

## CCFB's Director of Engagement - Emily Cler ALOT Graduate

Emily Cler of Champaign County Farm Bureau graduated from Illinois Farm Bureau's Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow (ALOT) program, a comprehensive leadership development course, in March.

Cler was among the 13 individuals representing 10 counties across Illinois in this year's graduating class. The class featured a diverse mix of full-time and part-time farmers, as well as agricultural professionals, reflecting a wide range of experiences across the industry.

Cler is the Director of Engagement at the Champaign County Farm Bureau, where she helps connect the community with local agriculture and supports programs that strengthen the county's farming heritage. She lives on a farm with her husband and two daughters at one of the highest points in Champaign County. In her free time, Emily enjoys spending time outdoors with her family.

Now in its 47th year, ALOT has graduated nearly 1,300 leaders since 1979. The seven-session program includes more than 80 hours of instruction focused on communication skills, political engagement, agricultural economics and global issues. Sessions are led by university experts, industry professionals and Illinois Farm Bureau staff.

This year's program also placed an added emphasis on public speaking and communication, responding to participant interest in building confidence and leadership presence. Through hands-on exercises and presentations, participants strengthened their ability to share agriculture's story and lead in their communities.

"Through the ALOT program, I



Emily Cler and IFB President Philip Nelson

learned a lot about myself, both personally and professionally," Cler said. "It helped me realize how I communicate and that not everyone operates the same way, which has pushed me to take a step back before reacting or speaking. One of the best parts was the connections and friendships I made along the way. Overall, ALOT helped me grow as a person and gave me skills I'll carry with me moving forward."

Program coordinators noted the 2026 class brought a strong mix of backgrounds and leadership experience, creating opportunities for participants to learn not only from instructors, but from each other.

"The ALOT program is a building block in a leader's journey," said Tammie Obermark, IFB's training and development manager. "Participants bring different experiences to the table, and throughout the program, they grow by challenging themselves and learning from one another. The skills they gain don't just stay within Farm Bureau. They carry into their communities, their businesses and the agriculture industry as a whole."

Throughout the program, participants engaged in sessions covering leadership development, government affairs, agriculture economics, media training and professional skills. The program culminates in a capstone group presentation, where participants apply what they've learned to real-world scenarios.

ALOT is sponsored by Illinois Farm Bureau, COUNTRY Financial, Prairie Farms and GROWMARK.

Applications for the 2027 ALOT program will be available this fall.



Class of 2026 ALOT graduates



Congrats Emily!

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



# May Report



Doug Downs, CCFB President

## President, Doug Downs

I recently attended the Legislative Ag Day in Springfield at the Capitol. As I understand, it's not the same as it was 20 years ago when farm bureau sponsored the event. Farm Bureau used to have a heavy presence at the event and still does. This year, President Nelson encouraged the county farm bureaus to send people to this event, and even though I'm not much of a politician, I did go and did enjoy meeting and interacting with a few politicians as well as the "political team" at Illinois Farm Bureau. This team is full of young up and coming vibrant folks with a lot of energy and passion for ag. I spent a good deal of time talking with our new national legislative leader Rebecca Barnett who recently joined the team coming from Alabama Farmers Federation, but who is originally from NE California near the Oregon and Nevada border. Talk about a dynamic cultural person. She really understands things at a national level.

Another person who caught me that day right off the bat was Mark Ramey who is the assistant state legislative director. He grabbed me, pulled me aside, and said congratulations! Having no idea what he was referring to, I asked why and he stated that on the most recent action request from farm bureau, your county submitted over a hundred. Like twice as much as the second closest. "What's happened". I'll tell you all I've been mentioning this in our boardroom, and maybe it's spreading, I don't know, but it only takes 10 seconds to do one of these after you've done it once. The email or text link takes you to a site that automatically populates your info if you've done it before, and all you have to do is hit "send" or "submit" and that prewritten letter that IFB has written in support or opposition to a bill is sent. You don't have to type any message or say a word. It can't be easier. Mr. Raney stated it's impressive for a county to make that much noise and it really gets the legislators' attention. I want to thank all of you who did that and to encourage you to keep it up. If you've never done it before, it's the easiest political move you can make and it's so easy even a non-political person like me can make a difference.

