



Vol. 103, No. 11

# NEWS

801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61821

November, 2025



## Honoring Champaign County Farm Bureau Veterans

Champaign County Farm Bureau would like to thank all veterans for their service to our country. Two Champaign County Farm Bureau members shared their experiences, memories, and thoughts as we near Veteran's Day. Thank you to Gerald Henry and Jim Jones for sharing a little bit of their story with us.

### Gerald Henry

Gerald was drafted into the Army in 1969. He was 24 at the time, a little older than most of the guys around him and that bit of maturity helped him through the challenges ahead. He went through NCO training, earned his sergeant stripes, and later joined the 173rd Airborne. He spent a month out in the field before moving into a company clerk position. "I had a soft bed, warm meals, and cold showers," Looking back, Gerald says the best advice he could have given his younger self was simple: learn to take orders, and do it right away. That mindset, he says, got him through a lot. Coming home was tough. Support for Vietnam veterans was hard to find back then, and respect didn't come easily. But years later, when he went on an Honor Flight, Gerald felt that gratitude firsthand. "Everywhere we went, people thanked us," he says.



Gerald Henry

"It was wonderful." Today, Gerald continues to serve on local boards, at his church, and through the Farm Bureau. Service has always been a part of who he is, whether he's wearing a uniform or not.

### Jim Jones

Jim Jones joined the military in January 1951 as a member of the National Guard, encouraged by a cousin, after receiving his draft notice in November, 1950. At age 19, he started as a tank driver in Urbana at the Armory. In Feb, 1952 he was activated into the Army and went to California for 8 months as a tank driver. Following his stint in California he was sent to Germany where



Gerald Henry airborne training school 1969



Jim Jones

he served with the 4th Infantry Division. He remembers the long ship ride across the Atlantic, crowded with 11,000 other GIs. He also remembers the small towns he passed through via train on their way to Frankfurt. In Germany, He worked closely with his commander, Ray E. Hervey from Danville, IL. who treated him with respect and trusted him with important duties, mostly handling court-martial paperwork

for 15 months. For Jim, Veterans Day is about remembering those who didn't come home, those who gave everything in combat. He also likes to remind people that veterans from every generation helped secure the freedoms we enjoy today. Even now, long after his service, Jim carries that sense of responsibility and respect with him, quietly honoring the lessons and experiences that shaped his time in the Army.

### Farm Bureau Salutes Veterans November 10, 2025

8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

**NOTE: You MUST register for the veteran's breakfast by Nov. 3rd or as soon as you receive this newsletter. Call Debbie Stylian at 217-352-5235. We welcome veterans from our Farm Bureau family, family members of veterans as well as widowed spouses of veterans. Our hosts, the CCFB Women's Committee members will also attend.**

Breakfast will be served immediately at 8 am followed by the program, including speaker Nancy Reifsteck on her father's WWII service including his POW ordeal, special military memorabilia will be on display, Quilts of Valor will be awarded, and patriotic music will be presented. Representative Brandon Schwizer will also be a guest. You will not want to miss this event.



## VETERANS BREAKFAST

NOVEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 8:00AM - 10:00AM



### HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

ENJOY BREAKFAST, HEAR PRESENTATIONS FROM LOCAL SPEAKERS, AND FIND A COMMUNITY OF OTHER VETERANS.

801 N. Country Fair Drive, Champaign IL 61821

RSVP TO [EMILY@CCFARMBUREAU.COM](mailto:EMILY@CCFARMBUREAU.COM)  
OR CALL 217-352-5235 BY NOVEMBER  
3RD

# November Report

## President, Doug Downs



Doug Downs, CCFB President

Harvest is probably all but over by now. As of Mid October, it's been the fastest pace harvest I can remember since 1991. I've not had a day "off" in 7 weeks and only had one brief morning rain shower to slow things down for a day. My wife reminded me this evening, when I showed up at 9:15 pm after 100 and some odd acres of corn put in the bin today, that I do have a home and family and they supposedly miss me. I'm ready to sit at the supper table again with her and the kids soon. It been a hard 7 weeks, but it's been uneventful in a good way around here.

It's the beginning of the holiday season and many thanks are notable. I'm thankful for my friends who are still here this fall and have lived to tell about it. After close calls and medical scares, I'm thankful for all of you. I'm thankful for the incredible yields, although not record breaking, were still respectable considering how extremely dry it was. I'm thankful for many other things and I hope everyone can reflect on what you're thankful for.

