



Membership Minute

Celebrate America's 250th Anniversary and National Ag Month

In honor of America's 250th anniversary and National Agriculture Month, the Clinton County Farm Bureau is celebrating the rich history of our nation and the vital role farmers have played — and continue to play — in sustaining our communities.

For 250 years, agriculture has been at the heart of America's story. From the earliest days of our country to today's modern

farms, farmers have provided the food on our tables, the fuel that powers our vehicles and equipment, and the fiber that becomes the clothing and everyday products we rely on. Agriculture is more than farming — it touches every part of our daily lives.

To commemorate this historic milestone, the Clinton County Farm Bureau is giving back to its members with a special

giveaway totaling \$1,000.

Fifteen lucky members will each receive a \$50 worth of prizes from three categories that represent agriculture's everyday impact:

- Food
- Fuel
- Fiber

In addition, one very lucky winner will receive a \$250 farm fuel credit from their local fuel supplier.

These giveaways are a way to celebrate both America's history and the generations of farm families who have been here through it all. Farmers have been a constant presence in our communities, providing the essentials that feed, fuel, and clothe us. National Ag Month is the perfect time to honor that legacy.

Winners will be selected from
Continue on page 5 - *Giveaway*

CCFB works to advance legislative priorities at GALC

Clinton Farm Bureau members learned how to harness the power of grassroots advocacy during the organization's annual Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference (GALC), held Feb. 17 in Springfield.

Centered on the theme "The Power of Grassroots," this year's conference highlighted the impact of member voices shaping

policy at every level. Local, state political leaders and legislators met with Farm Bureau leaders from across the state, including 6 members of the Clinton County Farm Bureau, to discuss IFB's 2026 legislative priorities. The event culminated in a legislative reception for elected officials, who met with IFB members.

Continue on page 5 - *GALC*



Members of the Central High School FFA Chapter had the opportunity to meet ILFB President, Phillip Nelson while attending the Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference.

Icing on the Cake for Ag Education



Twenty-three participants joined us for the third workshop in our Winter Series of Adult Ag in the Classroom Workshops — Cake Decorating — instructed by Holly Diekemper of Diekemper Cakery. Guests enjoyed a fun, hands-on evening learning creative decorating techniques and professional tips from Holly. Events like this help support Ag in the Classroom and its mission to connect students with the importance of agriculture in their everyday lives. More photos from this event can be found on Page 8.

Pulling for Ag event planned for Sept. 19

The Clinton County Farm Bureau (CFB) is planning our third annual ITPA Tractor Pull at the Clinton County Fairgrounds on Saturday, September 19th!

This event will include seven pulling classes: 9,500 lb. Limited Pro Stock, 8,500 lb. Limited Pro Stock, Heavy Modified, 11,000 lb. Pro Farm, Lighted Modified, Pro Stock and a 9,500 lb. Pro Farm.

Continue on page 3 - *Pull*




The Latest Episode of Taking Stalk with Illinois Farm Bureau Is Out!

What does it take for farm to table to work? Celebrity Chef Stephanie Izard joins RFD Radio Network's Rita Frazer at the Everything Local Conference to dish on why farmers and chefs need to talk more — and how those conversations turn into better relationships for those on either end of the fork.

Episode 35
Cooking up connections with Chef Stephanie Izard

Listen: FarmWeekNow.com/podcasts
 (or wherever you listen to podcast)




Affiliate Relations Giveaway

Our staff recently promoted our affiliate relationship and valuable patronage benefits at Gateway FS's open house. Attendees had the opportunity to enter for a chance to win a cooler, Farm Bureau swag, and more. The Clinton County Farm Bureau Board of Directors drew one lucky winner during a recent committee meeting. Congratulations to Ron and Jeanne Thole of Trenton! Jeanne recently stopped by the office to claim their prize. Pictured is Jeanne Thole with CCFB Manager Brad Conant.




March 15th Deadline

Clinton County Farm Bureau Foundation Scholarship Applications are DUE MARCH 15!

Scan the QR code or visit our website for more information and online application.




SCAN ME!



Ag Mechanic Students Apply for a chance to be awarded a scholarship for your education

We're here to help you grow!