Another interesting note while this action request was happening is that I got a call from a good neighbor who wanted to do it but was having some trouble. I don't know what that trouble ended up being, but I made a call to the division, and they contacted my neighbor and got it worked out. So, my message is that if you have ever had trouble with this, please call the office and ask for help. It only takes once. It is designed to be super simple, but occasionally a glitch might cause some unintended issue. Our office can get you straightened out or even get you set up so that the next time an action request comes out, you are ready to make a difference.

We appreciate all your member support.

Doug Downs  
CCFB President

## Prime Timers Meeting

May 14, 2026 • 10 am

CCFB Auditorium

*Speaker: Julia Rietz,*

*Champaign County State's Attorney*

*Entertainment: Marvin Lee Flessner*

**Please RSVP by May 11**

**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

*Next Meeting - May 11*

*CCFB Auditorium - 9:30 am*

*Speaker - Jennifer Gussman,*

*Villas of Hollybrook*

*Lunch to follow at Olive Garden.*

## CCFB Calendar of Events

### May 2026

<i>May 11</i>	<i>Women's Committee</i>	<i>9:30 am</i>
<i>May 14</i>	<i>Prime Timers</i>	<i>10 am</i>

**HOW TO ENTER:**

- Share the advantage of being an Illinois Farm Bureau member on your Facebook and/or Instagram account between March 22 at 8 a.m. CT and May 10 at 5 p.m. CT.
- Tag Illinois Farm Bureau's account.
- Make sure that your post is publicly available.

**EACH WINNER RECEIVES:**

- The honor of throwing out a ceremonial first pitch before the St. Louis vs Chicago game on July 30 at 1:15 p.m. Five all-inclusive suite tickets to the game.

**DETAILS:**  
ifb.org/  
PutMeInCoach

### DESKTOP



1. Go to <https://ifb.benefitHub.com>.
2. 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."
3. Find the best deals and start saving!

### MOBILE APP



#### ANDROID

1. Go to Google Play and search for Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits and install the app.
2. 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.
3. 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

1. Go to the App Store and search for Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits and install the app.
2. 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.
3. 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

### 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 the 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

## Women's Committee Sewing Group: A Little Update

The Women's Committee sewing group has been staying busy and enjoying time together these past few months. They have had a good mix of projects going, from quilts to smaller items, and it's always nice to see what everyone is working on.

One of the best parts of the group is how willing everyone is to help each other out. Whether it's figuring out a pattern, fixing a mistake, or just sharing ideas, there's always someone ready to lend a hand. You don't have to be an expert to join, there's plenty of learning as they go.

They have also continued working on items to donate locally, which makes the time spent sewing feel even more worthwhile. It's a good feeling knowing something we made might brighten someone else's day.



Of course, it's not just about sewing. It's a chance to visit, catch up, and take a break from the usual routine. The conversation is just as important as the projects.

If you've ever thought about joining us, we'd be glad to have you. Bring whatever you're working on, or just come and see what we're about.

## Entrepreneurs Needed To Rise To The Challenge

The Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge is a national business competition that showcases U.S. startups developing innovative solutions that address challenges facing America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities. Now in its 13th year, the Challenge was the first national business competition of its kind focused exclusively on rural entrepreneurs.

The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is looking to identify the top entrepreneurs who are addressing both traditional challenges farmers face on their operation, such as access to labor, optimizing yield and reducing operating costs, and entrepreneurs who are addressing new challenges facing farmers and rural communities.

The overall winner of the competition will receive \$100,000 in startup funds, the runner-up will be awarded \$25,000 and two additional business owners who advance to the final four round will receive \$10,000.

Farm Bureau is offering a total of \$145,000 in startup funds throughout the course of the competition. After the application period closes on June 5, 10 semi-finalist teams will be selected and announced on Sept. 2. Next, the 10 semi-finalist teams will pitch virtually to compete for a spot in the final four round of the contest.



