



Membership Minute

Vol. 009

Feb.

2025

Growing Healthy Soils & Record Yields

As part of Clinton County Farm Bureau's (CFB) 2025 Nutrient Stewardship Grant project, we are excited to bring North Carolina no-tiller Russell Hedrick to the St. Rose Development Club on February 26th for an informational seminar on soils.

Hedrick made history with his 2022 corn harvest, raising a dryland no-till corn crop that topped 459 bushels per acre. Not bad for someone who began farming 10 years prior on tight red clay with a propensity for erosion.

His willingness to challenge conventional wisdom, try on-

farm experiments, and use regenerative agriculture practices all contribute to his success. His open-book approach is a testament to his passion for helping other farmers achieve yield, while promoting soil health principles and conservation.

Over the course of a decade, this student became the teacher. Russell has spoken to agricultural audiences in 46 states and eight countries. Not limited by constraints of conventional or regenerative

Continue on page 2 - **Hedrick**

You'll Learn

No-till tips & insights from the dryland corn yield record-breaker, including innovative, money-saving nutrient management & cover crop strategies.



Russell Hedrick
Featured Speaker

107th Annual meeting held

The Clinton County Farm Bureau held its 107th Annual Meeting on January 21st at the American Legion in Albers with approximately 300 members and guests in attendance. Highlights from the meeting included reports from the organization's officers, staff, and committees, and additional comments from a few special guests.

Nutrient Stewardship Committee Chairman Cliff Schuette reported that the organization received a \$30,000 grant from the Illinois Farm Bureau, which will be matched with local

Continue on page 2 - **Meeting**



Directors front row from left: Ron Holevoet, Tim Wesselmann, Mark Litteken, Tori Richter, Cliff Schuette, Lucas Hanke; back row from left: Brian Becker, Jeremie Stout, Quinton Huelsmann, Ray Krausz, Matt Timmermann, Justin Benhoff, Rob Gerstenecker and Philip Rueter. Not pictured is Travis Hemker.

Adult Ag in the Classroom Workshop held

Sixteen participants attended the second workshop in the Clinton County Farm Bureau's winter series of "Adult Ag in the Classroom" program. Attendees enjoyed crafting snowman from 4x4 blocks. Participants were able to customize the accessories to fit their personal style and home décor. Proceeds from this series will benefit the Clinton County Ag in the Classroom program. The Ag in the Classroom program provides monthly agricultural lessons to all first and fourth grade students in the Clinton County Schools. Registration for the final workshop, Barn Quilt Painting, is available on the Clinton County Farm Bureau's website: www.clintoncofb.org.



Community Impact Grant applications now available

The Clinton County Farm Bureau (CFB) has again committed up to \$5,000 to fund community improvement projects for 2025 through an online application process with an April 30th deadline. Our Community Impact Grant program seeks to identify various projects that will

Continue on page 8 - **Grants**



Kleiboeker selected as P.E.A.R.S. Recipient

The Illinois Ag in the Classroom Program recently selected Susan Kleiboeker, Clinton County Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom Coordinator, as a P.E.A.R.S. (Pretty Exciting Ag Related Stuff) Recipient. Kleiboeker was selected for the winter series of “Adult Ag in the Classroom” Program Workshops. The series consist of workshops lead by local “experts” or Farm Bureau staff to provide hands-on training to help attendees master new skills and techniques. These workshops are designed to be fun, engaging, and interactive. The first series of workshops consisted of a wreath making workshop, block snowman building, charcuterie, and will wrap up in March with barn quilt painting. The Ag in the Classroom program provides monthly agricultural lessons to all first and fourth grade students in the Clinton County Schools. More information on the series and the Ag in the Classroom program can be found on the Clinton County Farm Bureau’s website: www.clintoncofb.org.

Hedrick

Continued from page 1

agriculture dogma, he is revered as an approachable, sensible expert in nutrient management, farm equipment, and business. Along the way he earned the moniker of The Regenerative Farmer.

Be sure to join us for an informative “Growing Healthy Soils & Record Yields” seminar at the St. Rose Development Club on Wednesday, February 26th to hear Russell’s story and learn more about what your soils can do for you. The evening will begin with a meal catered by

Popeye’s Chophouse between 6-7 p.m., Russell’s presentation begins at 7:00 p.m., and we will wrap up with an opportunity for Q&A afterwards. Eligible producers will also be entered into a drawing to subsidize 40-acres worth of cover crop seed expenses to get them started on their own regenerative journey in the Fall of 2025.