This scholarship opportunity is focused on aspiring ag mechanics looking to advance their studies or achieve a certification.



To learn more about our scholarship opportunities, and the online application, please visit our website: www.clintoncofb.org

U.S. Rep. Mike Bost staff tours Henrich's Dairy



U.S. Representative Mike Bost and members of his staff frequently collaborate with the Illinois Farm Bureau to engage with agricultural producers across southern Illinois, discussing priorities for the upcoming 2026 Farm Bill, trade opportunities, and ongoing economic challenges facing farmers. One recent engagement included a visit to Henrichs Dairy Farm, where Bost's staff toured the farm's newly constructed carousel milking parlor. The visit provided an opportunity to see firsthand how innovative technology is helping modern dairy operations improve efficiency and animal care. Carousel, or rotary, milking parlors offer exceptional efficiency for large dairy herds. These systems allow cows to be milked in a continuous rotating platform, enabling operations to milk more than 800 cows per hour. In addition to increasing throughput, carousel systems enhance cow comfort by reducing stress and providing a consistent milking routine, which can contribute to increased milk production. They also improve labor efficiency, support better animal health monitoring, and, with integrated automation, provide precise real-time data for effective herd management.

KEEP IN TOUCH AND...

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"Clinton County Farm Bureau"

Our Website
www.clintoncofb.org



Pull

Continued from page 1

A "King of Clinton County" Pull will also be held in conjunction with this event. Classes will include: 7,500 lb. Farm Stock, 10,500 lb. Farm Stock, 12,500 lb. Farm Stock, SI Pullers 12,500 lb. Hot Farm Stock, SI Pullers 5,500 lb. Top Cut Class, 12,500+ (MITP), 16,000 lb Farm Stock and multiple truck classes to be announced closer to the event.

Funds will be raised from pull entry, gate admission, as well as a raffle that will be conducted by the CCFB Young Leaders Committee. This event is a fundraiser for the Clinton CFB's

charitable Foundation to support our scholarship programs.

All day admission price is \$20 for ages 18+, \$10 for ages 11 - 17, and FREE for children 10 and under. FREE Parking and Kids Zone activities! Concessions will be available from the FFA Chapters across Clinton County.

Mark your calendars and contact the Clinton County Farm Bureau office at (618) 526-7235 for more information about the event and sponsorship opportunities for your business or farm! Sponsorship packets and additional details are also available on our website at www.clintoncofb.org.

 Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District

GARDEN SEED SWAP WEEK

Have Extra Garden Seeds?
Come by our office and swap them out with our wide variety of options

MARCH 23-27, 2026

1780 N 4th. Street
Breese, Illinois 62230

www.clintoncoswcd.org





2026 Young Leaders Conference - Harvesting Success

Several Clinton County Young Leaders attended the Illinois Farm Bureau Young Leaders Conference in Peoria on February 6-7. The conference provided an opportunity to network, build skills, and gain fresh ideas to bring back to the county Farm Bureau. Attendees participated in a collegiate dinner Friday evening and heard from Nicki Joiner, who shared valuable insights on resumes and professional development. On Saturday, President Philip Nelson and State Young Leader Chair Garrett Williams welcomed participants before they attended a variety of breakout sessions covering many areas of agriculture. The weekend concluded with a glow-themed trivia night, giving students a fun opportunity to connect with fellow young leaders from across Illinois.



A Century of Trust

In 1925, a group of Illinois farmers came together to provide fire and lightning insurance, helping to ensure their farms and crops would be protected. Over the next century, COUNTRY Financial® grew to offer a diverse range of personal and business insurance products, as well as retirement and investment services.

Over the next 100 years, our insurance will do more to protect you and your loved ones, so you can enjoy the moments that make your life full.

COUNTRY Financial® is the marketing name for the COUNTRY Financial family of affiliated companies (collectively, COUNTRY), which include COUNTRY Life Insurance Company®, COUNTRY Mutual Insurance Company®, and their respective subsidiaries, located in Bloomington, IL. 0125-042CP



It's National Ag Month Hats Off to the Many Roles of Family Farmers

Our son has 39 hats hanging in his bedroom – bill facing down and caps evenly spaced in a single row on hooks positioned within inches of the ceiling.