### Cream of the Crop Photo Contest

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs is calling on young Illinois photographers to submit their agriculture-related photos for the 2026 Cream of the Crop Photography Contest.

Winners in three different age categories will be awarded Bright Start college savings account scholarships ranging from \$250 to \$1,000.

The competition, now in its 14th year, provides students ages 8 to 18 with a creative opportunity to share their vision of agriculture in our state.

The Treasurer's Office is now accepting electronic submissions for the Cream of the Crop Photo Contest. Each participating student may submit up to two photos by June 12, 2026.

A panel of outside judges will choose the top photographs in three age-based categories: ages 8-10, 11-14, and 15-18. Bright Start scholarships of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 will be awarded to students who place first, second, or third in each of the three categories.

# planting a legacy



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## AG in the Classroom 2025-2026

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

[www.ccfbfoundation.com/aite](http://www.ccfbfoundation.com/aite)



### Cattle Breeding

Students used Starburst candies representing cattle traits, such as beef production, disease resistance, and fast growth rate, to learn how farmers can develop a specific herd. They discovered the unreliability of natural breeding when they didn't get to pick the person in their class to "cross" their Starburst with versus the greater success with selective breeding when they were able to go about the classroom finding the trait they wanted.



Thank you to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and Illinois Beef for providing these awesome coloring and activity books for the students to take home.



### Hatching Ag Education



66 classrooms

Champaign County is replenishing the hen and rooster population with the help of classrooms. Students learn the life cycle of a chicken, nutrition, chick care and much more.

Schools that participated are: Uni High School, Toro, Robeson, Stratton, Booker T. Washington, Holy Cross, Unity West, Coop Nursery School, Lincoln Trail, Fisher, Thomas Paine, South Side, Edison, Bottenfield, Kenwood, Prairieview Ogden South, CECC, Pleasant Acres, St. Joseph, Westview, Restore/RISE, and Yankee Ridge.

792 fertilized eggs

9 teachers trained  
2 sessions

1892 students impacted

50 pounds of chick feed

23 schools and learning centers



**Upcoming Gala**  
June 11  
Pear Tree Estates  
Do you have your tickets yet?



### Keep in Touch

QR Code to [ccfbfoundation.com/aite](http://ccfbfoundation.com/aite)

[sarah@ccfarmbureau.com](mailto:sarah@ccfarmbureau.com)  
[julie@ccfarmbureau.com](mailto: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, Ooni 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](http://www.ccfbfoundation.com/raffle)



# 19<sup>th</sup> You're Invited Annual CCFB Foundation Gala

June 11, 2026 - 5:30pm

Pear Tree Estate



For Sponsorship & Ticket Information  
[www.ccfbfoudation.com/gala](http://www.ccfbfoudation.com/gala)

# Welcome!

The CCFB Foundation is pleased to welcome Jill Henninger and Michael Youmans to our Board of Directors. We look forward to their insight and leadership as we continue to grow and advance our mission.



**Jill Henninger**  
Growmark



**Michael Youmans**  
Clarkson Grain



**Nathan Hubbard**  
COUNTRY Financial  
Agency Manager



**Bret Kroencke**  
217-359-9391



**Dan Punkay**  
217-328-0023



**Kolby Jackson**  
217-586-5030



**Austin Beaty**  
217-352-2652



**Chris Greenwold**  
217-355-8675



**Jordan McDaniel**  
217-352-9817



**Robert Lalumendier**  
217-352-3341



**Barry Karuzis**  
217-352-4555



**Preston Engel**  
217-974-7949



**Tanna Suits**  
217-892-0200



**Andrew Deedrich**  
217-359-3941



**Tony Wesselman**  
217-352-3466



**Tim Osterbur**  
217-469-2033



**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

## 9 Tips To Keep Your RV Tip-Top

by COUNTRY Financial

Take care of your RV, and it'll take care of you!

If your home is the biggest investment of your life, purchasing an RV could be a close second. For all the joy it can bring your family, the cost is just part of the equation. Maintaining your RV is just as much of a commitment. But it's easier than you think.

If you're new to the RVing world, here are a few of our favorite maintenance tips to get you started.

