



Understanding the 2025 Illinois Farm Bureau Bylaw Changes

What Members Need to Know

Each year, delegates from County Farm Bureaus across Illinois gather at the Illinois Farm Bureau™ Annual Meeting to conduct the organization’s business and vote on policy and governance matters. One important responsibility of those delegates is considering proposed changes to the organization’s bylaws.

At the 2025 Annual Meeting, delegates approved several bylaw amendments related to membership categories and membership timelines. These changes were adopted with the required two-thirds vote of the delegate body and will take effect in stages through 2026. County Farm Bureaus™ operate under their own bylaws, but those bylaws must remain consistent with statewide Illinois Farm Bureau policies. This is due to the “Uniform Cooperative Agreement” that every County Farm Bureau, including the CCFB, and IFB have signed that governs the membership relationship between the two organizations.

While the updates involve some administrative changes, the goal is simple: keep Farm Bureau’s membership structure clear, current, and easy to manage as the organization continues to grow and serve Illinois agriculture.

Simplifying Voting Membership Categories

One of the most significant changes approved by delegates is the consolidation of two current membership classes.

Under the existing structure, Illinois Farm Bureau recognizes both **Voting Member (MM)** and **Professional Member (PM)** classifications. Beginning **September 1, 2026**, these two categories will be combined into a single classification known as **Voting Membership**.

The new category will carry the same statewide privileges that Voting Members currently hold. This means that members who currently hold voting membership status will continue to enjoy the same voting rights and participation opportunities within the organization.

It is important to note that voting rights will continue to apply only to individual members. Business entities such as partnerships, corporations, and trusts may hold memberships but will not have voting privileges under the bylaws.

The primary purpose of this change is to simplify the membership structure and make it easier for members to understand their role within the organization.

Removal of the MS Membership Category

Delegates also approved a bylaw change that removes the MS membership classification from the statewide bylaws. This change will take effect **September 1, 2026**. While this category has existed for many years, it represents a relatively small portion of total memberships across the state. The removal of this classification is part of a broader effort to streamline membership categories and reduce administrative complexity.

For current MS members, the most important message is this: **your support of Farm Bureau continues to matter**. Members in this category have long played an important role in strengthening the organization, supporting agricultural advocacy, and helping maintain a strong voice for Illinois agriculture. Even though the category itself is being phased out, the individuals who hold these memberships remain valued members of the Farm Bureau family.

If you are a current MS member of the CCFB, our office will be reaching out to discuss your membership options as we move through this change.

Updated Timeline for Membership Dues

Another bylaw amendment adopted at the Annual Meeting updates the timeline related to dues payments and membership status. This policy falls under what is called **Membership in**

Good Standing (MIGS).

Under the previous system:

- Membership became **delinquent after 90 days** past the paid-through date.
- Membership was **canceled after 120 days** past the paid-through date.

Beginning **May 1, 2026**, the new timeline will be:

Membership becomes **delinquent after 1 month** past the paid-through date.

Membership is **canceled after 2 months** past the paid-through date.

This update applies to **new memberships and renewals that occur on or after May 1, 2026**. Members whose renewal dates occur prior to that time will continue under the current timeline until their next renewal cycle.

In many ways, this change simply returns the policy to timelines that existed before the implementation of combined billing. It also helps ensure membership records remain accurate and up to date across the organization.

Communicating the Changes to Members

Illinois Farm Bureau and county Farm Bureaus will be working together to make sure members are aware of these updates.

Several communication steps are planned:

- Renewal notices will include a printed insert explaining the updated membership timelines.
- The MyIFB online system will display reminders about the new delinquency and cancellation rules.

Members renewing after May 1, 2026 will begin seeing these reminders as part of their renewal materials.