Wait. Make that 42. Dad just returned from two farm shows.

Farmers own and wear many hats, a culture traced back to at least his great-grandpa's era in farming. Farmers love to wear hats. Ag retailers love to give them away as walking advertisements. And nowadays, many schools allow hats during the academic day, making them both a style statement and a part of today's youth identity.

Metaphorically, farmers wear many hats throughout the day, a juggling act worth recognizing in this season that honors National Ag Day on March 24, 2026. Being a full-time farmer means embracing a wide range of part-time roles: grower, mechanic, heavy equipment operator, agronomist, meteorologist and veterinarian among them.

You could add scientist to the list: The liquid fertilizer jar tests in our shop fridge prove this one. Logistics manager is another: Necessary to direct trucks hauling grain 11 months of the year. Firefighter, too: This last dry and abnormally hot harvest required that. Add in accountant: We keep our own books. Then, our grain

requires a marketer, our freezer beef a sales lead; our employees, a human resources manager; and the next generation, a mentor and teacher.

An impressive 96% of Illinois farms are owned by families, and on those farms family operators and their employees must assume many roles with enough skill to be mechanics at 8 a.m., marketers after the late-morning USDA report, agronomists before the kids get off the bus and accountants by dusk. We personally recognize the value of partnering with outside professionals who improve our performance in those fields as we conduct this orchestra of crops, people, tools and nature.

Our son owns trucker-style farm hats for nice events, school and playing golf. He reserves a grungy one for farm work and another for outdoor FFA events. He also displays one that belonged to his great-grandpa, a nod to Gramps and his former hat collection. I still can picture those farm caps, more than 100 that fully covered Gramps' farmhouse office walls to the point Granny didn't realize termites had destroyed the studs behind them.

Outside of termite exterminator, farmers wear many hats in every sense of the phrase.

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



2026 Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference

Members of the Clinton County Farm Bureau had the opportunity to meet with state representatives at the Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference. Pictured on left: Blake Twenhafel, CCFB Director Lucas Hanke, State Senator Jason Plummer; CCFB Director Cliff Schuette, State Representative Blaine Wilhour; CCFB Director Ray Krausz, Jenny Litteken and CCFB President Mark Litteken. Pictured on right: CCFB Directors Lucas Hanke, Cliff Schuette, Illinois State Rep. Charlie Meier, Jenny Litteken and CCFB President, Mark Litteken.

GALC

Continued from page 1

"The power of grassroots is in each and every one of you," IFB President Philip Nelson said during his opening remarks. "You are the people who develop the policies. You're the people that work with legislators to see those policies get implemented." Attendees also heard from

numerous lawmakers, including Illinois House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch and Illinois Senate President Don Harmon, as well as U.S. House Ag Committee Chair Glenn "GT" Thompson, outgoing Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin and U.S. Rep. Darin LaHood.

GALC is the annual central event around IFB's longstanding efforts to connect members and

legislators. Other programs include IFB's Adopt-A-Legislator program, which fosters long-term personal relationships between urban legislators and farmers across the state. IFB's Leaders to Washington trips also connect farmers with national legislators through visits on Capitol Hill.

"The Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference is where

grassroots power comes to life," said Kevin Semlow, IFB executive director of governmental affairs and commodities. "We're focused on equipping members to advocate for the policies they care about. It's an opportunity to learn, engage and connect, because when our members lead, agriculture's voice is heard."

Giveaway

Continued from page 1

eligible members who complete the online registration form.

As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, we also celebrate the farmers, producers, and agricultural advocates who continue to shape its future. Agriculture isn't just part of our history — it remains a vital part of everyday life and our nation's continued success.

One entry per membership, must be current member in good standing to qualify. Winners will be announced after April Board Meeting.