### 1. Treat it like you treat your car

That means regularly changing the oil, tire rotation, brake inspection, filter replacement and other fundamental maintenance. Never start a lengthy road trip without checking the tire pressure, fluids and filters.

### 2. Roof upkeep

You should be checking all the seals and seams on your RV's roof at a minimum of two times a year. It's easy for water to collect on top of a flat roof, so if you ignore this step, you could be looking at thousands of dollars in repairs. If you have a rubberized roof on your RV, it should be professionally treated at least once a year to keep it pristine.

### 3. Battery maintenance

Some RVs come with so-called "maintenance-free" batteries, but that doesn't mean they can be ignored. Check them before every trip and at least once every six months. After 3-5 years, replace them. Don't forget to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors and CO2 monitors at least once a year, too.

### 4. Generator upkeep

Run your RV's generator at least once a month, whether you're planning a trip or not.

### 5. Tank tips

The last thing you want is your freshwater, grey or black tanks going kaput, especially when you're on the road.

- Freshwater tanks: Flush them at least two times per year and use a simple bleach and water solution to help prevent any bacteria or odors from building up.
- Grey water tanks: Odor is the biggest issue with grey tanks, but there's an easy fix. Just pick up some grey water odor blockers to prevent those musty smells.
- Black tanks: Only use approved black tank chemicals to break down solids. Flush the system regularly and don't forget the biodegradable TP.

### 6. Clean your awnings

Give them a good wash a few times a year, because they easily capture mold and mildew over time. Let them dry completely before you retract them back in.

### 7. Clean your slide outs

It's easy for dirt and grime to build up, so keeping them clean will save you headaches down the road. Don't forget to lubricate the sliding mechanism and any window seals.

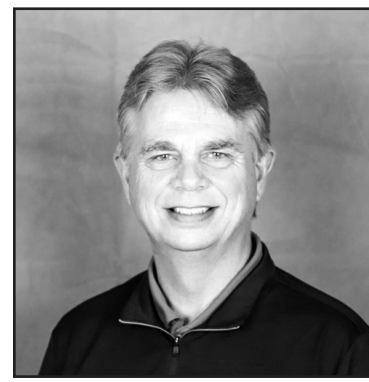
### 8. When in doubt ... hire a pro

Not a DIYer? Find a local pro. Your RV is a massive investment, but it's like taking care of a home and car all in one. If you don't want the hassle of all the maintenance on your list of chores, find an RV maintenance/repair shop you trust to do the work for you.

### 9. Read your owner's manual

Whenever in doubt, refer to your RV's owner's manual for more upkeep tips.

# SUNRISE



**JIM MEINHART,**  
GENERAL MANAGER

## Spring Stand Counts & Replant Decisions: Protecting Yield Potential and Profitability

Spring planting conditions across East Central IL are rarely perfect, and 2026 has been no exception. Cool soil temperatures, excessive rainfall, soil crusting, insect pressure, and seedling diseases can all contribute to uneven or reduced stands in both corn and soybeans. When fields don't look as expected, the natural reaction is often to consider replanting. However, replanting is one of the most costly and risk-sensitive decisions a grower can make.

Rather than reacting emotionally, successful replant decisions should be based on a step-by-step evaluation of agronomics, economics, and yield potential. In many cases, the existing stand—while imperfect—may still offer greater profitability than starting over. The following framework provides practical guidance to help farmers make sound, data-driven decisions this spring.

### SOYBEAN REPLANT DECISIONS

Soybeans are a highly adaptable crop with a strong ability to compensate for lower populations. Because of this flexibility, replanting decisions in soybeans should be made carefully.

#### Step 1: Measure Population Accurately

The first step is to determine the actual plant population. For row-planted soybeans, use the 1/1000th acre method. For drilled beans, use a hoop method. Take at least five representative counts across the field, avoiding bias toward either the best or the worst areas. The use of aerial imagery can further reduce bias in stand counts and often provide a more complete assessment. At Sunrise FS, we have the tools in place to aid with these decisions.