I'm sorry for the lack of reasonable content in this month's edition. I told myself I would waste this space, but the past month or so has been intense and honestly, I haven't even been to the office. The hum of the combine rotor is about all I listen to all day, but I do field a lot of phone calls and stay in touch with other county leaders regularly. We have a lot to be thinking about. The annual meeting in Chicago is only about 6 weeks away. So there is plenty of buzz in the background. Your county office is working diligently preparing for this winters meeting schedules, valuable programs and events we will be at.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving season and start to the holiday season.

Doug Downs  
CCFB President

## Prime Timers Meeting

November 13, 2025

Program & Entertainment

Heaven Bound Gospel Quartet

\$8 per person/Fried Chicken Buffet

\*No Walk-Ins\*

\*Call to reserve your spot by November 10\*

CCFB Office - 217-352-5235

## Women's Committee

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

### Calendar of Events

Veteran's Breakfast

November 10 • 8 a.m.

CCFB Auditorium

## Mobile Dairy Classroom

October 6-10, 2025

A partnership with St. Louis Dairy and Southwest Dairy brought a Mobile Dairy Classroom to Champaign County.

2889 students & 110 teachers were able to see how to milk a cow, learn how milk goes from the farm to the consumer, meet Louise the Cow, and ask a lot of questions!

The Dairy Classroom visited the following schools

St. Thomas  
Unity East  
Pleasant Acres  
Broadmeadow  
Eastlawn  
Northview  
Kenwood  
Bottenville  
St. Matthew

## CCFB Calendar of Events November 2025

|                |                         |         |
|----------------|-------------------------|---------|
| November 10    | Veteran's Breakfast     | 8 am    |
| November 13    | Prime Timers            | 10 am   |
| November 20    | Full Board              | 6:30 pm |
| November 25    | Governmental Affairs    | 7:30 am |
| November 27-28 | Office Closed - Holiday |         |



You're invited to a  
Life Line Screening  
event!

Champaign County Farm Bureau  
801 N Country Fair Dr. Champaign, IL 61821  
Screenings will be held in the Auditorium

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screenings.

Trusted by over 11 million customers.

Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection.

Who should attend: Anyone age of 40+

Special Pricing for \$129

- Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

4 ways to book your appointment...

Scan here:



Call 800-324-9458  
and use promo  
code: HABC001

Visit  
LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC

Text the word  
"circle" to  
216-279-1607

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.

Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.



# 2025 Champaign County Farm Bureau Trips

Monday, December 1, 2025 - Matinee

## Kenny & Dolly Christmas – Starved Rock Lodge – Oglesby, IL

Back for a repeat performance are Dave Karl (Kenny Rogers) & Wendy Engler (Dolly Parton) for all of the top songs, mannerisms and humor of the real Kenny and Dolly. This tribute has it all, the best of Kenny, Dolly and of course many of their famous duets. There will be the perfect mix of Christmas music sprinkled in this show.

Price per person: \$150.00      Dead-line to Register or cancel reservation: Monday, November 10

Stay tuned for more trips!!

Please call Debbie at the number below to reserve your spot!

Champaign County Farm Bureau  
801 N. Country Fair Dr.  
Champaign, IL 61821  
(217) 352-5235



**Please note the deadlines posted for each trip**

Any cancellation, for any reason, must be made on or before the deadline posted for each individual trip to guarantee any refund. We ask that all day trips are paid for in full when you register.

\*\*\* Gratuity is included in the price unless indicated\*\*\*

Please feel free to share this information with friends, neighbors and family. We would love to add them to our list of travel friends.

Thank you and we look forward to traveling with you.



### Step by Step

#### involvement with Champaign County Farm Bureau

Farm Bureau offers opportunities for members at every stage of life and involvement. From Young Leaders to Women's programs, Governmental Affairs, and Prime Timers, each step helps you grow your leadership, build connections, and make an impact in agriculture and the community. Start small, get involved, and see where your Farm Bureau journey can take you!



## COVER CROP ASSURANCE PROGRAM

Trusted Service. Long-Term Sustainability.

### THE OPPORTUNITY

We've developed a data-driven, technology-enabled program designed to help you confidently integrate cereal rye as a cover crop into your operation—without compromising yield expectations. By following a few straightforward steps, you'll gain access to the agronomic and environmental benefits of cover cropping, supported by the assurance of a crop plan warranty. If your covered acres do not meet or exceed your Benchmark Yield, Sunrise FS will provide a per-acre payment to help offset the difference.