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April Report

President, Doug Downs



Doug Downs, CCFB President

Someone asked me the other day how much longer I would be writing this article, meaning how long will you be the president? I'm not sure what he was getting at... is he tired of what's in this space and ready for a fresh look (understandable)? Did he think I was wasting his time and got nothing from it (maybe/probably)? Or was he asking how long till you step down and turn it over to someone else? We had officer elections at our annual meeting recently, so you will all have to put up with me in this spot for 9 more issues (not that anyone is counting or anything). Then he says "so, what's next? You need time to do some fishing and golfing right?" I don't fish or golf. "You gonna go on a vacation for a few weeks or something?" No...that would drive me nuts. "Well, watcha gonna do with all that "free time". Interesting observation. I knew when I stepped in here to take my turn that I didn't have any spare time. It's amazing how I've managed to "find that time" and I imagine I'll continue to "find the time". It's funny how that works. At a recent meeting I sat with a former IFB vice president, and he said to me "you know the people who don't have time for these positions are often the ones who are needed the most and make the best board members and volunteers". We are getting ready to have a strategic planning meeting of our board in a few days. The board tenure, terms and such are bound to come up. I'm sure there are some of you who have been asked to serve, and you think you don't have the time. I am that guy. But when push comes to shove, the people who are vested in the production of ag are the people who have to find the time. This is your livelihood and there are becoming less and less of us out here. I've said it before in this column, please consider stepping up and speaking up if asked.

Last month I noted that winter was almost behind us, and surely by time of this publication I can say that with confidence. But today, we had a high of 68 degrees and tomorrow the low is supposed to be 15, so I'm confident that as you read this the planters are ready. Seed stacked and ready to drop. I'm currently unloading seed boxes and chemicals. It's almost time for another season that will have its challenges and, in some way, or another be unlike any other that we have ever seen. At Illinois Farm Bureau, your legislative teams will continue to press for the new farm bill which actually has a real chance of becoming put into law as well as keeping you informed of what might be the next action call. At the county office, summer programs and events are being developed and planned. It's always a busy time.

I'd be remiss to say take care of yourselves and those around you this planting season. Safety and caution start with you. I was talking to a landlord today about the last time I pulled an "all nighter" planting, and that happened to be in 2019, when it happened twice. It's a miracle that nothing got wrapped up in anything else that year, and the more I think about it the more I can't believe I was capable of pulling off 2 of those in the same week. If you have to do something like that (it happens) let's be realistic about what is safe and reasonable. Take care of yourselves. Many depend on you.

Doug Downs
CCFB President

Prime Timers Meeting

April 9, 2026 • 10 am

CCFB Auditorium

Speaker: Scott Eisenhower,

Village of Rantoul Administrator

Entertainment: Gary Fairchild

Please RSVP by April 6

Fried Chicken Buffet Lunch –

Cost \$8 per person

No Walk-Ins

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

April 13 – Spring Fling

• Reservations are required by March 30 – call 217-352-5235

• Meet and greet will begin at 9 am in the CCFB Auditorium.

• Featured speaker is Cheri Burcham: "Looking on the Funny Side"

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What This Means for You

Key Takeaways for Farm Bureau Members

- Your membership benefits and voting rights remain unchanged.
- Two voting member categories will be combined into a single **Voting Membership** class beginning September 1, 2026.
- The MS membership classification will be phased out, but those members remain valued contributors to the organization.
- Beginning May 1, 2026, membership dues must be paid sooner to avoid delinquency or cancellation.
- Paying dues on time will ensure no interruption in your membership status or benefits.

Illinois Farm Bureau and Champaign County Farm Bureau continue to evolve to better serve our members and represent agriculture across Illinois. These bylaw updates are designed to simplify the membership system, keep records accurate, and ensure the organization remains strong and responsive to its members.

As always, if you have questions about your membership or these changes, our office is ready to help. Please reach out to 217-352-5235 or email ccfb@ccfarmbureau.com if you have any questions.

CCFB Calendar of Events

April 2026

April 9	Prime Timers	10 am
April 13	Spring Fling	9 am
April 16	Full Board	6:30 pm
April 21	Governmental Affairs	7:30 am

BenefitHub: Illinois Farm Bureau's New Member Benefit Platform

Illinois Farm Bureau members now have a simpler, smarter way to access and maximize their member benefits. **BenefitHub** is the new, easyto use platform where you can explore all your favorite discounts—and discover new ones—across dozens of everyday categories including travel, tickets, auto, electronics, and more. Many of the top brands in the U.S. are featured, giving members meaningful savings on the things they buy most

Follow these four quick steps to get the best value and maximize savings:

- Start in the BenefitHub portal to compare deals across retailers.
- Buy a discounted gift card when one is available.
- Complete your purchase through the merchant link in BenefitHub, using your gift card.
- Enjoy both the retailer discount and cash back.