Row Spacing (inches)	Length of Row (1/1000 <sup>th</sup> acre)
7.5	69' 8"
15	34' 10"
20	26' 2"
30	17' 5"

Hoop Diameter (inches)	Multiplier
18	24,662
21	18,119
24	13,872
28.25	10,000
30	8,878
36	6,165

For example, if you count an average of 98 plants in a 1/1000th acre sample, your population is 98,000 plants per acre. Accurate stand counts are critical—estimating visually often leads to poor decisions.

#### Step 2: Evaluate Stand Adequacy and Uniformity

Research across Illinois and the Midwest shows that maximum soybean yield is typically achieved at populations around 100,000 plants per acre. However, soybeans can compensate remarkably well at lower populations by increasing branching and pod set.

Uniform stands of as few as 50,000 plants per acre have been shown to produce near-optimal yields under good conditions. The key factor is not just population, but uniformity. Large gaps in the stand reduce the crop's ability to close canopy, allowing weeds to compete for light, water, and nutrients.

#### Step 3: Evaluate Plant Health

Not all emerged plants should be counted. Only include plants that are likely to survive and contribute to yield. Carefully inspect plants for:

- Stem damage or girdling
- Herbicide injury
- Insect feeding (such as bean leaf beetle)
- Disease symptoms (damping-off, root rot)

Understanding the cause of stand loss is essential. If the issue was environmental (cold, wet soils), replanting under improved conditions may help. If the issue was insect or disease pressure, adjustments such as seed treatments or insecticide use may be necessary.

#### Step 4: Compare the Yield Potential of the Existing Stand vs. the Replant

Planting date plays a major role in soybean yield potential. Fields planted in late April to early May typically achieve maximum yield potential. As planting is delayed, yield declines:

- Approximately 0.25 bushels per acre per day through May
- Approximately 0.5 bushels per acre per day from late May into June

A replant in late May can reduce yield potential by about 7%, while a mid-June replant can reduce yield potential to roughly 80% of maximum. In many cases, an early-planted thin stand will outperform a later-planted perfect stand.

#### Step 5: Fill-In vs Full Replant

When stands fall below 100,000 plants per acre, filling into the existing stand is often more beneficial than completely replanting. Research from the University of Wisconsin shows that preserving the original planting date provides a yield advantage that is difficult to overcome with later planting.

Full replanting should generally be reserved for situations where stands are extremely low or non-uniform to the point that yield potential is severely compromised.

#### Step 6: Consider Economics and Herbicide Programs

Before making a final decision, evaluate the economic impact. Replanting costs include seed, fuel, labor, and potential additional herbicide applications. Residual herbicides applied earlier may limit replant options or require adjustments to the weed control program.

Additionally, crop insurance requirements should be reviewed. In many cases, an adjuster must evaluate the field before replanting, and some policies may not cover "fill-in" situations.

### CORN REPLANT DECISIONS

Corn is far less forgiving than soybeans when it comes to stand loss and uneven emergence. As a result, replant decisions in corn require closer scrutiny and more detailed analysis.

#### Step 1: Evaluate Final Population

Take at least five stand counts across the field, including areas with different soil types, drainage patterns, and topography. Evaluate plant health by examining roots and seed reserves to determine whether plants can recover.



It is important to recognize that some fields may only require partial replanting rather than a full-field approach.

#### Step 2: Evaluate Stand Uniformity

Uniformity is one of the most critical factors influencing corn yield. Even with an acceptable plant population, uneven spacing or delayed emergence can significantly reduce yield. The use of aerial imagery can further reduce bias in stand counts and often provide a more complete assessment. At Sunrise FS, we have the tools in place to aid with these decisions.

Research indicates:

- Gaps of 1 to 3 feet can reduce yield by approximately 2%
- Gaps of 4 to 6 feet can reduce yield by approximately 5%
- Delayed emergence can reduce yield by 4% to 25% depending on severity

These losses occur because later-emerging plants are outcompeted by earlier plants and contribute less to overall yield.

#### Step 3: Estimate the Yield Potential of the Existing Stand

Use available replant decision tables or guidelines to estimate yield potential based on planting date and final stand. Adjust for uniformity issues such as gaps and delayed emergence.

