method minimizes many treatment and data collection errors. This treatment method is best executed by planned prescriptions and with an application made by utilizing a rate controller.

For 2023 On-Farm Discoveries, I will be testing the following concepts and products,

1. Seed Technologies
2. Nutrient Testing of key micro
3. Soybean Population Control
4. "Is that Enough Nitrogen"
5. Imagery Application
6. Nitrogen Biologicals

If you would like to participate in our 2023 On-Farm Discovery projects, have questions about items discussed in this newsletter, or have ideas for other On-Farm Discovery projects, please get in touch with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist or me.

Eric Beckett, CCA 4R NMS
217-318-9100
ebeckett@illinifs.com



Farmers Adapt To Weather

“We have always been able to plant,” I reassured Mom while seated at my desk that faces hers. We should have been seated in a tractor. The season was spring and the year 2019, when it rained.

And rained.

And rained.

I took screenshots of weather forecasts, showing seven days of clouds and rain. It seemed unbelievable, and mentally, an out-of-body experience that endured. By May 30 of that year(past our typical planting season), we had 80% of our acres yet to plant and had dumped 10-plus inches from the rain gauge. The guys used the rainy days to start maintenance on harvest machinery. They had faith that we would have a crop to harvest.

For generations, farmers have endured weather stresses that impact farm production and livelihoods, and they can name those most-adverse years like sports statistics. Thankfully, technology and modern research give us an adaptive edge, building resilience in the face of weather variability.

Our planters hold more seed in one fill than Grandpa could plant in a single day in the 1970s. Bigger and faster planters plant crops quicker and more precisely, necessary with larger farm sizes today. Smartphones show live subscription weather forecasts and field-specific precipitation totals. Tile drainage systems improve water management within fields.

Data shows that over time weather comes with greater variability and extremes from cold to hot and dry to wet. Since 1980, the number of days it has rained more than two inches has doubled in Illinois, a statistic cited in a docuseries at WatchUsGrow.org. More rain in a shorter time can trigger crop losses and soil erosion, but farmers have adjusted to protect crops and the



environment.

More than ever on our farm and farms across the state, farmers use cover crops, or groundcover between primary crops. They install grass filter strips along streams and use reduced tillage practices to slow and filter water flowing across the land.

When the weather finally cooperated in June 2019, we had a full crew and machines ready to act. The air conditioning stopped working in a tractor, but my brother sweated it out. We planted four times more acres in a day than in the prime of Grandpa’s career and dutifully planted every acre we could.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family in west-central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and cover crops and raise beef cattle, backyard chickens and farm kids.

2023 CCFB Trip Dates, Deadlines & Information

Questions? Call the Champaign County Farm Bureau at 217-352-5235.

June 14, 2023

Moonshine Restaurant & Casey, IL

BIG THINGS SMALL TOWN- CASEY, IL

Just off Interstate-70, the town of Casey springs to life with larger-than-life objects.

Quaint shops, delicious eateries and unique attractions! Casey is an adorable little town with friendly folks. Perfect for a day trip or well-deserved weekend getaway with new businesses and big items being added every year. There is always something new to experience! Casey Illinois is home to certified world’s largest items, which include: wind chime, rocking chair, mailbox, wooden shoes/clogs, golf tee, pitchfork, key, gavel, twizzle spoon, golf driver, barber shop pole, and teeter totter.

Price per person: \$40.00 – Bus only – Lunch at Moonshine is on your own so please bring cash they do not except credit cards

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: Monday, May 8

July 26,2023 (evening)

The Honky Tonk Angels, Beef House, Covington, IN
Honky Tonk Angels: The Mystery of Bubba’s Revenge

The hilarious final sequel in the Honky Tonk Angels series is a foot stompin’ gospel jubilee centering on the overbearing husband of Angela Bodine, the “physically sensitive” beer drinkin’ Bubba. From the creator of Always...Patsy Cline comes a spooky country-western style Halloween night séance including song such as “Jolene,” “Achy Breaky Heart,” and “Spirit in the Sky.”

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Hours: Monday – Friday
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Manager – Bailey Edenburn
Communications Director – Lesley Gooding
Administrative Assistant – Brenda Wood
Membership & Outreach Coordinator – Maggi Maxstadt
Ag in the Classroom Director – Sarah Kaper
Ag in the Classroom Educator – Julie Adcock
Foundation Director – Kirk Builta

Contact us at (217) 352-5235
www.ccfarmbureau.com

Special Note from the Beef House**This show is currently being revised by its author Ted Swindley. He has granted permission to advertise his show. If revisions have not been finalized by production dates, another show will replace this title.**

Price per person: \$110.00 – Gratuity NOT included in price

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: Monday, June 19

September 20, 2023 (Wednesday Matinee)

Outsider, CIRCA 21 Theatre, Rock Island, IL
Outsider

Ned Newley doesn’t even want to be governor. He’s terrified of public speaking; his poll numbers are impressively bad. To his ever-supportive Chief of Staff, Ned seems destined to

fail. But political consultant Arthur Vance sees things differently: Ned might be the worst candidate to ever run for office. Unless the public is looking for... the worst candidate to ever run for office. A timely and hilarious comedy that skewers politics and celebrates democracy.