### OFFER DETAILS

To participate, you must enroll in the Sunrise FS Cover Crop Assurance Program and plant cereal rye purchased exclusively from Sunrise FS by December 1, 2025. All products must be sourced through Sunrise FS and applied in accordance with our agronomic recommendations. Additionally, all enrolled acres must be covered by an active multi-peril crop insurance policy.

### TIER 1 (\$20/ACRE)

- Purchase & plant at least 40 acres of cereal rye
- Utilize Sunrise FS custom drilling

### TIER 2 (\$40/ACRE)

- Follow all requirements from tier 1
- Purchase and apply recommended termination package
- Utilize Sunrise FS custom application

### WARRANTY PAYMENT

If the plan doesn't exceed 100% of your field's 10-year Adjusted Yield:

80-89% of Adjusted Yield  
\$20/acre

90-99% of Adjusted Yield  
\$10/acre

### WARRANTY PAYMENT

If the plan doesn't exceed 100% of your field's 10-year Adjusted Yield:

80-89% of Adjusted Yield  
\$40/acre

90-99% of Adjusted Yield  
\$20/acre

Fields that yield less than 80% of the 10-year adjusted average, are located in a county officially declared a "Disaster County," or are included in a crop insurance claim are not eligible for a warranty payment.

CONTACT DREW HEWITT FOR MORE INFO!

217-751-2751 | dhewitt@illnifs.com

The plan described in this brochure is subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Sunrise Cover Crop Assurance Program 2025 Policy Document. Always read and follow local directions.

## How do I use my Farm Bureau Benefits?

Either show your Illinois Farm Bureau Card in person or Go to <https://ilfb.abenity.com/> and login. The login to this site is separate from your Illinois Farm Bureau Account. For help registering with Abenity call the office at 217-352-5235.



**Two Million Saved**

Illinois Farm Bureau members saved \$2 million in a year, using tangible member benefits.



Start Saving Today!

Save on the every day products and services you need from the brands you trust.





CCFBFOUNDATION.COM | [f CCFBFOUNDATION](https://www.facebook.com/ccfbfoundation) | [x CCFB\\_FOUNDATION](https://www.instagram.com/ccfb_foundations/)

## AG in the Classroom 2025-2026

**October in Our Classrooms**

**Harvest in Illinois**

Now that students are seeing harvesting equipment in the fields, they're curious about how the machines work. In this lesson, students learn how a combine cuts, threshes, and sorts corn and soybeans, how apples are picked, and how pumpkins are harvested. Then, they apply engineering principles to design their own harvesting machine. Some classes even had the chance to examine real corn and soybean plants up close!

**Ag at the Orchard**

150 children and their families attended the Ag in the Orchard event on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to Women's Committee and Sigma Alpha volunteers who ran 6 ag-tivities for families.

**Classroom Moments: Ag Engineering**

**Mobile Dairy Classroom**

Thanks to the Southwest Dairy Farmers and St. Louis Dairy Council for visiting 2889 students in Philo, Champaign and Rantoul to teach students about the dairy industry!

**Events**

**Wednesday, November 19th**  
**Grounded in Ag Breakfast**  
**7:30am-11am**  
**CCFB Auditorium**

**Keep in Touch**

QR Code to [ccfbfoundation.com/aitc](https://www.ccfbfoundation.com/aitc)

[sarah@ccfbfoundation.com](mailto:sarah@ccfbfoundation.com)  
[julie@ccfbfoundation.com](mailto:julie@ccfbfoundation.com)

[Champaign County Ag in the Classroom](https://www.facebook.com/ChampaignCountyAgInTheClassroom)

## YOU'RE INVITED

**Grounded In Ag Breakfast**

**Wednesday, November 19th**  
**7:30am-9:00am**  
**CCFB Auditorium**  
**Open House Style Breakfast**  
**Short Program at 8:15am**

**PLEASE RSVP**  
**217-352-5235**

**Join us for breakfast in support of Ag in the Classroom! Come hear first-hand how this incredible program is impacting 2,800+ students per month with lessons about where their food fiber and fuels come from.**

**Three Ways to Donate!**

**QR CODE ABOVE...OR ONLINE**  
[www.ccfbfoundation.com/grounded](https://www.ccfbfoundation.com/grounded)

**MAIL**  
CCFB Foundation  
801 N. Country Fair Dr. - Champaign, IL 61821

## Calling all Farmers! Come Join Us!

**FOUNDATION Farmers**

A support network within the CCFB Foundation that is comprised **solely** of farmers. These farmers are united by their desire to educate others about agriculture and understand that investing in the future workforce of agriculture is crucial for the success of their own farm operations. They contribute to Foundation missions both financially and through advocacy, leveraging their grassroots voice within the local agriculture industry.