For example, a field planted in late April with 25,000 plants per acre may retain approximately 95% of its yield potential. After accounting for gaps and delayed emergence, that potential may drop to around 85–90%.

#### Step 4: Compare to Replant Yield Potential

Next, estimate the yield potential of a replanted field. If replanting occurs in late May with an optimal population, yield potential may still only reach 85–90% due to delayed planting.

This comparison often reveals that replanting does not significantly improve yield potential and introduces additional risk.

#### Step 5: Evaluate Economic and Management Factors

Replanting corn introduces additional costs, including tillage, seed, fuel, labor, and possible additional pesticide applications. Herbicide programs must also be reviewed to ensure compliance with label restrictions and crop safety.

Later planting increases exposure to disease and insect pressure and may require hybrids with different maturity ratings. It also increases the risk of fall frost and delayed harvest.

#### Step 6: Replanting Best Practices

If replanting is necessary, the existing stand should typically be destroyed using tillage or herbicide. Introducing new seedlings into an existing corn stand is rarely successful, as established plants will outcompete new seedlings for resources.

In cases where replant areas are small or localized, interplanting may be considered, but expectations should be adjusted accordingly.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

Replant decisions are never easy, but they should always be grounded in data and economics rather than appearance. A less-than-perfect stand does not automatically justify replanting. In many cases, maintaining the original stand preserves planting date advantages and reduces risk.

The goal is not to achieve a perfect-looking field; it is to maximize profitability. By carefully evaluating stand counts, plant health, uniformity, and yield potential, farmers can make confident decisions that protect both yield and input investment.

When in doubt, consult with your agronomist or crop specialist to walk through the numbers and determine the best course of action for your operation. 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*  
Agronomist, Sunrise FS  
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# Women in Farming: New to the Narrative, Not the Work

Grandma never questioned butchering two chickens for lunch before church. She cleaned, cut, breaded and partially fried the ultra-fresh poultry, which finished baking in the oven while the family of six attended worship.

Holy chicken.

It's almost Mother's Day. I love Sunday dinner out. And the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the first time ever named 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer. In reality, female farmers aren't a new phenomenon. The industry is just finally talking about it out loud.

On both sides, my family tree is rooted in farming, and I'm blessed that both my grandmas – a fresh 88 and almost 89 – still can coherently share about their careers on the farm. Today, my mom farms, I farm, and more exciting yet, the fourth generation (the oldest now 20 studying agriculture in college) has grown to know two generations of grandmas and their quiet impact on agriculture as partners with the men in their family businesses.

The narrative used to frame a women's farm labor as "just helping." Yet, their husbands will attest these ladies would disk fields, sort and load hogs, locate field tiles, unload racks of hay, fetch parts, market crops, manage the farm financials, sign into debt, pay the taxes and elevate ear corn into the wire crib. They managed massive gardens that fed the family on summer evenings and year-round through preservation.

Meanwhile, they raised farm kids inspired to enter the same business. With children in tow for farm duties, my mom and grandmas packed lunches for the entire family, feeding hearts and minds with life lessons as much as bellies



with nutrition during a hard day's work.

I don't see us returning to the era of buying 100 straight-run chicks, butchering half for meat and raising half for selling eggs. But our farm's ownership by gender is a 50/50 split – Mom, Dad, my 40-something brother and I – all working full-time, pulling the occasional 90-hour weeks and collectively operating, managing, decision-making, succession planning, turning wrenches and respecting the talents each brings to the table, both in the conference room and at family dinners.

The team mindset and collaborative approach support farm continuity, community, harmony and the motive to live values, not just list them. Communally, we create a culture that has the next generation – both males and females – welcome and wanting to belong. That kind of narrative endures.

*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.*

## WOMEN'S COMMITTEE RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Submitted by **Bonnie Compton**

### Swiss Chicken Quiche

#### Ingredients

- 1 9" unbaked deep dish pastry shell (Example- Pet Ritz)
- 1 C. shredded swiss cheese (4 Oz.)
- 2 T. flour
- 2 C. cubed cooked chicken or turkey
- 1 t. salt
- 1 small jar pimentos well drained
- 1 c. milk (Use whole milk, or you can use half and half if you

desire extra richness. Do not use skim.)