More information is available by contacting the Clinton CFB office or checking out our website at www.clintoncofb.org. Registration is required by Tuesday, February 18th by contacting the Farm Bureau office or completing the online registration form available from our website.

Meeting

Continued from page 1

funds for nutrient stewardship efforts in Clinton County for 2025. The committee has received over \$194,575 in matching grants from the Illinois Farm Bureau since 2016 for this important effort.

As the organization’s charitable Foundation Vice-President, Schuette also noted the 23 scholarships (\$31,500) awarded to students in 2024 and applauded members for their donations over the years. Through the generosity of our members, the Foundation has been able to award almost 550 scholarships to Clinton County students, totaling over \$500,000 to-date! Schuette noted that the charitable Foundation has also awarded \$39,250 in Veterinarian scholarships and over \$92,000 in Teacher Grants.

During his President’s address, Mark Litteken recapped some of the past year’s programs, activities, and accomplishments, laid out some goals he had for the organization moving forward, and recapped success with membership growth and the organization’s first “Pulling for Agriculture” tractor pull this past year.

Clinton CFB experienced membership growth in voting and total membership this past year and was even able to gain back a 5th Delegate to represent

members in Chicago during the IFB Annual Meeting in December. Litteken also praised the work of volunteers and Director Brian Becker for the success of the first “Pulling for Agriculture” tractor pull fundraiser that brought in over \$8,000 to support the Foundation and the establishment of a new Ag Mechanics scholarship program in 2025.

Members in attendance also heard reports from Legislative Committee Chairman Ron Holevoet, AITC Committee Chairman Robert Gerstenecker, Young Leader Committee Chairman Quinton Huelsmann, State Representatives Charlie Meier, Farm Bureau Manager Brad Conant’s annual report, and comments from IFB District 16 Director Paul Beisiegel.

Directors elected to serve 3-year terms from their respective districts were: Matt Timmermann (District 1), Justin Benhoff (District 2), Luca Hanke (District 3), Brian Becker (District 4), and Cliff Schuette (At-Large).

Following the election of Directors, the meeting was adjourned, door prizes were awarded, and everyone received a pound of Prairie Farms butter as they headed for home. The Farm Bureau would also like to thank the COUNTRY Financial Agents for donating door prizes and all the members that attended!

HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN JANUARY

- 1 All four of Illinois’ policy submittals were approved by delegates at American Farm Bureau Federation’s national convention, including renewable energy and apiculture policies.
- 2 Everything Local Conference brought together more than 700 attendees and 80 vendors for three days of networking, career development and help growing profit opportunities for the state’s specialty growers.
- 3 The Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors approved the organization’s local, state and national legislative priorities, including estate tax reform, finalizing a five-year farm bill, new trade deals for farmers, and private property protection.
- 4 IAA Foundation supported agriculture students by offering 120 scholarships worth more than \$210,000.

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU CONVENTION

stop the DRIVE FORWARD

Adult Ag in the Classroom Block Snowman Workshop



Barn Quilt Painting Workshop

This is a beginner level class with all supplies provided.

Take home your own 12"x12" masterpiece ready to hang!

Register Now

Friday, March 14 • 6 p.m.



SCAN HERE



ADULT AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM



\$35 for members

\$45 for members

Registration open February 1 and is required. Space is limited to first 35 paid participants.

Herman E. Wiedle and Cecilia E. Wiedle Scholarship

With a gift of farmland, the Wiedles support students in their home community with these scholarships

Three \$2,000 Awards

Looking for students from Clinton County!

DEADLINE TO APPLY
FEBRUARY 15, 2025

Visit iaafoundation.org to apply

Public voting for new Illinois state flag open now

Illinois residents have the opportunity to vote on a new state flag design this month, with submissions reflecting various aspects of the state's identity.

And one in particular focuses on the top industry in the Prairie State.

"There are a lot of key factors that represent Illinois that most people would think about, like the silhouette of our state or Lincoln. But I really wanted to focus on agriculture for my design because that's the Illinois that I know," said Colleen Hayes, one of 10 flag design finalists.

Growing up surrounded by agriculture in Bloomington-Normal inspired Hayes, a graphic designer for Clanin Creative in Champaign, to reflect Illinois agriculture in her design. She told FarmWeek that the Illinois Flag Commission selected her design from nearly 5,000 submissions.

