



Champaign County Farm Bureau News

Vol. 94, No. 12 801 N. Country Fair Drive, Suite A, Champaign, IL 61821 December, 2016

“Champaign County Farm Bureau will strive to assist families in agriculture by recognizing and responding to issues of concern while strengthening partnerships and improving farm family life for this and future generations.”

Farm Bureau Policy

Farm Bureau policy is literally the heart of our organization. As a grassroots organization, it truly drives and sets the tone for us. This fall the Champaign County Farm Bureau submitted three policies through the resolutions process. The process started with a member having an idea regarding a change to our current policy on education. The member felt we needed to change our policy to better reflect our education system and where we need to be for the future. The member crafted the policy as they intended it to read and then asked the Board of Directors to consider.

The next step was to submit the proposed resolutions to the state-wide tentative resolutions committee, comprised of representatives from each of the 18 Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors districts. These individuals then consider the resolutions Champaign County submitted plus resolutions from around the state. After a subcommittee concurred with two of our three submittals, the full committee agreed and will be submitting them to the delegates to consider at the upcoming Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. At the annual meeting, each county in the state of Illinois is represented with delegates based on the size of the respective counties voting membership. During the policy resolution portion of the meeting, delegates will carefully consider all the resolutions. It should be noted that a member or county can still, during the delegate session, introduce a resolution from the floor pertaining to an issue that they feel is critical to the organization. As the process unfolds, the delegates discuss, debate and vote on if the proposed resolution should

be part of our policy book for 2017.

Once a resolution is approved by the delegates from around the state it becomes policy of the Illinois Farm Bureau.

If the Illinois Farm Bureau feels that the new or revised policy has merit on the national level, they may care that policy forward through the American Farm Bureau Federation process that nearly mirrors the Illinois Farm Bureau process.

Thus, an idea that started in a toolshed, coffee shop or the kitchen table may end up being the policy for our national organization. So if you have an idea on where our organizations needs to be heading we'd like to hear from you

We Support: - Increased engagement of students to better understand political process and civic engagement.
- Innovation and creativity in education

Champaign County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting Notice
Notice is hereby given that the 105th Annual Meeting of the Champaign County Farm Bureau is called for
MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2017
at the
Pear Tree Estate
2150 CR 1000 E, Champaign
Champaign, Illinois

Registration begins at 5 p.m.
Marketing Club meets at 5 p.m.
Dinner will be served at 6 p.m.
The business meeting will begin at 7 p.m. for the purpose of consideration of any business which may be properly presented.
Directors from the following townships will be elected:
-East Bend
- Urbana
- Ogden
- Crittenden
- Rantoul
- South Homer
- Tolono
- Hensley
To make reservations:
Turn to page 8 for the official registration form.
REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2017

Minutes of the 2016 CCFB Annual Meeting are printed on page 8 of this edition of the CCFB Newsletter

Winter Weather Outlook

By: Eric Snodgrass, Agribile

Fall Weather: This Fall's warmth will be record setting. Some locations in Illinois did not get their first frost until Nov 12, which is about 1 month later than normal. The last time we had our first frost this late in the season was in 1975. Soil temperatures are very warm preventing fall applications and many are asking when is it finally going to get cold! The big issue is that the really cold air is not in Canada where it typically is this time of year and as a result, Canada's snow pack through the first half of November was woefully behind average (see image below). So where is all of the cold air? The answer to that question is Siberia. Fall snow pack in Siberia is well above average and the biggest consequence of this is that the jet stream has been in a strong west-to-east flow across the Pacific Ocean. For us in the mid-west, this typically results in ridging in the jet stream which is what has driven all of the warmth. This flow pattern has also prevented any major winter storms from pushing through the midwest until the storm system that hammered the northern plains on Nov. 18. That same system introduced the first really cold blast of winter-like air into the Midwest for the weekend of Nov 19-20.