Getting Started:

If you previously had an Abenity account, you can sign in to BenefitHub using your existing email and password. New to the platform? Create an account and start saving today.

Visit: <https://ilfb.benefitHub.com>

Need Help?

For account questions, contact BenefitHub Customer Care at 18136752210 or customercare@benefithub.com

BenefitHub members save an average of \$2,500—so why wait? Start exploring your savings at <https://ilfb.benefitHub.com>.

DESKTOP



- Go to <https://ilfb.benefitHub.com>.
- Sign in with your existing username and password or register as a new user by selecting "Don't have an account? Sign up. You will need your membership number to complete sign up."
- Find the best deals and start saving!

MOBILE APP

ANDROID GET IT ON Google Play

- Go to Google Play and search for Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits and install the app.
- Once installed, you will see a log in button. Click it and sign in with your existing BenefitHub account or register to create one. You will need your membership number which can be found on the front of your membership card.
- Once logged in, you will see a welcome page, spotlight offers and a search bar to explore all the savings offered on the platform. Click on the menu button (gear icon at the bottom of the screen) to see all categories.

iPHONE Download on the App Store

- Go to the App Store and search for Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits and install the app.
- Once installed, you will see a log in button. Click it and sign in with your existing BenefitHub account or register to create one. You will need your membership number which can be found on the front of your membership card.
- Once logged in, you will see a welcome page, spotlight offers and a search bar to explore all the savings offered on the platform. Click on the menu button (gear icon at the bottom of the screen) to see all categories.

Announcing Champaign County Farm Bureau's Trips and Tours

Mark Your Calendars • 2026 Trips

May 7, 2026 - Beef House on Broadway – The Beef House – Covington, IN

A concert celebrating 30 seasons! A show you don't want to miss!
 Price Per Person: \$150.00 Deadline to Register or Cancel: April 17, 2026

June 4-5, 2026 - Gaither Vocal Band – Shipshewana, IN ****OVERNIGHT TRIP****

Since the early 1990s, the Gaither Vocal Band has served as a standard-bearer in the world of gospel music. Founded by legendary gospel songwriter and producer, Bill Gaither, this Grammy-winning vocal group has performed in the world's most prestigious venues, including the Sydney Opera House, The Kennedy Center, and Carnegie Hall. Today, the Gaither Vocal Band roster is comprised of five power-packed voices, including Bill Gaither, Wes Hampton, Adam Crabb, Todd Suttles and Reggie Smith. Individually, these men are gifted artists and men of authentic faith. Together, they are known around the world for their stunning vocals, innovative harmonies and life-altering message... a message of grace, hope and redemption.

Enjoy a few hours of shopping on June 5th before heading back home!
 Price Per Person: \$325 Deadline to Register or Cancel: May 1, 2026

July 20, 2026 – A Tribute to the Best of the Best – Starved Rock Lodge, Oglesby, IL

Travel through the decades as Joe Nuccio honors some of the most iconic singers from the 30s to the 70s. Sit back and enjoy the songs of crooners and showmen like Louis Armstrong, Tony Bennett, Perry Como, Bobby Darin, Jimmy Durante, Nat King Cole, Dean Martin, Frank Sinatra, Cab Calloway, and more. Then get your toes

tapping rock and soul singers like Fats Domino, Jerry Lee Lewis, Ray Charles, Elvis, Roy Orbison, Tom Jones, Neil Diamond, and others. It's sure to be an afternoon filled with your favorite songs by the most popular artists of all time..

Price Per Person: \$150 Deadline to Register or Cancel: July 3, 2026

August 19, 2026 – The Buddy Holly Story – Drury Lane Theatre – Oakbrook Terrace, IL

Buddy – The Buddy Holly Story chronicles the life and music of rock and roll pioneer Buddy Holly from his early start in Texas to his meteoric rise to fame and untimely death at the age of 22. Experience the original sound that changed rock and roll music as we know it..