**WHY JOIN?**

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM GROWTH**  
By becoming a member, you can actively contribute to shaping the growth and development of Foundation programs.

**LEND YOUR FARMER VOICE**  
You have the opportunity to lend your unique farmer voice to initiatives such as Ag in the Classroom, supporting local students pursuing higher education, and investing in hands-on careers that directly impact your farming operation.

**ENJOY CAMARADERIE WITH TOP PRODUCERS**  
Joining Foundation Farmers allows you to connect with and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow top producers in Champaign County. Together, you can make a collective impact on the future of the local agriculture industry.

**HOW DO I JOIN?**  
It's easy! Submit the enclosed form via mail or email, or sign up online from your computer or from your phone with the below link or QR code.  
[www.ccfbfoundation.com/foundationfarmers](https://www.ccfbfoundation.com/foundationfarmers)

**FOUNDATION FARMER BENEFITS**

**1 Year COMMITMENT**

- ONE YEAR COMMITMENT OF ONE OR MORE ACRES**
  - Foundation Farmer hat and truck decal
  - Foundation Farmer field sign
  - Invitation for two to the Foundation Farmer harvest celebration in mid-late November
  - Recognition on social media and the Foundation Farmer standing banner at all events

**3 Year COMMITMENT**

- THREE YEAR COMMITMENT OF ONE OR MORE ACRES**
  - Foundation Farmer hat and truck decal
  - Carhart Men's Jacket or Carhartt Ladies Vest with embroidered Foundation Farmers Logo and your name or farm
  - Foundation Farmer field sign
  - Invitation for four to the Foundation Farmer's harvest celebration in mid-late November
  - Photo recognition (individual /family farm photo that you provide or farm logo) on social media and the Foundation Farmer standing banner at all events

**Questions about Foundation Farmers?**  
Call Us: 217-352-5235



Nathan Hubbard  
COUNTRY Financial  
Agency Manager



Bret Kroencke  
217-359-9391



Dan Punkay  
217-328-0023



Austin Beatty  
217-352-2652



Jordan McDaniel  
217-352-9817



Barry Karuzis  
217-352-4555



Tanna Suits  
217-892-0200



Tony Wesselman  
217-352-3466



Scott Jackson  
217-359-9335



Kolby Jackson  
217-586-5030



Chris Greenwald  
217-355-8675



Robert Lalumendier  
217-352-3341



Preston Engel  
217-974-7949



Andrew Deedrich  
217-359-3941



Tim Osterbur  
217-469-2033



Dawn Babb  
217-892-0291

## 5 Less Obvious Reasons to Check on Your Insurance Coverage

by Christy McFarland

increasing your liability coverage to protect yourself from the unthinkable.

### Working out of your home

Starting a company out of your home might seem innocent enough, but it's important to make sure you have the right coverage. Depending on how your business is set up, you might need to adjust your policy or take out a separate one to protect both your business and your home.

### Less time in the car

The amount of miles you rack up on your car driving to and from work could impact the cost of your auto policy. If you're jumping up and down because you've recently taken a job with a shorter commute, don't forget to take a break from your celebration to see if it improves the cost of your auto policy.

### Just married or had a baby

These might be some of the more obvious life changes that warrant you to check in on your coverage, but they're so important, we wanted to include them on our list. Both major life changes will likely impact your insurance coverage, especially your home, auto and life insurance. For instance, the policy you took out before you had a baby might not be sufficient now that you've grown your family. It'll be important to make sure your new bundle of joy is protected. Another example is if you purchased a diamond ring. It'll be important to make sure it doesn't exceed the limitations on your homeowners' insurance.