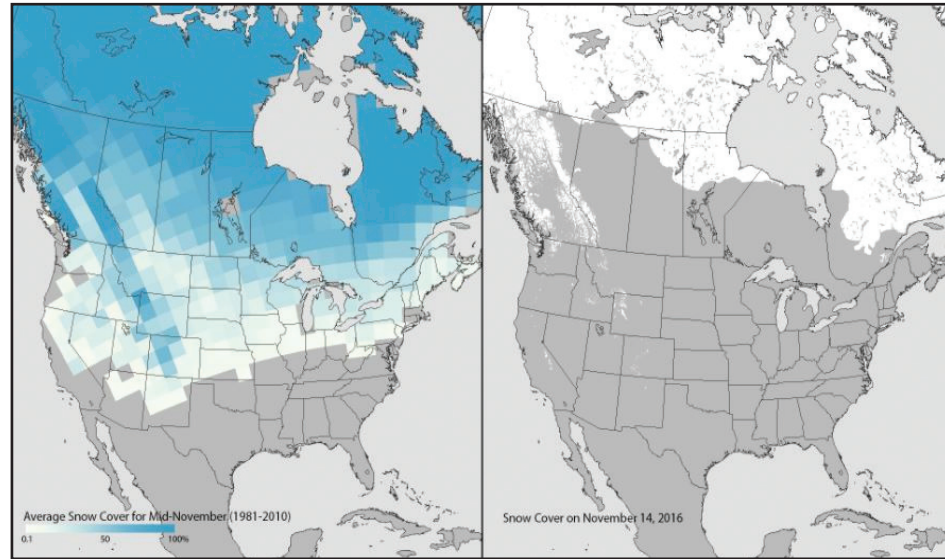


Image Credit: NOAA (free to use)

December Pattern Change: We are watching a major shift in the weather patterns arriving for December. During this time of year, meteorologists watch for large blocking patterns at high latitudes. This December, we are watching for a dome of high air pressure to set up over Greenland. That ridge in the flow will help displace cooler air south into the US and finally breakdown the warm pattern in the central US. During this same time, we are anticipating a very active storm track through the Midwest, which will be a much different pattern than we had this fall. Get ready for more "normal" winter temperatures and precipitation!

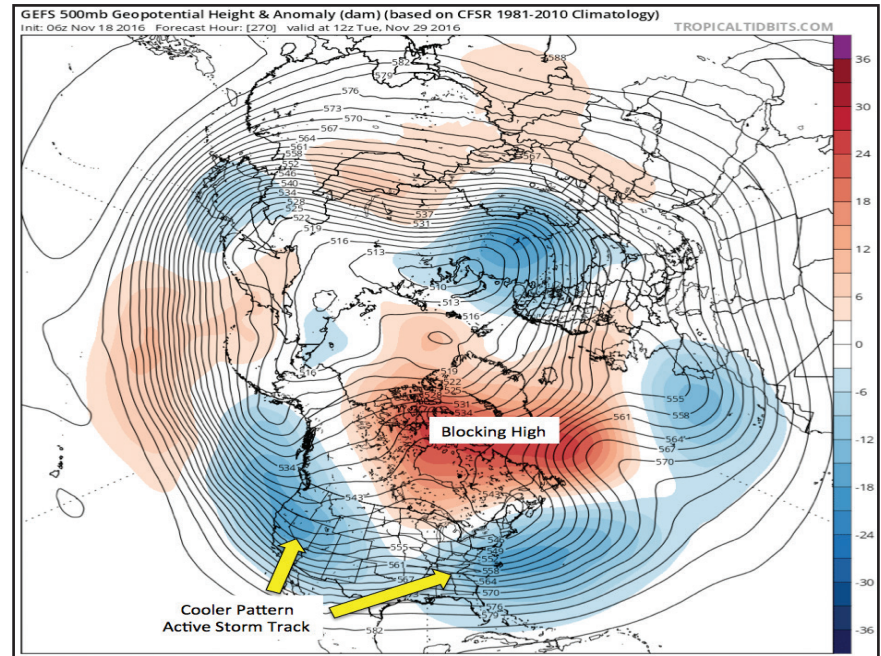


Image Credit: Tropical Tidbits (free to use)

Continue reading winter weather on page 3.....



December Report

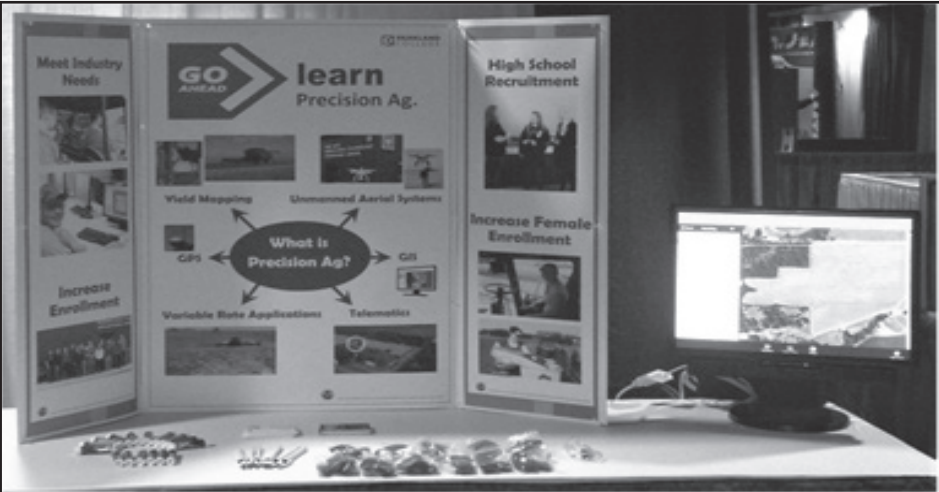
President, Chris Murray

Fall harvest has come to an end and more equipment, every day, is getting put away for the winter. As we continue to transition into preparation for our next year’s crop, we continue our end of harvest storage. The same happened in the political arena, there was an election, local state and national, it will be truly hard to duplicate the amount of attention that went into the races. Whether you wear red or blue on your sleeve, I think there is a great sense of a lot of people wanting change for the next four years while candidates are serving our country.