Price Per Person: \$150.00 Deadline to Register or Cancel: July 24, 2026

September 23, 2026 – Ring of Fire – Beef & Boards Theatre – Indianapolis, IN

Set to the legendary songs of Johnny Cash, *Ring of Fire* takes audiences on a heartfelt journey through the Man in Black's iconic career. From the early days of country and gospel to chart-topping hits that defined an era, this spirited musical revue features favorites like "I Walk the Line," "Folsom Prison Blues," and, of course, "Ring of Fire." Full of heart, humor, and the raw honesty that made Cash a legend, the show paints a rich portrait of love, struggle, and the uniquely American sound that still resonates today.

Price Per Person: \$150.00 Deadline to Register or Cancel: September 4, 2026

November 20, 2026 – Holiday Cruise – Celebration Belle – Moline, IL

Enjoy a tradition holiday meal and listen to your favorite holiday tunes! Get ready for some holiday cheer with a Christmas Show presented by Aaron & Jade from Bloom. Join them for this fabulous combination of Christmas Spirit, music, and dance!

Price Per Person: \$150.00 Deadline to Register or Cancel: October 30, 2026

Saving Tomorrow's Agriculture Resources (STAR)

This survey aims to assess the adoption and feasibility of conservation practices among urban growers. Insights gathered will help inform the development of an urban agriculture conservation evaluation tool.

At STAR, we provide a free, simple, STAR Tool for farmers which includes a questionnaire asking about conservation practices used on their field as well as a conservation innovation plan with suggestions for technical and financial resources. Farmers receive a STAR rating from 1 to 5, which helps them identify the next steps in their conservation journey.


Our current Tool has proven very successful for use with row crop farmers. We partner with Siemer Milling Company, offering financial rewards to producers who improve their rating from year to year, and we support the Illinois Department of Agriculture's cost-share program.

To expand the STAR Tool's benefits to more growers across the state, we are developing an Urban Ag STAR Tool for diversified growing systems including community gardens and urban farms.

To capture relevant on-the-ground knowledge from farmers, researchers, agronomists, and other stakeholders, we created a survey to assist in developing our field form and scoring system. This allows us to assess conservation practice adoption and feasibility. We will consider these findings alongside the quantitative results from our literature reviews, grounding our Tool in both scientific evidence and real-world applicability.

Participation is voluntary and the survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey may be completed anonymously, but those who would like to be entered into our raffle to win a gift card will be asked to provide their contact information.

Survey link: <https://forms.gle/JwzkEMFAbd8PPJd58>



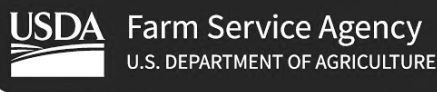
ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU YOUNG LEADERS