### Backyard magnets

Install a new swimming pool? Get a trampoline or a playground? Did you know you're liable if someone comes onto your property and gets injured? While pools and trampolines might seem harmless, they can be a cause for attraction. There are ways to keep your backyard safe, like installing a fence. You might also want to consider



Jordan Johnson  
217-485-3010



Tim Bridges  
217-586-6170

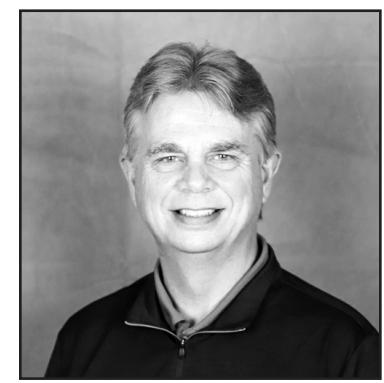


Drew Arteaga  
217-469-9800



Scott Jackson  
217-359-9335

# SUNRISE



**JIM MEINHART,  
GENERAL MANAGER**

## From The Field

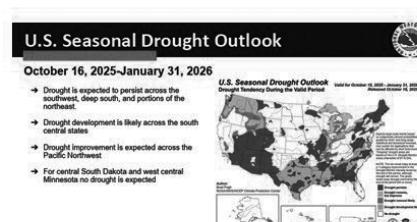
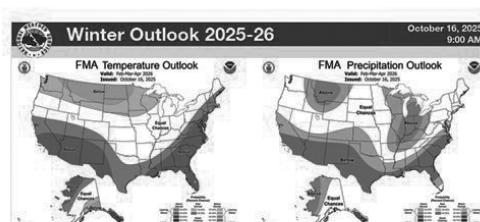
After what has been another very dry and warmer-than-normal fall harvest, the last fall field work is upon us in East Central Illinois. In last month's newsletter, I discussed in detail of approaches to managing soil fertility during drought conditions. Some of those considerations included shifting soil testing to springtime when we typically see better soil conditions, what effects drought conditions have on specific crop nutrients as well as soil pH. Our main concerns moving forward with soil testing this fall include the following: if we can resume, we are considering soil core integrity.

- First off, can we insert the soil probe the full length of the core with relative ease? For most of this fall this simply hasn't been the case.
- When the soil probe is removed the soil cores compacted, loose and fall out immediately upon removing?
- Soil core dry throughout the entire core.

If any of these conditions still exist, then it is likely still to dry for soil sampling and fields should be monitored case by case for suitable conditions.

Last fall we saw very similar conditions in terms of drought conditions and very warm temperatures at times. However, this fall has exceeded these extremes from last year. The million-dollar question moving forward what this means for all existing field work that typically occurs before field conditions completely deteriorate for the season. The month of November in EC IL typically signifies the start of fall anhydrous ammonia season, fall herbicide burndown applications, as well as finishing up any harvest, tillage operations, and cover crop seeding activities. The National Weather Service has indicated that La Niña is expected to persist through early winter before transitioning to neutral conditions for the remaining winter months. This winter is expected to have more seasonable temperatures, along with an above-normal precipitation outlook. I recently had an older farmer tell me extremes typically follow extremes. Could this mean we are in for a snowier winter? However, with improvement for chances with winter precipitation drought conditions may persist into January. So, what does this mean for the remaining field work that needs to be completed? With the current grain prices and commodity prices, along with the uncertainty of world markets, I believe it's still best practice to maximize every dollar spent this fall on inputs, especially including anhydrous ammonia application for our nitrogen needs next growing season.

**Why is waiting until soil temperatures are below 50 °F and trending downward crucial?** When soil temperatures are below 50°F, the majority of naturally occurring soil biology responsible for converting ammonia N to other vulnerable forms of nitrogen subject