That doesn’t change the job that we have here in Champaign County. We need to continue to make our voice heard when we are called to voice our opinion. The agriculture sector has a lot to be proud of as we continue to answer the bell in higher yields with new technology and better agronomic practices. The population is continuing to grow and we need to make sure that we continue to have a competitive industry here in the heart of the Midwest. Champaign County needs to be ready to become a major contributor in feeding our population of tomorrow. Wishing all a safe, and Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,
Chris Murray

What’s New in Agriculture at Parkland?



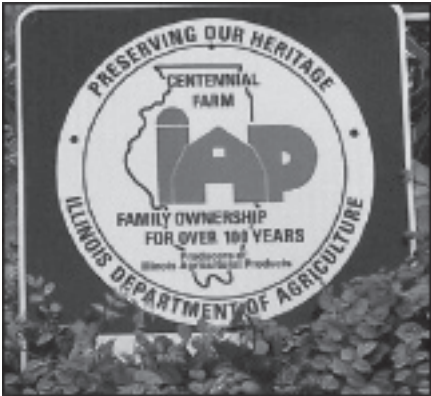
Showcase display at NSF annual conference demonstrating Parkland’s use of technology, recruitment efforts, meeting industry needs and increasing female enrollment in the Precision Ag program.

Parkland has had an exciting month with news to share about the purchase of a new tractor, faculty traveling to

Washington D.C. for annual National Science Foundation (NSF) conference, industry partners renew commitment to

Centennial Farms - Family Farm History

By: Lesley Gooding



Is the love of farming in your veins? Has your family been farming the same land in Champaign County for generations? If so, it is time to do a little research and find out if the land you love qualifies for Centennial Farm status. Centennial Farms are agriculture properties that have been owned by the same family for at least 100 years. According to the Illinois Department of Agriculture, properties must be owned by the “same family of lineal or collateral descendants for at least 100 years. A lineal descendant is a person in the direct line of descent, such as a child or a grandchild. A collateral descendent is

not a direct descendent, but is otherwise closely related, such as a brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or cousin.”

Champaign County is home to over 200 Centennial Farms, the most of any county in the state. The Illinois Department of Agriculture created the Centennial Farms program in 1972 and has recognized more than 9,200 farms with this special designation.

How to apply

- \$50 application fee required to offset the cost of the official Centennial Farm sign
- Complete form and meet requirements found at <https://www.agr.state.il.us/marketing/centfarms/>

Direct questions to

Illinois Centennial / Sesquicentennial Farms Program

Illinois Department of Agriculture
Marketing and Promotions

State Fairgrounds

P. O. Box 19281

Springfield, Illinois 62794-9281

Phone: 217/782-6675

Fax: 217/524-5960

Email: centfarm@agr.state.il.us

student learning and agriculture/horticulture students participate in the Post-Secondary Agriculture Organization (PAS) state contests in Bloomington, IL. Parkland was also the proud host to 200 local and regional FFA high school students for competition in Agronomy and Dairy Foods Career Development Events. In the midst of all of the activities, the faculty have been busy registering students for spring courses.

News to Share:

Parkland Agriculture/Horticulture Students Compete in PAS Contest – Parkland agriculture and horticulture students represented Parkland in the state PAS contest in Bloomington, IL last month. The students competed in Crop Science, Ag Sales, Horticulture, Livestock, and Employment Interviews. Cody Lewis (Tuscola, IL) placed 3rd in Ag Sales and Julie Nesbit (Champaign, IL) and Traci Anderson (Mahomet, IL) placed 2nd in Horticulture. Each have earned a trip to the national PAS competition in St. Louis, MO next spring.

Parkland Purchases New Tractor to Support Agriculture Program – Parkland College has purchased a new tractor to replace the existing 20-year-old tractor currently used by the agriculture department. The new tractor is an investment in the future of the Agriculture program as it will be used in precision agriculture classes, Parkland’s Land Laboratory and to support the local FFA chapters. Students in all agriculture degree programs will benefit from this investment.