Flag 2246 was designed by graphic designer Colleen Hayes with support of her design team at Clanin Creative in Champaign. (Design photo courtesy of Colleen Hayes).

"It's an amazing feeling to have my flag recognized and to be a part of something that can shape Illinois' future," Hayes said. "I hope everyone can appreciate how agriculture is vital to our state."

Other design finalists with agriculture themes include a monarch butterfly flag designed by two Illinois high school students, Spresalynn Tipps and Johna



You can vote for

- One of the Illinois Flag Commission's Top 10 flag designs
- Retaining the existing state flag
- Or reinstating Illinois' 1918 centennial flag or 1968 sesquicentennial flag.

You can vote for one flag once every 24-hour period. If you have multiple favorite submissions, you may select a different flag each day.

Voting ends February 14

One of the 10 flags to vote for Illinois new state flag was designed by Colleen Hayes. The 21 stripes represent Illinois as the 21st state and reflect its agricultural roots, resembling rows of crops and the open prairie. Three six-pointed stars represent the state's three regions *northern, central, and southern* and their 18 points reference Illinois' founding in 1818. A sun on the horizon, also featured on our current state flag, represents renewal. The colors *Blue for unity, Green for agriculture, and Yellow for a bright future* honor Illinois' history and natural beauty.

Kinney. Another design uses corn kernels and a 21-pronged gear to form the state flower, the violet.

The current state flag, as well as the state's bicentennial and sesquicentennial flags, are also on the ballot.

The opportunity to choose a new state flag came after lawmakers passed SB 1818 2023. Now known as Public Act 103-0513, the Illinois Flag Commission will make recommendations to the General Assembly by April 1 to decide whether the current state flag should be replaced. The General

Assembly will then vote to adopt a new flag or keep the current design.

"My hope is that Illinois' flag will truly represent Illinois — a state with a strong workforce, an agriculture champion and so much more," said state Sen. Doris Turner, D-Springfield, chair of the Senate ag committee and member of the Illinois Flag Commission. One vote can be submitted every 24 hours through Feb. 14.

View each design additional voting information at: <https://apps.ilsos.gov/stateflag/>



A Century of Trust

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Snowy Scenes Liven Landscapes

A light snow arrived after New Year's Day, and my soul cued up the song "Snow" from Irving Berlin's musical, White Christmas. The white stuff compelled me to plug our exterior Christmas lights back in after previously retiring them for the season. I wanted photos of our lit, snow-capped roof line and the warm white lights glowing through the snowy bushes.

Yes, snow sometimes deserves the four-letter word status, but forget about the wet boots at the back door, the treacherous road conditions or the livestock and barnyards that need scooped out. Disregard the people who escape to Florida because of it or the life-altering chaos of breaking both arms while sledding with your kids in a cattle pasture (yeah, that happened to someone).

Enjoyed in the moment, snow brings peace. It delivers calmness. The precipitation generates a serene feeling unmatched in any other season. It makes us crave beef roast and chicken pot pie, a fire in the fireplace, a blanket and a book. The snowy landscape glistens, producing reflections at sunrise that rival bodies of water. The white stuff magically turns barrenness to beauty, and the glow of a barnyard light on a fresh batch defines silent night – calm and bright.

During my country travels, I appreciate the high contrast as the snow accents every leafless branch of a tree. It adds elegance to everything brown and provides evidence of presence by humans, wildlife, tractors, sleds and snowmobiles. While our chickens hesitate to step out of the coop when they see a carpet of white, our cows stand majestically beautiful and undeterred with snow on their backs.

Freshly fallen snow likens a new jar of peanut butter, highly tempting to disturb. The kids eagerly oblige. Snow spawns some of our fondest family memories of snowmen, sledding, hot cocoa and days off school. In fact, my transplanted Illinois family that lives in southern California escapes to the mountains to find snow and play in it.

Mom said our region experienced the blizzard of a lifetime one week after my birth. More than two feet of snow and high-wind conditions made Dad crawl down the roadside to work, following the tops of the fence posts that peaked from the snow. Roads were impassable or allowed a single lane for traffic only because road crews recruited the support of end loaders to make a path. We don't need too much of a good thing.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her family in West Central Illinois, where they raise corn, soybeans, hay, beef cattle, backyard chickens and farmkids.