to leaching become less active in the soil profile. Additionally, applying a nitrogen stabilizer with anhydrous ammonia further delays the nitrogen conversion as our soil temperatures continue to cool until they freeze. Nitrogen stabilizers also help prevent these conversions during those times we get some warm days in February or even from those winter rain events that often lead to runoff problems. I will not tell growers which stabilizer to use, but I will ensure it contains known active ingredients that effectively prevent nitrogen loss from leaching. This loss is often associated with anhydrous ammonia if the nitrogen stabilizer being considered with NH<sub>3</sub> is neither N-serve from Corteva nor Centuro from Koch. Buyer beware; some products may be recommended to enhance the uptake of NH<sub>3</sub> to reduce loss. However, using these types of products alone or even decreasing the rates of traditional NH<sub>3</sub> stabilizers will likely not achieve the desired results of preventing nitrogen loss until next year's corn crop is ready for N uptake, roughly 6-7 months from now. Additionally, I have been asked about cutting rates of NH<sub>3</sub> stabilizers to save a buck or two. If there are budget constraints associated with fall nitrogen applications, and in terms of protecting that pound of nitrogen applied, my recommendation is not to cut the rate of stabilizers. This would be like having expectations of traveling to Florida but only having enough fuel funds to reach Tennessee. The increased likelihood of nitrogen loss exponentially increases when labeled rates of nitrogen stabilizers are not utilized. Many years of replicated 3rd-party research clearly indicate the importance of stabilizers utilized with NH<sub>3</sub> applications. I also recommend not applying more than half of your total nitrogen needs this fall with anhydrous ammonia. This will allow for in-season course corrections to ensure corn crops next year are not limited by nitrogen.

**Are field conditions conducive to fall anhydrous applications?** If soil conditions have not improved this fall, the loss of nitrogen from volatilization may be a concern and warrant delaying NH<sub>3</sub> applications. Items to take notes include the following when determining field conditions.

1. NH<sub>3</sub> tool bar able to apply product at a consistent desired depth below the soil surface? Much like a field cultivator, the wings of the NH<sub>3</sub> tool maintain a consistent depth across the wings of the toolbar.
2. Are you having problems breaking sheer bolts or knives? This may indicate that the soil conditions are not suitable for application.
3. Can you see NH<sub>3</sub> seeping out of the soil or even smell it after application? This is a good indication that proper sealing of the knife track is not occurring, and NH<sub>3</sub> is being volatilized.

If you are applying NH<sub>3</sub> this fall, don't forget about these essential safety items outlined by the Illinois Fertilizer & Chemical Association.

Anhydrous Ammonia Safety doesn't just happen by accident.

1. Always use your ammonia gloves and chemical goggles when working around ammonia. Never wear contact lenses when working around anhydrous ammonia.
2. Always assume ammonia is present in all equipment or hoses and thoroughly purge the ammonia before inspection or maintenance.
3. Inspect those ammonia hoses for nicks, cuts, soft spots, and coupler slippage. When in doubt, purge and change the hose out.
4. Follow the replacement date indicated by the hose manufacturer, and remember ammonia hoses cannot be repaired.
5. Ensure each nurse tank has 5 gallons of fresh, clean water. Additionally, put a gallon water jug in your truck and tractor.
6. Pre-trip inspection before pulling nurse tanks to and from the field of application. Check the condition of the trailer and the tank before pulling out onto the roadway.
7. Slow down! No more than 25 mph when pulling ammonia tanks.
8. Avoid congested or high-traffic areas when pulling nurse tanks to and from the field of application.
9. You are required to stop at all active rail crossings when pulling nurse tanks to and from the field of application.
10. **ALWAYS** shutoff **ALL** nurse tank valves and disconnect transfer hoses before pulling onto a public roadway. This is required by law. You should never have a "charged" system when sharing the roadway.
11. Nurse tanks should not be operated in low light conditions or before or after sunset UNLESS you have a rotating, flashing amber light on the tank(s). Today's motorists are not as familiar or patient with farm equipment, even in rural Illinois, so it is always best to keep slow-moving vehicles off the roads during non-daylight hours.
12. Never forget the safety chains, even in the field of application. Nurse tank trailers are put to the test during the ammonia season, serving as both highway vehicles and being pulled through rough field conditions. The safety chains can save you from catastrophe if the hitch fails! Hook them up every time.
13. Are your breakaway devices working on the application equipment? This is another safety mechanism designed to prevent releases, but it must be installed correctly and maintained to work effectively. Proper installation and preventive maintenance are key!
14. Never hesitate to make the call if you have an ammonia release. A reportable quantity (RQ) for anhydrous ammonia is 100 pounds (18 gallons) or more. If you are unsure, you have met the RQ threshold; still make the call. Tell the emergency operator exactly what has happened so that law enforcement and fire departments show up prepared to deal with ammonia. Whoever is in possession of the ammonia tank at the time of the release must make this call immediately. A written follow-up report must also be sent to IEMA and the LEPC.