Faculty Travels to Washington D.C. as part of National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant – Jenni Fridgen (Principle Investigator) and Mandy Briggs (Co-Principle Investigator) of Parkland’s \$200,000 NSF grant to enhance the precision agriculture program recently traveled to

Washington, D.C. to attend the ATE (Advanced Technical Education) annual conference. The conference allowed Jenni and Mandy to network with other NSF grant recipients and receive training on future funding opportunities. Both represented Parkland in the showcase session by demonstrating their efforts on the grant. The National Science Foundation requires all grant recipients to attend the annual event.

Industry Continues Commitment to Parkland’s Agriculture Program – Helena Chemical (headquarters in Memphis, TN) continues to be an industry partner to Parkland’s agriculture program through cooperation on product demonstrations in the Land Laboratory. Demonstrations for next year include in-furrow nutrition in corn and soybean, fertilizer (including micronutrients) treatments, as well as nutritional products to maximize yield. Illinois Fertilizer and Chemical Association (IFCA) and Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District remain vital partners in continuing efforts of cover crop demonstrations. Dan Schaefer, IFCA Director of Nutrient Stewardship, has committed to a long term corn-soybean-wheat-cover crop demonstration that will be used to enhance student and community learning on the long-term benefits of cover crops. Parkland is extremely grateful for the continued support of the agriculture program.

Parkland to Offer New Sustainable Urban Horticulture Course – Parkland will begin offering this spring a new course, Sustainable Urban Horticulture. This course will provide an overview of how to produce food, crops and methods of overcoming the challenges facing the availability of fresh and nutritious food produce. Sustainable food production and gardening as alternative to traditional rural farming and distribution for local foods.

“Check Your Calendar!”

December

8	Prime Timers	10:00 AM
8	YAL Christmas Party	6:30 PM
8	Land Use	6:30 PM
12	Women’s Committee Christmas Brunch	10:30 AM
12	Fruit pick up	
13	Legislative	7:30 AM
13	Premier Lady Marketing	9:30 AM
15	Full Board	6:30 PM
25	Merry Christmas!	
26	Office closed	

January

2	Office closed	
5	YAL	6:30 PM
9	Women’s Committee	9:30 AM
6-7	Illini Farm Toy Show	
12	Prime Timers	10:00 AM
12	Land Use	6:30 PM



Vann Parkin
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Questions?

If you have any questions or need help registering, we're here for you. You can:

- Call 866-COUNTRY (866-268-6879).
 - Use the My COUNTRY "click to chat" or
 - Check out frequently asked questions at countryfinancial.com/mycountryfaqs
- *Not all policies and financial accounts are available in My COUNTRY.**



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How to de-clutter your home

Clutter can amass in almost every space in your house,
making it hard to feel organized

Simplifying your life doesn't have to be stressful, although it might feel like an uphill battle at first. Use our tips below to get started, and see what you can accomplish!

- **Start small.** A shelf, a drawer or a cupboard. Ask yourself, do you really need that many spices? When was the last time you used that dish? Do you need 25 plastic containers for your small family?
- **Sort your tech.** If any of your electronics are broken, out of date or you've moved on, they are safe to throw out. Sort through charging cables and if you can't match them up to electronics you use, get rid of them. There are a sites where you can easily sell used electronics, like Gazelle and Nextworth, if you feel guilty parting with gently used tech.
- **Only keep what makes you happy.** If the waffle iron you got last Christmas and have never used makes you feel guilty every time you see it, is it worth keeping? Probably not. But if your cookbooks make you feel happy every time you look at them, they might be.
- **Get green.** Recycle magazines you've read, old bills and receipts for items you don't plan on returning.
- **Don't stop once you're started.** If your plan is to tackle your whole house, let your momentum in one area carry you on to the next.

Be realistic in what you keep and how much time you devote to de-cluttering. It can easily snowball into an entire afternoon or day of work, when you really only meant to work on your sock drawer. But if you have the time (or need to make time), carve out a few hours over your weekend to dedicate to your de-cluttering agenda, and then stick to your task. Good luck!



KIRK BULTA
Executive Director



MYLA MUNRO
Earth Partners Coordinator

CCFBFOUNDATION.COM



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A Community Coming Together In Support of Agriculture

9th Annual Harvest Gala a Success



(LEFT) Champaign County Fair Queen and Earth Partners' Teen Teacher Jada Burr delivers dessert to Leonard Stocks of Fisher.

(RIGHT) Gala Auctioneer Jim Hannagan sells the record breaking dessert auction while Master of Ceremonies Kris Ehler keeps his eye on the audience.

(BELOW) CCFB Foundation Scholarship Recipients volunteered as event staff at this year's Harvest Gala which supported their scholarship program and agricultural literacy efforts throughout Champaign County.