A Sign of Your Legacy

Embrace this tradition unique to agriculture by hanging a gate sign of your own! Whether you're on the farm or connected to agriculture, displaying your member sign shows pride in and support for your Farm Bureau organization.

Each sign can be customized and shipped for just \$50. Proceeds benefit the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom program, so you're also helping teach children the importance of farming.

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Sign customization is a service reserved for Illinois Farm Bureau members. Novelty signs will not be produced.

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www.clintoncofb.org

IFB Organizational Membership Strategy Implementation to Begin

By **TAMMIE SLOUP** *FarmWeek*

Illinois Farm Bureau's Organizational Membership Strategy is now moving into the implementation phase. The Organizational Membership Strategy Advisory Committee is made up of Illinois Farm Bureau members from throughout the state.

The IFB Board of Directors voted to approve 23 recommendations and two other efforts — this year's inaugural

Advantage Conference and in-state Ag Tours — are already in the works.

The 2025-27 OMS roadmap will focus on three strategic initiatives:

• **Representation:** With a declining number of farmers and changes in the ag industry, IFB will ensure that we serve every member at every level of agriculture.

• **Engagement:** Member needs change alongside the advances

in agriculture, and IFB's programming will reflect that, providing value to all members.

• **Organizational strength:** The foundation of IFB's strength as an organization is in its county Farm Bureaus. Efficient, streamlined, and modernized processes will increase retention, develop county leaders, and provide additional support to members.

The three OMS subcommittees — Membership, Programming, and Engagement and County Farm Bureau — developed guidance, recommendations, and proposals for the OMS Advisory Committee, which submitted its final recommendations to the IFB Board. A total of 45 IFB members from all regions of the state serve on the subcommittees and advisory committee.

Among the recommendations are several that would require bylaw changes, which must be voted on by delegates at Annual Meeting in 2025 at the earliest. The topics include new voting member definitions, removal of spousal membership class, monthly membership, and dues processing.

Other recommendations would entail pilot projects to help gauge feasibility. These include:

- Study centralized bookkeeping solutions to build a pilot for CFBs
- Multi-county staffing model
- Advocacy staff in regions
- Ag tours
- Support ag business series to connect farmers and ag professionals
- Office-less Farm Bureaus



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SCAN ME 

Egg prices boiling over

Egg prices reached an average of \$4.15 per dozen nationwide last month, which was within 67 cents of the record high set two years ago

U.S. egg prices continue to climb higher so far this year due to strong demand and tighter supplies.

In the major Midwest production region, the wholesale price of large, white shell eggs delivered to warehouses increased 43 cents to \$6.49 per dozen, USDA reported this month.

Nationwide, the average price of a dozen eggs reached \$4.15 in December compared to a record \$4.82 two years ago.

A key driver of the increase is the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza. More than 145 million chickens, turkeys and other birds have been slaughtered since the outbreak began in 2022.

Ending stocks of eggs subsequently slipped from 23.1 million dozen in 2023 to 19 million dozen in 2024. USDA recently predicted ending stocks could rebound to 22 million dozen this year.



DRIVING AGRICULTURE FORWARD SCHOLARSHIP

FIVE \$1,000 AWARDS
Available Quarterly

Details at: www.iaafoundation.org

For Illinois residents enrolled in a truck driver training program.

FEBRUARY AG ADVENTURE: PRESIDENTS

President's Day is February 17, 2025

President's Day originally celebrated U.S. President **George Washington's birthday** and was made the first national holiday by Congress in 1880. In 1968, Congress combined the celebration of Abraham Lincoln's birthday on February 12 with George Washington's birthday on February 17 to make one federal holiday, President's Day, held annually on the third Monday in February.

DID YOU KNOW?
17 Presidents
were also
FARMERS!

- George Washington - 1st U.S. President
- John Adams - 2nd U.S. President
- Thomas Jefferson - 3rd U.S. President
- James Monroe - 4th U.S. President
- John Quincy Adams - 6th U.S. President
- William H. Harrison - 9th U.S. President
- James C. Tyler - 10th U.S. President
- James C. Polk - 11th President
- Abraham Lincoln - 16th President
- Ulysses S. Grant - 18th President
- Theodore Roosevelt - 26th President
- Harry Truman - 34th U.S. President
- Lyndon B. Johnson - 36th U.S. President
- Jimmy Carter - 39th U.S. President
- Ronald Reagan - 40th President
- Bill Clinton - 42nd President
- George W. Bush - 43rd President

Ulysses S. Grant

18th U.S. President

Between military campaigns, Grant was a farmer in Grantwood Village, Missouri. The historic property is now owned by the Busch family, who previously owned Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company. The farm has been an animal reserve since 1954 and is home to buffalo, emus, camels, macaws, donkeys, goats, peacocks, and the Budweiser Clydesdale horses.