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING AMERICA'S 250TH AND NATIONAL AG MONTH
Agriculture is more than farming...
it's the food on your plate, the fuel in your car, and the clothes on your back.
We are celebrating the Impact of Agriculture by giving away all three!
 Online entry form available for members on our website: www.clintoncofb.org
 Deadline to enter is National Ag Day...March 24 at midnight

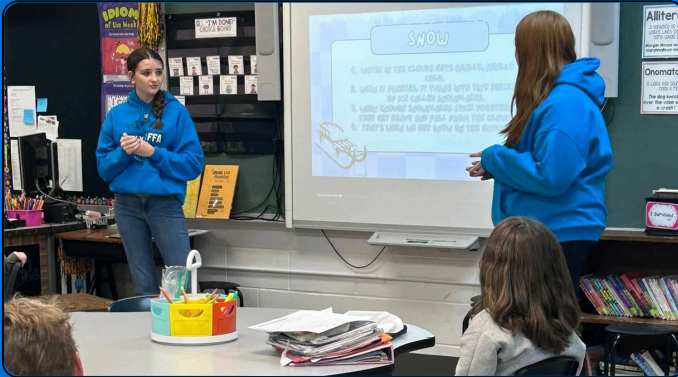
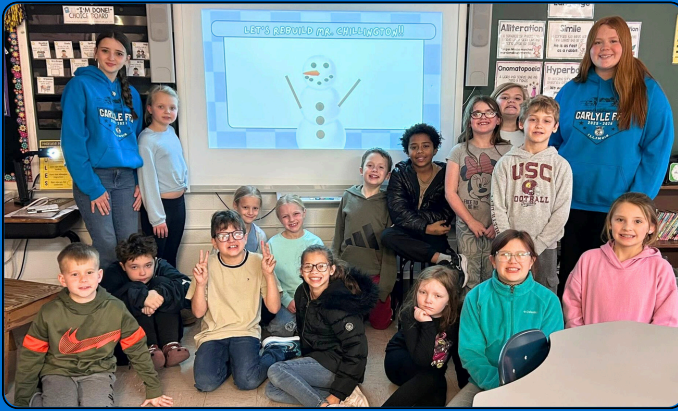
15 WINNERS!
WIN \$50 WORTH OF
 FOOD FUEL OR FIBER

GRAND PRIZE
\$250 FARM FUEL CREDIT
 FROM YOUR LOCAL SUPPLIER

Enter to Win

ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU
 TAKING STALK PODCAST

SCAN



The Sprout Scouts program was launched in the fall of 2025 and continues to make a meaningful impact in local classrooms.



Sprout Scouts are FFA high school students who volunteer their time to serve as classroom presenters, helping promote agricultural education while simultaneously developing their own leadership and communication skills.

students while reinforcing important agricultural and environmental concepts.

Four students from Carlyle High School recently presented a lesson on snow and winter weather during a January classroom visit. They did an excellent job engaging students while reinforcing

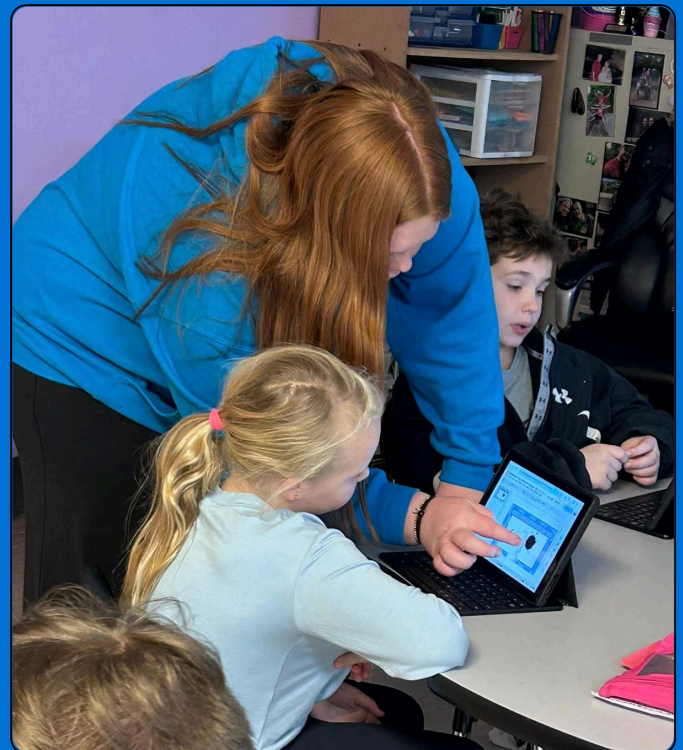
Sprout Scouts visit local classrooms once each month, providing consistent educational support and serving as positive role models for younger students. The program reflects a strong commitment to agricultural literacy and youth leadership development within the community.