Photos courtesy of Ryann Kesler Photography.



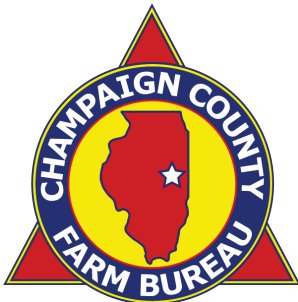
The CCFB Foundation Board of Directors gathers together to celebrate the 9th Annual Harvest Gala at Pear Tree Estate.

Special Thanks to our Harvest Gala Sponsors

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Special thanks to Gala Master of Ceremonies Kris Ehler and Auctioneers Jim and Ed Hannagan!

Celebrate Christmas with the Prime Timers
on December 8 starting at 10 a.m.

Program:

Ginger McKee - Cunningham Children’s Home

Music by:

Martin Luther Chorus



Ken Roellig, Prime Timers Chairman

- Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month
- Cost is \$8 to attend
- Call 352-5235 ahead of each meeting to reserve your spot

Mark your calendar - Don’t miss a single Prime Timer date!

Prime Timers 2016:
January 12

Marketing Update

By: Jason Clapp, Risk management Commodities

A few week’s ago, the WASDE report generated more ammunition for the market bears as the USDA increased the national average corn yield by almost two bushels to a record 175.3 if realized at the end of the year. That increased our ending stocks to 2.403 billion bushels. Soybean yield was also increased to 52.5 bushels per acre which is also a record if realized on the final estimates in January. Ending stocks for soybeans were increased to 480 million bushels. The corn and soybean markets have both rolled over and now that we’ve spent some time trading at the higher end of the ranges it now seems like the markets might want to explore the lower end. The strength in the U.S. Dollar is not helping us right now as the recent rally has reached new highs and have exceeded the highs from last winter. When you couple that with a recent sell off of the Brazilian Real we could start to see some export business switching away from the U.S. towards South America. For now there don’t seem to be any issues with South American production with the exception of some small pockets in southern Brazil and northern Argentina that might be receiving a little too much rain.

So far corn and soybeans have held to some key support levels during this week’s sell off and fund managers are likely waiting for the results of this week’s FOMC meeting to see which way they want to jump next. The flavor of the last several week’s according to the weekly Commitment of Traders reports has been showing fund managers slowly covering shorts in corn and wheat while maintaining a modest long position in the soybean market. Demand for soybeans remain excellent as we can see from weekly export sales and inspections reports. We also just had a National Oilseeds Processors Association (NOPA) report that showed the third largest crush month in history. Overall we look for corn and soybeans to remain range bound until around the first of the year when we start to finalize this crop’s size and start to think about new crop acres.

trade ranks one of agriculture’s most important chapters. Export markets buy in the neighborhood of 45 percent of the grain grown on Illinois farms – nearly every other row of it, the Illinois Department of Agriculture reports. The state ranks the nation’s second leading exporter of both soybeans and feed grains. If nothing else, take the news from our farm’s resident expert. Grandpa says farming ranks a more complex, globalized business now than in the heart of his farming career, when exports and trade didn’t earn a mention.

Fast forward a couple generations, and productive U.S. farms collectively grow more than the country can consume. Trade appropriately enters the conversation to increase global demand for what Illinois proves great at growing. Specifically, free trade agreements lower tariffs on U.S. agricultural goods. They can raise the bar for labor and environmental standards among trading countries. And evidence shows that current free trade agreements increased exports for agricultural commodities, plus added U.S. jobs and economic growth as a result.

This fall, the kids and I frequented our grain storage facility. “What is exports?” our daughter asked, as she plucked the word from the “Our Farm Exports” sign along the road. The word seemed as foreign to our daughter as the destination of some of our crops. We talked about how fuel, feed and exports dominate our farm’s crop’s uses. Our location within 30 miles of ethanol plants fosters that demand. So does our vicinity to the Illinois River, which serves as one of the arteries pumping American-grown and -made products to the 95 percent of customers who live outside the United States. In this season of reflection, we should count our barge-worthy blessings. Illinois uniquely globalizes our customer base with access to navigable waterways at its western and southern borders and through the interior.

The Farm Bureau for a long time has advocated for trade. Agriculture now experiences a stronger need for deals like the pending Trans-Pacific Partnership. A Henry County farmer this fall told FarmWeek that her young son loves seeing the cows every day, but he doesn’t understand the herd’s financial loss to the farm. She traveled to Washington, D.C., and informed politicians that free trade deals could counteract this scenario. Soon enough, her young boy will grow into a young man who understands this picture beyond the story book image. When will our country’s leaders? Learn more about why trade matters at www.ilfb.org/17960.aspx. About the author: Joanie Stiers writes from her family’s grain and livestock farm, where she works and raises two kids in West-Central Illinois.

RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP ONLINE!

CCFB members can now go to www.ccfarmbureau.com and click on MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL to pay their dues 24-hours-a-day! Please note that this is ONLY for “renewals.” If the membership is new, delinquent or a reinstating member, you’ll need to contact the office to pay by credit or debit card.

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Benefit List!

All you have to do is
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Need more information?

Call Deidra Ochs at

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
FARM BUREAU NEWS

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CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FARM BUREAU
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
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Contact us at (217) 352-5235
www.ccfarmbureau.com

At The Farm Gate

By Joanie Stiers

Trade expands agriculture’s
global customer base

China’s import needs matter to Illinois family farms. So does South America’s soybean harvest, which competes for our export business. Toss in talk on the strength of the dollar’s impact on corn prices, and I should have taken more college courses in economics. Shudder.

The thought of globalizing the perceived charm of any family farm complicates a stereotype often derived from preschool picture books. But

ILLINI FARM TOY SHOW

Friday Jan. 6th, 2017 5 PM to 9 PM
Saturday Jan. 7th, 2017 9 AM to 5 PM
Farm Toy Consignment Live Auction Sat. 10:30 AM

Adults: \$3, Kids 6-12: \$2, Under 6: Free
Wyndam Garden Hotel, 1001 W. Killarney St. Urbana, IL 61801
I-74 to Exit 183 Lincoln Avenue

For additional info, contact Lynn Doran at (970) 420-4765 or lynnann85@gmail.com
Sponsored by Champaign County Farm Bureau Young Ag Leaders and Vermillion County Farm Bureau Young Leaders



a division of GROWMARK, Inc.



**MARK THORNSBROUGH,
GENERAL MANAGER**

Catching up with the Illini FS Agronomy Division...Matt Busby

By Lesley Gooding

Matt: Today Illini FS is utilizing drones to help observe crops for complaints, weather damage and overall health of a field. As the technology improves and becomes less expensive it is going to give us the opportunity to look at higher resolution pictures and NDVi imagery that measures vegetative color to help make better recommendations. We see many opportunities, but we still have to determine the best way to utilize this new technology.

CCFB: Are there any special financing programs going on now through the end of the year?

Matt:

- 0% seed financing program.
- Ag Finance program which allows a grower to finance all their

inputs – seed, fertilizer, chemicals, fuel, oil and possibly cash rent.

- Energy financing program that finances all energy products.
- Lease program for grain bins and buildings that Illini FS sells.
- Lease program for new and used equipment.

CCFB: What can customers expect from Illini FS seed & agronomy in the upcoming year? Will there be any new products or programs for customers?

Matt: Illini FS will strive to provide our patrons with solutions to their problems. Illini FS will continue to make sound agronomic recommendations that help our patrons improve their bottom line. Sustainable agriculture will continue to help drive our rec-

ommendations. We need to be good stewards of the land. We will offer dependable service. We will utilize Monsanto's Climate platform to offer data management solutions to help growers make better economic decisions. We will continue to utilize our 3 brand seed strategy (FS, Monsanto and NK) to offer the best genetics and seed trait platforms to our growers. The approval of the Xtend platform will give us some of the best genetics available in the seed bean line up while giving us one more chemical tool to help control weeds. Illini FS will continue to perform on farm research to test new products to determine which ones give an economic return and profitably increase yields.

Nutrient Management at Illini - Howard Brown

Farmers exercised restraint and good environmental stewardship with fall applications of anhydrous ammonia. Nearly all farmers waited until November to start making applications and most utilized N-Serve to stabilize the applied nitrogen (N). N-Serve stabilizes soil-applied anhydrous ammonia by keeping N in the stable ammonium-N form for an extended period of time. Ammonium-N is a reduced form of soil N (no oxygen attached). Having hydrogen attached (NH₄⁺) rather than oxygen (NO₃⁻) makes it immune to loss by denitrification (removal of oxygen by soil microbes in saturated soil causing N loss as a gas). Ammonium-N is a positively-charged ion which is attracted to the negative charge of the soil's Cation Exchange Capacity. The attraction of the soil's negative surface makes it less likely that ammonium-N will leach as soil water moves through the profile. N-Serve delays the microbial conversion of ammonium to nitrate-N, minimizing the potential for loss prior to next Spring.

It's all how you look at MOM (Minimize, Optimize, Maximize). MOM a palindrome. It means the same thing whether spelled forward or backward. Regardless if we start with Maximize input utilization or Minimize environmental impact, in the end everything is accomplished. The "O" in MOM (Optimize harvest yield) is essential for nutrient stewardship improvements to be sustainable. When we focus on MOM, good things will happen. Sustainable improvements in nutrient stewardship and farm income will be the outcome.