Theodore Roosevelt

26th U.S. President

Roosevelt was a cattle rancher whose deep attachment to the land spurred his later commitment to work in conservation and national parks. As president, Roosevelt signed legislation establishing five new national parks.



Jimmy Carter

39th U.S. President

Generations of Carters have been cotton farmers in Georgia. Jimmy Carter was a member of FFA and credited the organization with his life-long love of woodworking. Growing up, Carter grew, packaged, and sold peanuts on his parents' peanut farm.



Safe Grain Handling Operations Training Thursday, March 20th

The Safe Grain Handling Operations course is a full day course held at the Arncos Safety Training Center in Trenton, IL. The course is designed for all levels of grain handling personnel. The course uses a variety of demonstrations, equipment, hands-on exercises, and written scenarios to exercise the participant's knowledge to reflect on the safety issues they have encountered. Topics covered include:

- Review of OSHA grain handling standard 1910.272 and other relevant standard requirements
- Hazard Prevention
- Grain Bin Entry and Rescue
- Lockout/Tagout
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Electrical Safety
- Fire Extinguisher Exercise
- Sweep Auger Safety

Throughout the coursework and exercises, participants will be asked to use the training material along with their knowledge and skills to find safe, acceptable, and workable solutions within Arncos Safety's custom built training center.

Register at:

www.arncosafety.com/safety-training-courses

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Section 21 Officer Team Including Carlyle High School's Hunter Rich

Section 22 Officer Team Including Central Community High School's Kora Eversgerd & Caiden Litteken



NATIONAL FFA WEEK FEBRUARY 15TH-22ND



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Free 1/4 lb Thickburger with purchase of same at regular price**

*Carlyle and O'Fallon Locations
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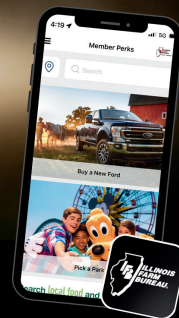
Hardee's

IT PAYS TO BE A MEMBER

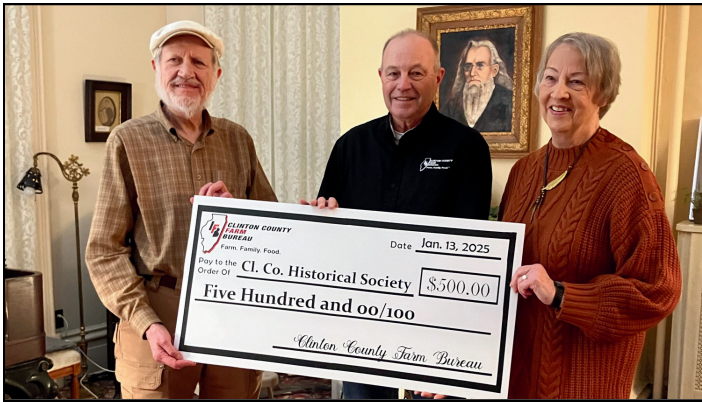
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2024 Community Impact Grant Awarded
 Clinton County Historical Society members Robert Seiffert (left) and Phyllis Hostmeyer (right) are pictured with Clinton County Farm Bureau Director, Ron Holevoet (centered) presented the Historical Society with a \$500 check for their Traveling Virtual Museum.



2024 Community Impact Grant Awarded
 Dennis Nottmeyer (left) with the Hoffman Pride and Heritage Partners was recently awarded \$600 from Clinton County Farm Bureau Director, Philip Rueter (right). The funds were used to purchase a memorial bench that was placed at the Hoffman Veterans Memorial.

Community IMPACT GRANT

Applications Available

The Clinton County Farm Bureau's "Community Impact Grant" program seeks to identify projects that will improve our communities and create partnerships with groups and individuals to make them happen.