Price per person: \$112.00 – Gratuity included in price

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: Monday, August 14

October 25, 2023 (Wednesday matinee)

The Mousetrap, Myers Dinner Theatre, Hillsboro, IN

The Mousetrap After a local woman is murdered, the guests and staff at Monkswell Manor find themselves stranded during a snowstorm. It soon becomes clear that the killer is among them, and the seven strangers grow increasingly suspicious of one another. A police detective, arriving on skis, interrogates the suspects: the newlyweds running the house; a spinster with a curious background; an architect who seems better equipped to be a chef; a retired Army major; a strange little man who claims his car has overturned in a drift; and a jurist who makes life miserable for everyone. When a second murder takes place, tensions and fears escalate. This record-breaking murder mystery features a brilliant surprise finish from Dame Agatha Christie, the foremost mystery writer of her time.

Price per person: \$98.00– Gratuity included in price

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: Monday, September 18

❖ **November 27 & 28, 2023**

Blue Gate Theatre, Shipshewana, IN

Daniel O’Donnell Christmas and More & Salute to the Stars: Country Christmas

Daniel O’Donnell Christmas and More: The show is a unique production that features the star entertaining his audience with a nostalgic trip down memory lane as he performs hit after hit in the first part of the show. Then, when the curtain is raised for the second half, the stage is transformed into a Yuletide setting which will feature Daniel singing many Christmas favorites, including “White Christmas”, “Merry Christmas To You”, and countless other festive classics from across the decades.



Salute to the Stars; Country Christmas: The Blue Gate Theater brings you the Las Vegas-style tribute show “Salute to the Stars”. This installment of “Salute to the Stars” includes tributes to Elvis, Garth and Trisha.

And finally, as the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley, is the man known worldwide as the TRUE Voice of Elvis, Doug Church.

Price per person: \$445.00 -Single \$350.00 per person - Double

Cost includes: Motor coach transportation, hotel, tickets for two shows, meals include: 1-breakfast, 1-lunch and 1-dinner and gratuity.

Deadline to register or cancel reservations is: Monday, September 18, 2023

Farm Bureau Sewing Group Stitching Up A Storm

By Marilyn Whalen

On a recent stormy February day, the Farm Bureau Women’s Sewing group came together to complete sewing projects for local organizations. The group of dedicated ladies came together to stitch items shortly before a Tornado Warning was issued for Champaign County.

The ladies most recent accomplishments include: over 30 quilted blankets were provided to the Tolono Fire Department, the Thomasboro Fire Department and Champaign Fire Department (Mattis Avenue station). In addition,

ten quilted blankets were delivered to the Pregnancy Resource Center and another ten to the Crisis Nursery by Paulette Brock.

Over the years, this group has donated to numerous organizations who benefit from the time the group spends together in the Farm Bureau Auditorium on a semi-monthly basis.

If you are interested in joining the ladies on their next sewing day, please feel free to contact Paulette Brock at 217-493-9712.



Above: 4-H members from the All-Star 4-H Club present blankets to Tolono Fire Chief Mike Huber.
Right: Ronda Scott with WC Sewing Group presents blankets to Thomasboro Fire Chief Paul Cundiff and Sean Purvine, Firefighter/EMT



WOMEN’S COMMITTEE RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Submitted by Kay Place

Green Salad Meal

- 1 head lettuce, cut fine
- ½ cup chopped Spanish onion (red)
- ½ cup chopped green pepper
- ½ cup chopped celery
- Cover lettuce with the 3 chopped vegetables
- 1 – 10 oz can tiny Le Seuer peas
- Spread 2 cups Hellman’s Mayonnaise and 2 tbs. sugar over the top of salad.
- Add 4-6 oz. shredded cheddar cheese in a layer over mayonnaise.
- Top with 8 slices crisp bacon or ham cubes.
- Put in shallow serving dish.
- Cover with aluminum foil and refrigerate overnight.
- NOTE: Hellman’s Mayonnaise must be used – another won’t work!

{ CEO

Believe it or not, most folks think that farms in Illinois are run by big, faceless corporations. Truth is, 96% of the farms are actually owned and operated by families. Yep, 96%. And we’re 100% committed to bringing you the most sustainably grown, healthiest food anywhere.

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April is National Safe Digging Month

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