2026 YOUNG LEADER AG INDUSTRY TOUR

VERMONT • NEW HAMPSHIRE • MAINE

YL Ag Industry Tour

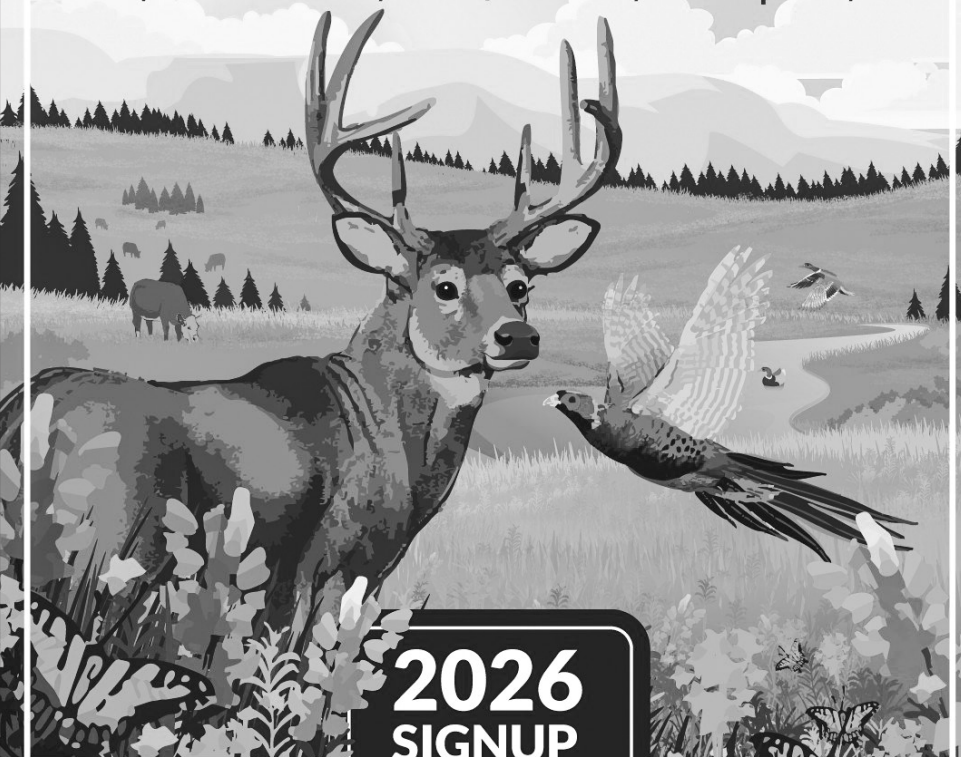
Members under the age of 35 are invited to apply to attend the 2026 Ag Industry Tour to the Northeast! Contact Emily@ccfarmbureau.com if you want to learn more!



CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

SIGNUP PERIOD

<p>CONTINUOUS CRP</p> <p>Feb. 12, 2026 - March 20, 2026</p>	<p>GENERAL CRP</p> <p>March 9, 2026 - April 17, 2026</p>
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2026 SIGNUP



FARMER BRIDGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Enrollment period opens Feb. 23, 2026 & closes April 17, 2026.

Pre-filled applications available online to producers with a Login.gov account

FSA.USDA.GOV/FBA

planting a legacy



CCFBFOUNDATION.COM | CCFBFOUNDATION | CCFB_FOUNDATION

AG in the Classroom 2025-2026

Providing hands-on learning opportunities that represent our industry in a truthful and modern way.

www.ccfbfoundation.com/aitc

Beef

Beautiful Bovine

Students are learning breeds of beef cows, what they provide, and participate in becoming a cow. One volunteer gets to dress up as a cow. The rest of the class designs a cow headband from one of the breeds. Fisher Elementary Kindergarten students became cows, mooing and pretending to eat grass.



Chicken Life Cycle

Students in 4th and 2nd grades learned the chicken life cycle together. The 4th grade classes checkout our incubator resources and cared for the eggs. They invited the 2nd grade classes to see and hold the baby chicks when they hatched.

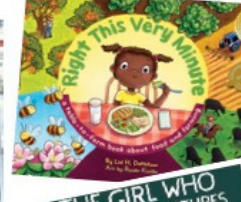
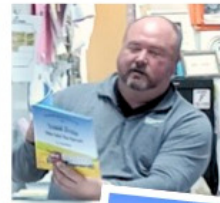


Read Across America

Our Agriculture Experts volunteered during Read Across America March 2-6th. Nine volunteers visited 11 schools and read to 583 students. They read books about dairy farms, farm to table, Temple Grandin and Semi Sam.



- GREG STIERWALT
- DOUG HANSEN
- PAULA ZWILLING
- SIGMA ALPHA
- ROD STOLL
- BAILEY CONRADY
- JILL HENNINGER
- CASEY HETTINGER
- TY KELLEMS



Ty Kellemms read to the 4th grade classes at Fisher Elementary on behalf of CIT Trucks and as a Board Member of Champaign County Farm Bureau Foundation. He read "The Trucking Adventures of Semi Sam: Helps with the Harvest."