Examples of eligible organizations in Clinton County could include schools, civic organizations, churches, 4-H clubs, FFA chapters and more. Project ideas could include efforts like upgrades to community buildings, spaces, and playgrounds; needed equipment for 4-H clubs, FFA Chapters, or other school clubs/organizations; and other community-based projects that could use additional funding.

Online applications available on our website:
www.clintoncofb.org

Grants

Continued from page 1

improve our communities and create partnerships with other groups and organizations to make those projects a reality.

Examples of eligible organizations in Clinton County could include: schools, civic organizations, churches, 4-H

clubs, FFA chapters, fraternities, sororities, and etc. Project ideas could include efforts like upgrades to community buildings, spaces, and playgrounds; needed equipment for 4-H clubs, FFA Chapters, or other school clubs/organizations; and other community-based projects that could use additional funding. Projects with lasting impacts will be favored over short-term projects.

In 2024, Clinton CFB's Community Impact Grant Program had an outstanding response, receiving nine (9) applications that requested almost \$22,000. Even with awarding more than the original \$5,000 budgeted for our program, we could still only fund portions of many of the projects that were awarded. To-date, the Clinton CFB has awarded \$19,550 in grants for 20 community improvement projects.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with great organizations and individuals on projects to improve our communities and look forward to seeing them make a difference. The online application form for the 2025 application that will be available until April 30th on our website: www.clintoncofb.org

Thank you for your membership!

To our Voting Members,

We would like to personally thank you on behalf of the board and staff for renewing your membership with the Clinton County Farm Bureau®. We commend you on your continued resilience, determination, and energy. We value your commitment as we partner for a strong agriculture present and future.

As your partner, your Clinton County Farm Bureau offers great resources, information, and programs for essential support for you and our other members, farmers and farm owners, workers, small businesses, parents and youth, and affiliated companies. We love being a strong partner to you.

We continue to see firsthand the important role farming and agriculture plays every day in Clinton County and in our country. We continue supporting area food, fiber, and fuel producers to help provide high-quality, farm fresh products to local consumers. We view this as important work.

We thank you for your membership and we look forward to serving you in the year to come!



Renew today by calling 618-526-7235 or by using the above QR code that will direct you to the members service renewal link.

To our Associate Members,

It has been our true pleasure serving you and your membership needs during this past year. We hope you will renew your \$20 membership for another year to take advantage of your membership value.

Clinton County and Illinois family farmers seek to provide you, your family, and families across our great country and beyond with safe, wholesome, sustainable food supply.

Your Farm Bureau membership provides you and your family:

- Access to local farm and food producers
- The opportunity to support Illinois farm families and food security
- Information about farming and your food
- Programs, education, events and more
- Agriculture in the Classroom for local students, teachers and parents
- 300,000+ discounts (abenity link or member center)
- And much more! Check out www.clintoncofb.org

GROWING HEALTHY SOILS & RECORD YIELDS

Join us for a conversation with the world record holder for dryland corn yield.



Russell Hedrick

FEATURED SPEAKER

As part of Clinton County Farm Bureau's (CFB) 2025 Nutrient Stewardship Grant project, we are excited to bring North Carolina no-tiller Russell Hedrick for an informational seminar on soils.

Hedrick made history with his 2022 corn harvest, raising a dryland no-till corn crop that topped 459 bushels per acre. His willingness to challenge conventional wisdom, try on-farm experiments, and use regenerative agriculture practices all contribute to his success. His open-book approach is a testament to his passion for helping other farmers achieve yield, while promoting soil health principles and conservation.

Russell's presentation begins at 7:00 p.m. and we will wrap up with an opportunity for Q&A afterwards. Eligible producers will also be entered into a drawing to subsidize 40-acres worth of cover crop seed expenses to get them started on their own regenerative journey in the Fall of 2025.

Registration is required by Tuesday, February 18th by contacting the Farm Bureau office or scanning the QR code on this flyer.

You'll Learn

No-till tips & insights from the dryland corn yield record-breaker, including innovative, money-saving nutrient management & cover crop strategies.



FEBRUARY 26, 2025

CATERED DINNER FROM POPEYE'S CHOP HOUSE 6 - 7 P.M.
PRESENTATION @ 7 P.M.



ST. ROSE DEVELOPMENT CLUB



WWW.CLINTONCOFB.ORG

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Register by Feb. 18
by scanning QR Code



Funded in part through a 2025 IFB Nutrient Stewardship Grant



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