Illini fs offers a 4-step program to improve nutrient stewardship. 1. ASSESS. Before we decide where we want to go we need to determine where we are at. Assess simply de-

scribes the need to define our current environmental footprint and to formalize our current nutrient management practices. We utilize a well-accepted online tool from the Field-to-Market website called Fieldprint Calculator. The online worksheet allows us to enter management information specific to a farmer's field and generate what is referred to as the "Environmental Footprint". Many farmers have significantly changed the way they manage N over the past five years. Illini FS has added questions beyond this environmental assessment allows us to establish a written record of historic N management changes that helps a farmer with his nutrient stewardship message. 2. CREATE. Once a farmer establishes a starting point, a plan or roadmap can be created to get to where he needs to go with a focus on MOM. Ways to improve nutrient stewardship can be as simple as creating a Nutrient Management Plan for a specific field or as innovative as tracking plant-available N over time with N-WATCH or N-TRACKER, the newest version of N-WATCH. Other tools to consider include N Rate Studies (six rates of N with three replications in a Randomized Complete Block experimental design). The IL Fertilizer and Chemical Association, in conjunction with Emerson Nafziger at the University of Illinois are placing N Rate Studies throughout the state once again. To learn more about getting involved with N rate studies or learning more about what information they generate visit www.ifca.com and click on "Keep it 4R Crop Tools" and then "N Rate Trials". Historical N Rate Studies (past 3 years) can be found on a map of IL. Simply click on the map marker and the N Rate Study results will pop-up in graphic form (Thank you IFCA). 3. LEARN. We have relied heavily on the University of Illinois over the past several decades and our need for learn-

ing through research will only grow. We are fortunate in Illinois to have a program that supports the pursuit of answers to our questions related to production agriculture. That program is the Nutrient Research and Education Council, or NREC (www.illinoisnrec.org). Farmers from across IL contribute to a \$1.00/ton check-off that is used exclusively to fund fertilizer testing programs (\$.25/ton) and applied production agriculture research (\$.75/ton). This program makes it possible to pursue answers to the many questions that have surfaced as a result of efforts to improve nutrient stewardship at the farm gate. The funding is not only used to support research efforts. Programs and projects focused on outreach and education are also considered for funding. A warm "thank you" is extended to those dedicated industry and farm organization leaders that made NREC possible. Illinois is the envy of the Midwest when it comes to funding applied production agriculture research and outreach. Another tool that can be used to guide the learning process is On-Farm Discovery. It is also referred to as Adaptive Management by USDA-NRCS. It is simply a structured way to look at differences between treatments or management systems that minimize the chance of making the wrong decision. Guidance from researchers at the University of Illinois help minimize the risk of errors with each project's design. Working together, farmer, Illini FS, and our University of Illinois Research Specialists makes up a strong team to address our new questions. To learn more about On-Farm Discovery and what projects are being used visit with your local Illini FS crop specialist. 4. COMMIT. Nearly every farmer has the desire to leave the land "in better shape than it was received". This part of our 4-step program demonstrates to others the commitment to improved nutri-

ent stewardship. It starts with a pledge that defines what farming practices will be avoided to preserve our natural resources. Once a farmer commits to our Nutrient Stewardship Program, the farm will be eligible for achieving Enduring Farm status. Enduring Farm is a stewardship program offered by Illini FS that recognizes a farming enterprise's commitment to nutrient stewardship and farm profitability.

Why is Illini FS focused on stewardship? Illini FS is in the business to sell farm inputs to local producers, whether crop inputs, information management, energy needs, or facility upgrades and/or repair. However, we also want to provide needed programs and services that will improve and protect the long-term profitability of our farm customers. With concern about the impact of production agriculture on the natural resources shared by everyone, especially those unrelated to production ag, farmers need to develop their stewardship plan by following the 4-steps of our program. It is important for us to have an answer to the question: "What are you doing to minimize nutrient loading and improving the quality of our natural resources?" Illini FS wants to lead this effort and help create and maintain our customer's nutrient stewardship message.

There is still time to establish a N-TRACKER site to watch the dynamics of soil N from now until pre-tassel. Visit with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist to learn more about the tool and associated cost. N-TRACKER is the newest version of N-WATCH, a program initiated in 2010 to inventory, track and verify plant-available N in the upper two feet of the soil profile over time. N-WATCH has been used in over 2500 fields from Nebraska to Ontario, Canada since 2010. Curious? Visit with your local Illini FS Crop Specialist to learn more about this innovative management tool. It will be worth the time invested.