Teacher Appreciation
Wednesday, April 29th
4:00-6:30pm



Keep in Touch

QR Code to ccfbfoundation.com/aitc

sarah@ccfarmbureau.com
julie@ccfarmbureau.com

Champaign County Ag in the Classroom

GOLF CART RAFFLE



GRAND PRIZE:
NEW STREET LEGAL GOLF CART

Support Scholarships & Ag in the Classroom!

\$100 /TICKET
FOUR CHANCES TO WIN!

Additional Prizes:
Blackstone Grill Package, Doni Pizza Oven & Cash!
Drawing Time/Location: Tuesday, September 8, 2026 at Flight Night for Agriculture at Riggs Beer Company
**Do not need to be present to win.*

Sponsored By: **SUNRISE FS**



DO YOU HAVE YOUR LUCKY TICKET YET?
Tickets sell out fast. Buy yours TODAY!

Click the QR Code to Purchase Online or visit our website:
www.ccfbfoundation.com/raffle



19th You're Invited Annual CCFB Foundation Gala

June 11, 2026 - 5:30pm Pear Tree Estate

For Sponsorship & Ticket Information
www.ccfbfoudation.com/gala



FUEL Grants

The FUEL Grant helps students pursuing hands-on, technical ag careers—like precision ag tech, diesel power, ag operations management, vet tech, landscape design and more.

Whether it's tuition, books, tools, or equipment, this grant is built to remove roadblocks and help students move forward!

Application Deadline: April 15th

Apply today at **CCFBFOUNDATION.COM/FUEL**

SUNRISE



JIM MEINHART,
GENERAL MANAGER

From The Field

What Farmers Need to Know Before Spraying Liberty® ULTRA, STRYAX™ or other Approved Over-The-Top Dicamba formulations This Season To Stay ESA Compliant

A practical compliance checklist for farmers who self-apply herbicides

Across Central Illinois, many growers apply their own crop protection products. Recent EPA mitigation requirements tied to some herbicides mean there are a few extra steps to check before heading to the field. Fortunately, most Illinois farms already meet many of these requirements through normal conservation practices.

If Liberty® ULTRA or Over-The-Top Approved Dicamba Formulations is part of your weed control program this season, use the quick guide below to stay compliant and avoid surprises.

Quick Pre-Spray Checklist

Before applying

- Check Bulletins Live Two! for PULA restrictions
- Confirm spray drift buffer requirements
- Evaluate runoff risk relative to sensitive habitat
- Use the PALM mitigation calculator if needed
- Save documentation and spray records

Understanding Spray Drift Buffers

For ground broadcast applications, a downwind buffer is likely needed if wind is blowing toward a sensitive or critical habitat area. If the wind is not blowing toward one of these areas, a spray buffer is not required.

- Areas that may count toward a buffer include:
 - Untreated crop fields
 - Bare ground or field edges
 - Roads or farm lanes
 - Mowed grass areas
 - Hedgerows or windbreaks
 - CRP acres or filter strips
 - Buildings, grain bins, or other farm structures

Vegetation can also reduce buffer requirements. Shelterbelts or tall vegetation along field edges may reduce the required buffer by 50–75%, depending on height and density.

Check for Pesticide Use Limitation Areas (PULA)

Before applying, applicators must verify whether the field falls within a Pesticide Use Limitation Area.

1. Visit the Bulletins Live Two! website
2. Locate the field you plan to spray
3. Print or save the generated bulletin as documentation

If the field is within a PULA, the bulletin will provide additional instructions and may include date restrictions for spraying.

Evaluate Runoff Risk

Runoff mitigation requirements depend on whether the field is within proximity to the upslope of a sensitive habitat.

- If the field:
 - An example maybe is more than 1,000 feet away from sensitive habitat
 - Does not slope toward sensitive habitat

Then additional runoff mitigation is typically not required.

Use the PALM Mitigation Calculator

Fields in runoff mitigation zones must accumulate at least three mitigation points before applying Liberty® ULTRA or newly ap-

proved Over-The-Top Formulations of Dicamba.

- Common examples found on many Illinois farms:
- Non-irrigated fields
- No-till systems
- Reduced tillage systems
- Field slopes under 3%
- Soil textures with higher sand content
- Working with a Certified Crop Adviser (CCA)
- Documenting mitigation points using the calculator

Central Illinois Example

Many Champaign, Douglas, Edgar, Vermillion, and surrounding county farms already meet the three-point mitigation requirement without making additional changes.