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Bureau since 1951.**

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Ag in the Classroom Brings Stories, Art, and Agriculture to Life

February's Ag in the Classroom lesson brought stories, creativity, and agriculture together in a fun and engaging way for first graders across Clinton County!

This month's featured book, *There's a Cow in Patrick O'Shanahan's Kitchen*, along with a focus on the ingredients for French toast, is helping students connect the dots between the farm and their food. As they explore the story, students are learning where common breakfast ingredients come from and how agriculture plays a role in their everyday lives.

But the learning doesn't stop there! First graders are being asked to become illustrators by retelling the book through their own original artwork. From lively kitchen scenes to carefully drawn ingredients like milk, eggs, and bread, students are bringing the story to life with creativity and imagination. This hands-on activity strengthens reading comprehension, sequencing skills, and artistic expression — all while reinforcing important agricultural concepts.

There are so many extremely talented young artists in the first grades across Clinton County, and their creativity truly shines through in this project.





Clinton County first graders proudly show off their original illustrations from February's Ag in the Classroom lesson, where they retold *There's a Cow in Patrick O'Shanahan's Kitchen* through their own creative artwork.


As part of the activity, students connected the story to agriculture by exploring the ingredients used to make French toast and where those foods come from. Pictured are students from Aviston Elementary.




WAYS..... FARM BUREAU WORKS FOR YOU

 More than four million dollars saved through member benefit programs for farm, family and home.

Advocating for legislation on state and federal levels that works for farmers. 

 Educating youth about the vital role agriculture plays in Illinois.

Keeping you informed through RFD Radio Network, FarmWeek, websites, smart phone apps, and more! 

 Providing a place for farmers and their families to collaborate, share ideas, and learn together.



Cake Decorating Workshop

Participants enjoyed a fun, hands-on evening decorating cakes during the third Ag in the Classroom Cake Decorating Workshop, led by Holly Diekemper of Diekemper Cakery.



JOIN US FOR A

Christmas

in July

NUTCRACKER

Paint Party

Wednesday, July 1
6 - 9 P.M.

Enjoy a relaxing evening with friends while supporting agricultural education in our local classrooms. Every brushstroke helps bring hands-on learning experiences to students across Clinton County.

REGISTER TODAY

Tickets include:

- charcuterie treats
- holiday nutcracker
- all paint supplies

Bring your favorite drinks

\$40 for members
\$50 non-members



HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU IN JANUARY

- 1** The Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors approved the organization's state and federal legislative priorities, including estate tax reform, protecting private property rights, expanding biofuel use, a full multi-year farm bill and more.
- 2** Four IFB policy submittals were adopted by American Farm Bureau Federation during the AFBF Convention, including language addressing ag labor, drones and science-backed conservation evaluation tools.
- 3** IFB partnered with the Illinois Specialty Growers Association and Illinois Farmers Market Association to host the Everything Local Conference, where hundreds of specialty growers come together for personal and business development and networking.
- 4** The IAA Foundation, charitable arm of Illinois Farm Bureau, opened applications targeting to award more than \$340,000 in college scholarships, helping students pursue degrees in agriculture-related fields and invest in their careers.



4 Ways to Prepare Your Farm for Severe Weather

by John Grant, Manager, Agribusiness Underwriting at COUNTRY Financial®

Severe weather like tornadoes, flooding, droughts and wildfires can all take a toll on your farm equipment and property. So, before bad weather hits, make sure you take these steps to prepare.

1. Take inventory

- Take inventory of your farm equipment and property to keep a record of exactly what's on your farm, what the value is and where it's located. This will come in handy in the case of a farm insurance claim. Download our farm inventory document from countryfinancial.com, fill it out and give it to your COUNTRY Financial Insurance Agent. Pro tip: Photos are a great way to inventory your tools and equipment in your sheds.
- Verify with your insurance agent that you have the proper insurance for livestock and equipment.