- 3 eggs- well beaten
- 1/8 c. chopped onion
- \*1 T. chicken broth

#### Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Prick pastry shell with fork.
3. Bake pastry shell for 8 minutes.
4. Reduce oven temp. to 350 degrees.
5. In a medium bowl, toss cheese with flour.
6. Add remaining ingredients and mix well and pour into prepared shell.
7. When oven temperature is 350 degrees, bake for 35-40 Min. or until set.
8. Test by inserting a knife in the middle and bake until the knife comes clean.
9. Let stand 10 min. before serving.
10. Refrigerate leftovers.

Notes: You can make a cup of broth by using chicken bullion using the directions on the package. Then use only 1 T. of the mixture. Also, you can save broth if you have boiled the chicken (vs. using a store purchased rotisserie chicken.) You can also use canned broth, or broth in the carton. Hint: If you are cooking the chicken, you can add some onion, celery, vegetables and spices to the pot for a more flavorful broth. (Don't reuse these vegetables if you are making soup as they will be "spent." You can measure and freeze small portions of the broth in an ice cube tray for later use. You can also freeze excess broth for making soup later.

You can use a refrigerated pie crust, or you can also make your own!

This quiche can be microwaved to serve for lunches, or a meal later in the week. Quick and easy! Serves 6.

## Helping Farmers Take the Initiative

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about mental health and promote resources and support. This is especially important for farmers, whose mental health is often overlooked and under-addressed.

In recent years, mental health has become a prevalent topic in our daily lives. The constant change and stress, compounded by the pandemic, have left many people feeling depressed or anxious, and farmers are no exception.

Fortunately, help is available through SIU Medicine's program designed to assist farmers and their families. The Farm Family Resource Initiative (FFRI) provides a network of support and resources, including a confidential 24/7 helpline (1-833-FARM-SOS) connecting you to health professionals who specialize in ag-related stress. These medical professionals live in Illinois and can relate to the local economy, weather, and other daily stressors specific to our region.

In addition to text, email, and website services, telehealth counseling sessions are available for those in need of additional support. Up to six individual, couple, or group sessions are available, all at no cost to the farmer or farm family member thanks to grant funding.

FFRI Ag Resource Specialist Karen Stallman understands the challenges that farm families may encounter, having lived on a farm in southern Illinois. "In farming, there tends to be a new challenge each day, and nothing seems easy," Stallman says.

FFRI also offers opportunities for healthcare professionals to learn more about farming-related issues and earn CME credits through its Rural Community Mental Health program. The virtual training illuminates how mental and physical health issues can impact those working in farming and agriculture. To learn more, visit [siumed.edu/farm/events-and-webinars](http://siumed.edu/farm/events-and-webinars).

The AgriSafe Nurse Scholar Program is also available to rural nurses through on-demand webinars, increasing their knowledge in the prevention, identification, and assessment of diseases related to agricultural work exposures. Find more details by visiting [learning.agrisafe.org/nurse-scholar-program](http://learning.agrisafe.org/nurse-scholar-program).

It is crucial to recognize that mental health care is not a luxury and that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness. The Family Farm Resource Initiative is just one example of the resources available to those in agriculture who may be struggling with their mental health.

Please check on friends, family members, and neighbors regularly. Spread the word about the Farm Family Resource Initiative and encourage others to reach out and talk to someone. It may save the life of someone you know!

This Mental Health Awareness Month, let us continue to advocate for mental health care and support in the agricultural community and beyond. Let us work together to break down the stigma surrounding mental health and encourage those who may be struggling to reach out for help. Together, we can promote healing and well-being for all. Find more information about the FFRI at [siumed.org/farm](http://siumed.org/farm).

#### CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU NEWS

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# CCFB Members In The Community



CCFB's Women's Committee hosted their annual Spring Fling event.



Women Rooted in Ag spent time volunteering for the Young Lives Prom at Hudson Farms.




Members of CCFB's Young Leaders group came together for a tour at Sunrise FS.