- Non-irrigated corn/soybean rotation fields
- No-till soybean production
- Typical prairie slopes below 3%
- Existing grass waterways or filter strips

In many cases, documenting these existing practices in the PALM mitigation calculator is enough to meet the requirement. Keep Good Records

- Bulletins Live Two! verification report
- PALM mitigation calculator results
- Standard pesticide application records

Keeping these records electronically or in a spray log helps demonstrate compliance if questions arise later. Key websites for monitoring weather conditions and herbicide labels insights: please use the following.

- www.weather.gov
- www.stryaxapplicationrequirements.com (Stryax™ Newly Approved Dicamba)
- www.greenbook.net
- www.epa.gov/Endangered-species/bulletins-live-two-view-bulletins
- www.epa.gov/pesticides/mitigation-menu-measure-descriptions#pesticide-runoff
- www.epa.gov/pesticides/mitigation-menu#mitigation-options

Bottom Line for Illinois Growers

The additional Liberty® ULTRA or Over-The-Top Approved formulations of Dicamba mitigation requirements may sound complicated, but most Central Illinois farms already meet many of the criteria through standard conservation practices and good agronomy.

The key is simply checking the required tools, documenting the results, and saving records before spraying.

A few minutes of preparation can prevent compliance headaches during the season.

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, please utilize my contact information below.

Eric Beckett, CPag, CCA 4RNMS

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5 Less Obvious Reasons to Check on Your Insurance Coverage

by Christy McFarland

An article about insurance? Snooze. We get it. Insurance isn't the flashiest topic, but it's an important one. There are definitely those more obvious reasons to adjust your coverage, like when you buy a new car or move. But what about those less obvious reasons?



Robert Lalumendier
217-352-3341

Your teen starts driving

If you have a teen driver in the household, or one on the horizon, you might want to consider checking in on your auto's liability coverage. If your teen gets in an accident and injures someone, the medical bills could be detrimental to your overall financial well-being. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), 16-19 year olds are more likely to get in an auto accident than any other age group¹. Teenage boys are even more at risk than girls. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 16-19 year old boys were two times more likely to get in an accident than teen girls. Don't wait to check in on your coverage. According to the IIHS, 16-17 year olds are even more likely to be involved in a car accident compared to older teens ages 18 and 19².



Preston Engel
217-974-7949

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 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.



Andrew Deedrich
217-359-3941

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.



Tim Osterbur
217-469-2033



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



Jordan Johnson
217-485-3010



Tim Bridges
217-586-6170



Drew Arteaga
217-469-9800



Dawn Babb
217-892-0291



Soybean: Small Bean With A Big Resume

If I were a crop, I might be a soybean. I'm short, low drama and work best behind the scenes. My mood can shift from tolerant and forgiving (planting season) to an annoying attention to detail (harvest). But chocolate holds it all together. (Soy is the key; I'll explain).

All of that is really by comparison to corn, the primary crop alternative in Illinois. We live in the Corn Belt. Corn gains name fame for its visual dominance in acres. We find fascination in corn mazes, and the most common consumer-facing farm policy conversations – like ethanol – involve corn.

Unbeknownst to most citizens, Illinois grows more than 20 million tons of soybeans annually and claims the reigning title of No. 1 soybean state in the nation. The achievement reached the heart of Springfield, where legislators voted the soybean as the Illinois state bean in 2025.

Soybeans make a great team with corn as a rotational crop companion and literally bring the muscle with their protein punch. Our FFA chapter packed 4,000 non-perishable meals for local food pantries using soy protein, a budget-friendly, high-protein staple. Soy protein is a common ingredient in meat, both plant-based alternatives and the real thing. Soybean meal, the byproduct after removing the seed's oil, is the nation's top high-protein feed that brings chicken, pork, eggs and dairy to the table.