2. Prepare employees

- Review emergency escape routes for each building. Keep in mind your emergency plan might differ depending on the event (tornado, flood, fire, etc.).

- Document procedures to account for all employees.
- Determine a safe place for all employees to meet.
- Create an emergency contact list for owners, employees, family members, and suppliers.
- Assign different roles and responsibilities to each employee, like who is responsible for taking care of livestock, moving equipment, or calling emergency contacts.

3. Inspect farm equipment

- Keep generators in working order. Make sure you have an adequate supply of liquid propane if power is out for multiple days. If portable generators are hooked up to tractors, make sure the tractor has adequate fuel supply.

4. Review farm insurance

- Meet with your COUNTRY Financial Insurance Agent annually to review your farm insurance coverages and share any changes you have made to equipment and property. These conversations can help to identify any gaps in coverage and provide opportunities to discuss adding optional farm insurance coverages that are not currently on your policy.
- Discuss the process for filing a farm insurance claim if disaster strikes.

You may not be able to stop bad weather from striking, but these steps can help you feel more prepared. For more information on farm and crop insurance, visit countryfinancial.com.

Community IMPACT GRANT

Applications Available

Apply today for the 2026 Community Impact Grant



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



BenefitHub: Illinois Farm Bureau's New Member Benefit Platform

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

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

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

Getting Started:

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

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

Need Help?

For account questions, contact BenefitHub Customer Care at 1-813-675-2210 or customerCare@benefitHub.com

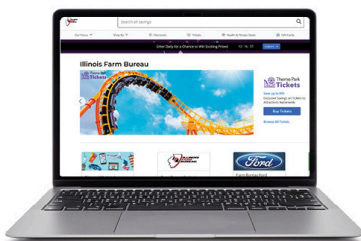
BenefitHub members save an average of \$2,500—so why wait? Start exploring your savings at <https://ilfb.benefitHub.com>.

Community IMPACT GRANT RECIPIENTS



Clinton County Historical Society awards Community Impact Grant
 With support from the Clinton County Farm Bureau's 2025 Community Impact Grant Program, the Breese Historical Society expanded its 2024 Sidney Breese Project to further educate and engage our community. In 2024, the Historical Society developed lesson plans for 8th-grade students at both Breese schools and coordinated field trips to the Clinton County Historical Society & Museum. During these visits, students learned about Sidney Breese and his important role in Illinois history. Building on that success in 2025, the society broadened the project to reach the entire community. The Breese Historical Society hosted a public discussion at the Breese Public Library focused on the life and legacy of Sidney Breese. Following that event, they purchased two complete sets of seven books (14 books total) authored by or about Sidney Breese and the history of the Illinois Central Railroad. Applications for the 2026 Community Grant Program are currently available

DESKTOP

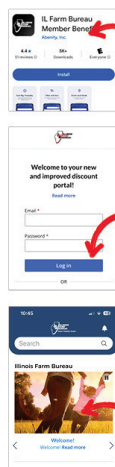


1. Go to <https://ilfb.benefitHub.com>.
2. Sign in with your existing username and password or register as a new user by selecting "Don't have an account? Sign up. You will need your membership number to complete sign up."
3. Find the best deals and start saving!

MOBILE APP

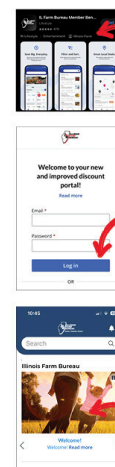


ANDROID



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.

Soil Testing Kits available this spring

The Clinton County Farm Bureau, in partnership with the Clinton County Illinois Extension Office, is offering soil testing kits this spring with support from the 2026 Nutrient Stewardship Grant Program. This program helps homeowners and gardeners better understand their soil while promoting responsible nutrient management. You may have questions about your soil, so let us help you take the guesswork out of soil improvement with soil testing. With soil testing, you can find out what your soil needs and get fertilizer recommendations based on your soil's specific needs.

The soil test includes soil pH, Potassium, Phosphorous, Calcium, Magnesium, Organic Matter, and Cation Exchange Capacity.