**Growers, do you remember this spring and, at times, delayed planting conditions?** One outcome of delayed planting this year was the explosion of winter annual weeds that seemed to grow this spring. One winter annual weed that seemed more problematic than others was Henbit, or Purple Deadnettle. Both are very closely related. However, growers who applied a fall burndown + a residual-type herbicide in 2024 generally had fewer problems this spring. As we have gone through this fall harvest, I have noticed more fields with germinating henbit and chickweed as early as late September. If growers had problems with winter annuals this spring, I would highly recommend considering a fall burndown, which will control emerging winter annuals and provide a residual effect until next spring. Often, winter annuals can cause secondary problems for next year, including serving as a secondary host to pests like Black Cutworm and Soybean Cyst Nematode. These pests can complicate spring tillage and create unfavorable field conditions for planting. Remember, winter annuals like Henbit are not a "Free Cover Crop"!

If growers or readers of this newsletter have questions or concerns about management strategies for this year, Sunrise FS or I would welcome the opportunity to partner with you. If readers want to contact me personally, please utilize my contact information below.

Eric Beckett, CCA 4R NMS  
Agronomist, Sunrise FS  
217-318-9100  
ebeckett@illinfs.com



# Popcorn Powerhouse

IL top producer of the state snack

I've never told the giver of the stovetop popcorn popper at our wedding how much use and abuse the whirligig has seen over the past 24 years. We never registered for the gadget, but what an unexpected delight for making kettle corn and movie-theater-caliber popcorn. We loved it so much, I have replaced it twice.

Popcorn turns everyday moments into memories – passing a bucket in the theater, grabbing a bag at a ball game or gathering around a fresh bowl for Fourth of July fireworks. More than 300 Illinois farms keep those memories popping and make Illinois a popcorn power. Our state ranks No. 3 in the production of popcorn, one of three primary types of corn grown in the United States along with sweet corn and field corn, the latter for which Illinois ranks No. 2.

More than 20 years ago, Joliet second and third graders successfully lobbied to make popcorn Illinois' official state snack, a fitting choice. I often grab a bag of popcorn at gas stations during road trips, where the airy crunch helps me stay alert on long drives on the road or in the tractor while planting soybeans. At home, the whole grain is my go-to for curbing nightly cravings: light on calories if you skip the butter and caramel, yet versatile in its forms. Our snack cabinet holds oversized pre-popped bags from the wholesale club, a stash of microwave packets, raw kernels from a local farm and pre-measured pouches for the Whirley Pop.

My mom, the lead curator of memories in our family, intentionally crafts moments that stick in memory banks. In that spirit, she bought a legit popcorn machine you find in concession stands. The popper lives most of the time in our farm's scalehouse at our grain storage facility, where it serves the harvest crew. Truck drivers haul in field corn and scale out with popcorn for themselves and for transport to cart drivers and combine operators.

Occasionally, we transport the popcorn machine to the farm office, where we make popcorn for events. Twice a year, it travels to my house for the overnight parties following prom and homecoming for our kids and their friends. They enjoy fresh-popped corn with a glass-bottled soda that I hope pop up moments worth remembering.

*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.*

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Recently, a local farmer faced a difficult situation on the farm a moment when extra hands and support were desperately needed. What happened next was nothing short of inspiring. Members of our community came together in a show of solidarity, rolling in with their equipment, ready to lend a hand and ensure the work got done.

This is the kind of moment that reminds us what makes our community so special. It's not just the shared commitment to agriculture it's the bonds we build with one another, the willingness to step up without hesitation, and the understanding that we are stronger when we work together.

### CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU  
Hours: Monday – Friday  
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
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Contact us at (217) 352-5235  
www.ccfarmbureau.com

We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed their time, machinery, and effort. Your hard work and generosity went far beyond helping with the farm tasks it showed care, compassion, and the true meaning of neighborly support.

At the Champaign County Farm Bureau, our mission goes beyond advocating for agriculture. We are here to connect neighbors, organize support when it's needed most, and provide a helping hand whenever a member of our farming community faces a challenge. If you ever find yourself in a tough spot on the farm, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. No one should have to face difficulties alone, and together, there's no obstacle too big to overcome.

Moments like these reinforce that our community is about more than work it's about family, friendship, and standing together through thick and thin. We are proud to be part of this network of neighbors and friends, and we celebrate the generosity and spirit that makes days like this possible.

Thank you to everyone who showed up, offered support, and reminded us all that our strength comes from the people around us.