The average American consumes nearly half a cup of soybeans in some form every day, which could include cooking oil, margarine, soy milk and protein shakes. Soy lecithin keeps chocolate and cocoa butter from separating. Hooray for soy holding together my bite-sized sweet fix after lunch, which likely was a salad that wouldn't exist without dressing, a soy-dominant lifeline for the fresh greens.

Our farm fuels its tractors and trucks with soy-based biodiesel. Soy oil is a named ingredient in plastics for John Deere and the foam in the seats of Ford vehicles. This month, I will see the bean more than my family as I plant some 300 million of those pea-sized seeds across our farm.

Thankfully, soybeans tolerate a wider range of "good-enough" conditions during planting season. Corn prefers perfection. The tides turn come harvest, when the bean gets moody: moisture content rapidly shifts from too wet to too dry, and the mature, standing crop's harvestability is notoriously sensitive to weather.

Beyond that, soybeans check the boxes for Illinois: rotational cropping systems, soil types, climate and access to exports in a state literally shaped by rivers. As the top U.S. agricultural export crop, soybeans bring billions of dollars to America's economy.

Those are some cool beans.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her parents and brother in Knox County, where they grow corn, soybeans and hay, raise beef cattle and operate side businesses related to the family operation.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week

2024 Statistics

- There were no fewer than 34 grain related entrapments in 2024 representing a 25% increase from 2023, with the balance of 17 involving livestock waste handling facilities, entanglements and falls in and around the grain handling facilities. (Source: Purdue University)
- No fewer than 51 cases involving agricultural confined spaces were documented, including 22 fatal and 29 non-fatal cases, representing a 38.6% decrease over the 83 cases in 2022, and a 7% decrease since 2023. (Source: Purdue University)
- Indiana and Missouri both experienced the most confined space-related cases in 2024 (5), followed by Illinois, Nebraska, and Wisconsin, each experienced 4 cases each.
- Indiana reported the most grain-entrapment cases in 2024 (5). Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Illinois and Nebraska, in that order, have historically recorded the most grain entrapment cases

BODY MECHANICS 101: ERGONOMICS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2026
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.



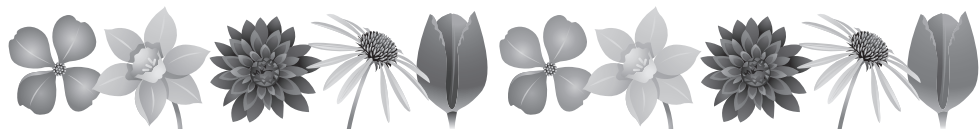
CRITICAL SAFETY DEVICES

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2026
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.



EFFECTIVE SAFETY TRAINING

FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 2026
10:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.



Please Join Us For Our 2nd Annual Happy Hour!

April 1st, 2026 4 p.m.-8 p.m.

Riggs Beer Company
1901 S High Cross Rd, Urbana, IL 61802

RSVP:



- ✓ Free Drink Ticket With Admission
- ✓ Light Refreshments
- ✓ Expert Panel of Farmers & Researchers
- ✓ Rainfall Simulator
- ✓ Door Prize Giveaways!

Questions? Contact us!
info@ccswcd.com 217-352-3536 x. 3

This Event is Brought to You By:



Women's Committee Hosted Matt Riggs Speaking On Agrivoltaics



Young Ag Leaders

Young Ag Leaders volunteered at the Eastern Illinois Foodbank and packaged potatoes for the March meeting.



WOMEN'S COMMITTEE RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Submitted by Loretta Stoerger

A Cool Refreshing Dessert

Ingredients

- 1 box regular Yellow Cake Mix
- 8 oz package of cream cheese (soft)
- 3 cups of milk (little vanilla)
- 2 small vanilla instant puddings
- Crushed pineapple (drain well)

- 1 large Cool Whip – put on before pineapple
- Coconut – OPTIONAL

Preparation

- Mix cake mix as stated on box
- Put in jelly roll pans
- Bake as directed

- Cool cake
- Mix pudding and milk with vanilla together, add cream cheese
- Beat well
- Spread pudding mixture on cake, then spread Cool Whip on top
- Put pineapple on top of Cool Whip
- Add coconut on top of pineapple if desired