Complete kit includes:

- Step-by-step instructions on how to sample soil
- Sample bag and form
- Convenient pre-paid

shipping box and label via USPS

Farm Bureau Soil Test Kit Pricing

- Soil Test Kit – 1 sample: \$25 member/\$30 non-member
- 2-sample kit: \$40 member/\$50 non-member
- 3-sample kit: \$55 member/\$70 non-member

*Pricing subject to change

Additional recommendations based on your soil sample results will be provided by the soil testing lab. However, we know that sometimes it's nice to talk with an expert about your soil results and how to improve your soil's potential. Illinois Extension Educator Chris Lueking and local Master Gardeners are available to answer your specific questions about soil tests, landscaping, tree care, lawn care, and gardening.

Soil kits are available at the Clinton County Farm Bureau Office, 1165 N 4th St., Breese.

If you have any questions, please call the office at (618) 526-7235.



Holevoet honored for years of service

Clinton County Farm Bureau Director Ron Holevoet attended his final board meeting on February 12 after 18 years of dedicated service. Pictured with CCFB President Mark Litteken, Holevoet was recognized for his years of commitment and presented with one of his favorites – key lime pie – in appreciation of his service to the members of the Clinton County Farm Bureau. The Farm Bureau extends its sincere appreciation for his commitment and leadership in serving the members of Clinton County.

Soil Testing Program

Soil testing takes the guesswork out of soil improvement, growing plants, and fertilizer recommendations.

- What's wrong with this lawn?
- Why won't my garden grow?
- The flowers need something...
- Why aren't these shrubs performing?
- These crops aren't yielding like they should?



Pricing:

- 1 Sample Soil Kit: \$25 for members/\$30 non-members
- 2 Sample Soil Kit: \$40 for members/\$50 non-members

Stop by our office in Breese for more information and to obtain your kit.

(618) 526-7235 www.clintoncofb.org



FACEBOOK

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"Clinton County Farm Bureau"

WAYS..... FARM BUREAU WORKS FOR YOU

More than four million dollars saved through member benefit programs for farm, family and home.

Advocating for legislation on state and federal levels that works for farmers.

Educating youth about the vital role agriculture plays in Illinois.

Keeping you informed through RFD Radio Network, FarmWeek, websites, smart phone apps, and more!

Providing a place for farmers and their families to collaborate, share ideas, and learn together.

What's on Your Mind? Help Shape Farm Bureau Policy

One of the greatest strengths of Farm Bureau is that our policies are created through a true grassroots process. Every position our organization takes begins with an idea from members—farmers and rural residents who see challenges or opportunities in their communities and want to make sure agriculture has a strong voice.

The policy development process starts at the county level. Members can bring forward ideas or concerns to their county Farm Bureau, where they are reviewed and discussed. If a proposal moves forward, it may be submitted to the Illinois Farm Bureau Resolutions Committee and considered by voting delegates from every county at the organization's Annual Meeting. If adopted, those policies guide the organization's advocacy efforts in Springfield and Washington, D.C., and proposals with national implications may also advance to the American Farm Bureau Federation policy process.

Policy Development Process

Simply put—Farm Bureau policy begins with you.

As we prepare for future policy discussions, we want to hear what's on your mind. Are there agricultural, rural life, or community issues you believe deserve more attention? Do you have thoughts on existing policy that could be strengthened or updated?

We encourage members to share their ideas and feedback. You can also explore current IFB and AFBF policy positions on the policy section of our website to learn more about where the organization stands today. Click here to learn more: [Policy and Legislation - Clinton County Farm Bureau](#)

If there's an issue that matters to you, let us know by submitting a suggestion to the Clinton County Farm Bureau Board through the form on that webpage. Your input helps ensure our policies reflect the real needs of our members and continue guiding Farm Bureau's work to support agriculture and rural communities.



Thank you for your membership!

To our 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!

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

2025 High School Agriculture Survey: What the Next Generation Thinks

This year’s countywide high school survey offers a clear picture of how students view agriculture—its role in their lives, the challenges it faces, and the values they associate with it. With more than 800 respondents across five area schools, the results show a generation that is connected to agriculture in meaningful ways, even if not always directly involved.

How Students See Their Connection to Agriculture

A majority of students—61%—say agriculture directly affects them. Many have ties through family farming (33%) or by living or working on farms (24% combined). Still, over a third (36%) report no personal ties, underscoring the importance of continued outreach and education.