Winter 2016-17: If I had to summarize this winter in one phrase, I would say to watch out for an active freeze/thaw cycle. Last winter was dominated by a powerful El Nino, but this winter's La Nina is not very strong and is therefore not as big of a player in our winter weather. We are watching for a very active Ohio River Valley winter storm track which means a lot of variability in our winter temperatures. Just like most winters, there will be times when we lock into a cold pattern, but there is a low probability that this winter will be like winter 2013-14 which was bitterly cold. By the same idea, there is a low probability that this winter will be warmer than average like last winter.

<http://www.noaa.gov/media-release/us-winter-outlook-predicts-warmer-drier-south-and-cooler-wetter-north>

**Saint Joseph/Ogden
FFA Update**

By: Lexi Downing, SJO FFA Reporter

The 89th annual National FFA Convention and Expo took place in Indianapolis, Indiana October 19th -22nd. FFA chapters from around the United States came together to celebrate FFA and this year's convention theme, “Transform Purpose to Action”. At the convention there were several sessions where members had the opportunity to hear from the National Officer Team and keynote speakers, this helped to ignite a passion within the members! At the Career Show and Expo colleges and businesses set up booths for members to stop by to learn more about their contribution to agriculture and to learn more about opportunities they have for FFA members. One of the highlights of the National FFA Convention for the St. Joseph-Ogden FFA Chapter was the



American Degree recipient Michael Wetherell.



American Degree recipient Anthony Booker

American Degree session, where the top members from around the country were recognized for their achievements, less than 1% of FFA members achieve this award. There were ninety-one recipients from Illinois, including two from Champaign County, Anthony Booker from the St. Joseph-Ogden FFA Chapter and Michael Wetherell from the Unity FFA Chapter. Both of these members are past recipients of the Champaign County Farm Bureau Scholarships. The FFA members of Champaign County had great success while competing in various events at the convention including Maddie Fugate, Madison Mitchell, and Kat Blakeslee from the Mahomet Seymour FFA Chapter! The 89th Annual National FFA Convention and Expo, was a fun, insightful and inspirational event for all members who attended!



Members of the St. Joseph-Ogden FFA Chapter at National FFA Convention



*The 2016 Crop is
IN the Bin.....What's Next?*



*Joe Burke, Chairman
CCFB Marketing Club*

*Sharpen YOUR Strategy
by Attending This Marketing Club
Opportunity:*

**Plan NOW to Attend the
2016 Champaign County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting
on MONDAY, JANUARY 23,
when the CCFB Marketing Club presents a special
Marketing Meeting
beginning at 5 PM at the Pear Tree Estate, Champaign!
Featuring Clayton Pope**

Ballot Recap

By: Lesley Gooding

Last month, CCFB highlighted four questions that were on the November 8 ballot. CCFB is keeping you connected to these issues by providing an update to each ballot question.

County Executive

The County Executive question passed by a very close margin. The first County Executive, an independent voice that has the binding authority to move county government forward, will be elected in November 2018. According to state statute, the County Executive question supersedes the County Chair referendum (which also passed).

County Chair

The County Chair referendum passed by a 68% to 32% margin. This referendum does NOT change current authority or responsibilities given to the present County Chair, but rather simply changes who elects the chair of the county board. Though this referendum passed, state statute indicates the County Executive question supersedes the County Chair question.

¼ Cent Facility Sales Tax

The Sales Tax ballot question failed by a 70% to 30% margin. This question asked voters to approve a ¼ cent sales tax increase to help fund deferred maintenance and address other

county building needs. The failure of this measure has led the county board to return to the drawing board and figure out how to move forward without additional funds for deferred maintenance. EXTREMELY preliminary discussions are being held about placing the same or similar question on the ballot in the near future.

Safe Roads Amendment

The Safe Roads Amendment is a statewide issue which was passed by the voters of Illinois on Nov. 8. This amendment will add a new section to the Revenue Article of the Illinois Constitution. According to Bill Bodine, Illinois Farm Bureau's Associate Director of State Legislation, “The next step for the amendment is for implementation legislation to be passed by the General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor. This legislation will outline the details of the funding and how it will be addressed as a result of the amendment. It is expected that this legislation will be introduced when the General Assembly starts its next session in January. It is too soon to say when the legislation will take effect, because it will depend on the details of the bill and when the General Assembly and Governor take action on it.”



On November 17th, the Champaign County Farm Bureau Young Ag Leaders hosted Champaign County FFA Chapters to learn more about Ag Safety and Rescue and to visit Prairie Fruits Farm to learn more about Dairy Goat Production. **Pictured Left:** Dave Newcomb, Illinois Fire Service Institute facilitates how to assemble a grain bin rescue tube with Madison Mitchell of Mahomet/Seymour FFA. Along with grain bin rescue and safety, FFA members were able to learn more about tractor rollover safety and rescue.