*See photos on page 8.*



## THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE POP!

### 1. Heating Up

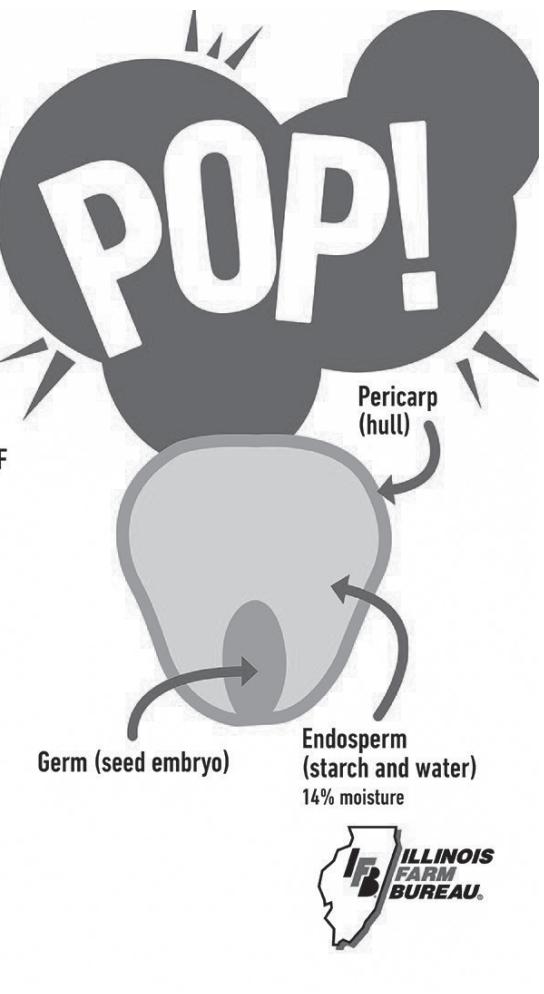
As the kernel is heated, the moisture turns into steam and pressure begins to build. The temperature needs to reach 356° F for the popping process to begin.

### 2. Pressure Cooker Effect

The hard shell traps the steam, turning the inside into a mini pressure cooker. The starch gelatinizes and becomes soft.

### 3. The Pop

When the kernel reaches 135 psi the shell bursts open.



ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU MEMBERS RECEIVE  
**\$500 EXCLUSIVE CASH REWARD**<sup>1,2</sup>  
on an Eligible New Ford Truck<sup>1</sup>  
or Ford Blue Advantage<sup>TM</sup>  
Certified Used Vehicle<sup>2</sup>



Visit [FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau](http://FordRecognizesU.com/FarmBureau)  
today for complete offer details!

## Farm Bureau Signs



If you live in a rural setting and notice that it's difficult for people to find your home, consider stopping by and purchasing a rural road sign. For just \$30, you can solve this issue. You can attach it to your mailbox or put it in your front yard.

**FARM WATCH**  
REPORT SUSPICIOUS  
ACTIVITY OR  
VEHICLES TO  
**(217) 333-8911**



Stop by the Farm Bureau Office and pick up a farmwatch sign. The sign, free of charge, has the Champaign County Sheriff's non-emergency number on it.

# Strong Farms. Strong Voices. Stronger Community.

"Your membership gives farmers a strong voice in policy, strengthens our farms, and builds a thriving community for all."

## Feed The Farmers



Over 3 days, Champaign County Farm Bureau proudly served 775 pork chop lunches to our hardworking local farmers!

Special thanks to Tanna Suits, Dan Duitsman, and Andrew Deedrich with Country Financial, along with the Mahomet FFA, Sigma Alpha, and, as always, the Champaign County Farm Bureau Foundation for all your help and support.

Thank you to TGM and Premier for allowing us to host these lunches at your locations, we couldn't do it without you!



## Neighbors Helping Neighbors



When a farmer needed help, this community showed up, no questions asked. Combines rolled in, trucks lined up, and the work got done.

That's what makes this community so special. Folks look out for each other and lend a hand when it's needed most.

Thank you to everyone who stepped up. You're a reminder of what community is all about. Hard work, kindness, and good neighbors.

## WOMEN'S COMMITTEE RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Submitted by **Kay Place**

### Pumpkin Pie

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp cloves
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 eggs

#### Preparation

Blend sugar, spices, salt  
Beat eggs with mike and combine sugar, spices and pumpkin until smooth  
Pour in shell  
Bake in hot oven (425) 15 minutes - reduce heat to moderate 350 continue baking 40 minutes