What They Believe Matters Most

When asked about the biggest issues facing agriculture today, students pointed to:

- Environmental issues (38%)
- Food-related concerns (25%)
- National security and foreign land ownership (19%)
- Regulation (15%)

These priorities reflect a generation that is paying attention not only to production but also to sustainability, policy, and global dynamics.

Food Production Preferences and Concerns

Students expressed strong and nearly even preferences for conventional (43%) and organic (40%) production methods, with a smaller but notable interest in regenerative agriculture (16%). When it comes to concerns about food production:

- 37% reported no concerns
- 23% worry about how food is processed
- 18% selected all of the above (processing, growing, animal treatment)
- 13% are concerned about animal welfare

Views on Agriculture’s Environmental Impact

Students identified the following as the most significant negative environmental impacts:

- Water pollution/erosion (26%)

- Pesticides/herbicides (23%)
- Hormone/antibiotic use (15%)

Yet 13% reported no concerns, showing a range of perspectives.

What They Want the Farm Bureau to Focus On

When asked what issues the Clinton County Farm Bureau should prioritize, students emphasized:

- Food and nutrition (39%)
- Water quality (21%)
- Legislation and regulation (20%)
- Climate (18%)

A strong majority (68%) also recognized that the Farm Bureau’s work spans advocacy, education, community involvement, and stewardship.

Their Overall View of Agriculture

Students hold overwhelmingly positive views:

- 49% rated agriculture a 5 out of 5
- 32% rated it a 4 Only 2% rated it a 1 or 2.

However, only 22% said they would like to be a voice in shaping agriculture’s future—an opportunity for engagement moving forward.

What Agriculture Means to Today’s Students

The most inspiring part of the survey came from the open-ended question: “What is your definition of agriculture?” Students shared thoughtful, personal, and often moving reflections. A few standout examples:

“Agriculture is the lifeblood of civilization... the resilience of the farmers who no matter how bad their back aches from the day before, continue to wake up every morning before dawn and carry on.”

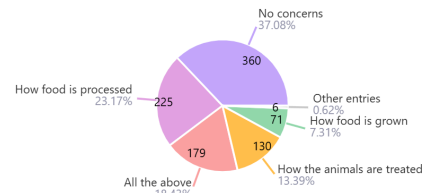
“Agriculture is taking care of the environment and maintaining sustainable food sources for everyone.”

“It’s a community across the nation that acts like family... a way of life whether it’s a job or just driving past a field on the way home.”

These responses show that even students without direct farm experience recognize agriculture’s cultural, economic, and environmental importance.

Do you have any concerns with food production?

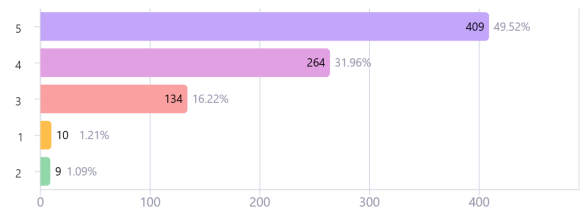
971 responses



Data	Response	%
No concerns	360	37.08%
How food is processed	225	23.17%
All the above	179	18.43%
How the animals are treated	130	13.39%
How food is grown	71	7.31%
Other entries	6	0.62%

Overall view of agriculture?

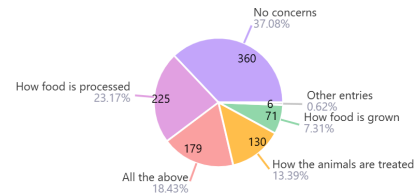
826 responses



Data	Response	%
5	409	49.52%
4	264	31.96%
3	134	16.22%
1	10	1.21%
2	9	1.09%

Do you have any concerns with food production?

971 responses

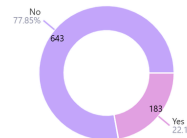


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Other entries	6	0.62%

Other: What is put in food and how it is grown; if the food we eat is tested; corporations taking over agriculture production.

Would you like to be a voice in shaping the future of agriculture?

826 responses



Data	Response	%
Yes	183	22.15%
No	643	77.85%



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