

Breese Dist. 12 Teacher Sandra Jansen named 2027 Illinois Ag in the Classroom Teacher of the Year

By Phyllis Coulter FarmWeek

Sandra Jansen, a Breese Elementary School social studies teacher known for sharing her experiences growing up on a dairy farm, was named the 2027 Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom (IAITC) Teacher of the Year.

"I didn't see it coming. Everyone was so secretive. The kids had made cards and posters. My family showed up," she told FarmWeek of the surprise assembly in Breese when the award was announced.

The southern Illinois teacher in Clinton County, who calls herself an agriculture "cheerleader," connects ag with other topics.

"We are constantly coming back to agriculture in my classroom. We talk about natural resources — renewable and nonrenewable — and we study the economy," she said. "In Clinton County, we are centered around agriculture.

"Agriculture is more than just a tractor going down a road," she continued. "It's an important and vital part of our community."

To help tell agriculture's story, Jansen has attended multiple IAITC-related professional development opportunities and incorporates new materials and IAITC resources in her daily curriculum, said Kevin Daugherty, IAITC education director.

Jansen uses agriculture to strengthen her students' critical thinking skills, problem-solving and teamwork. Her passion for ag and the foundation she lays has influenced many of her students to pursue careers in ag, environmental sciences and related fields, Daugherty said.

Continue on page 3 - ***Jansen***



2027 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Sandra Jansen, a Breese Elementary School social studies teacher, center holding flowers, is celebrated as the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom 2027 Teacher of the Year. Pictured from left: Robert Gerstenecker Clinton County AITC Committee; Mrs. Jansen; Brad Conant, Clinton CFB Manager; Susan Kleiboecker, Clinton AITC Coordinator; Kevin Daugherty, Illinois AITC.

Federal Diesel Relief Expands, but Illinois Documentation Rules Remain

By Tammie Sloup FarmWeek

Illinois farmers considering the use of dyed diesel fuel in highway vehicles now have additional federal guidance to review, but Illinois Farm Bureau officials emphasize that state documentation requirements remain unchanged.

The IRS recently issued additional guidance related to President Donald Trump's executive order on dyed diesel fuel, providing temporary federal relief for highway use of dyed diesel between Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.

Under the federal guidelines, farmers and other users of dyed diesel during the relief period will not be required to file a federal excise tax return, Form 720, solely to report dyed diesel tax liability. Taxpayers who already file Form 720 for other taxes also will not need to report dyed diesel liabilities on that return.

The federal guidance further states that users do not need to create or maintain records solely to document the federal tax liability during the relief period. In addition, the IRS will not require taxpayers to later submit omitted reports or recreate

already file Form 720 for other taxes also will not need to report dyed diesel liabilities on that return.

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Continue on page 2 - ***Rules***

Rules

Continued from page 1

require taxpayers to later submit omitted reports or recreate records after the relief period ends, even if filing deadlines extend beyond Dec. 31.

However, Illinois Farm Bureau cautioned the new guidance does not formally eliminate the underlying federal tax obligation.

"The latest IRS guidance strongly suggests the agency does not intend to pursue collection through the normal reporting process," the organization said in guidance distributed to members.

"However, the guidance does not formally eliminate the underlying federal tax liability."

The IRS is also evaluating a possible grace period or other measures to address residual red dye that may remain in fuel tanks after the relief period ends, although no official grace period has been announced.

Earlier IRS guidance issued Oct. 14 stated the agency would not impose penalties related to excise taxes on dyed diesel sold for use, or used, in diesel-powered vehicles operating on public highways nationwide during the Oct. 1 through Dec. 31 relief period.

Red-dyed diesel is standard diesel fuel marked with a red dye to indicate it is tax-exempt and legally restricted to off-road use such as farming, construction, generators and marine/rail equipment. It is chemically the same as clear on-road diesel but sold without highway fuel taxes.

The federal diesel tax is about 24 cents per gallon, while Illinois' motor fuel tax adds roughly 55 cents per gallon.

Read the updated IRS guidelines at bit.ly/irsdyeddiesel.

Illinois requirements remain in effect

Despite the federal changes, Illinois farmers seeking state penalty relief must continue complying with Illinois Department of Revenue documentation requirements.

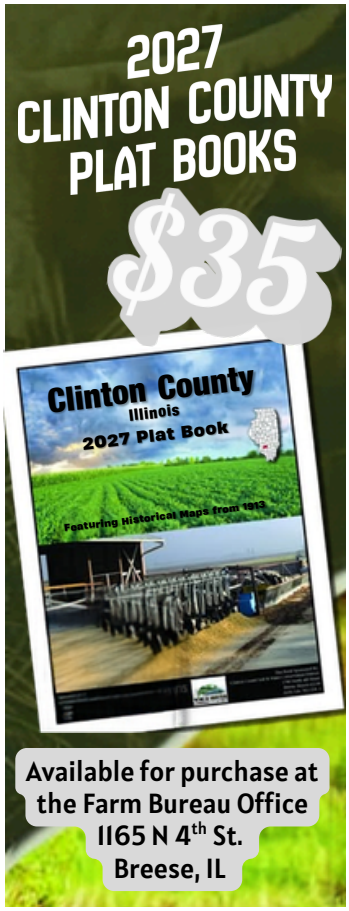
The state relief period runs Oct. 6 through Dec. 31. During that time, producers using dyed diesel for qualifying agricultural transportation must maintain the records required by the Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) and retain those records for four years. Read the IDOR documentation requirements at bit.ly/idordyeddiesel.

Illinois Farm Bureau's recommendation remains unchanged despite the new federal guidance.

"If you choose to use red dyed diesel in on-road trucks for farming and agricultural purposes, document everything and have a plan to transition back to clear diesel," the organization advised.

Illinois Farm Bureau said it will continue monitoring developments at both the federal and state levels and provide updates as additional guidance becomes available. Farmers with technical questions are encouraged to contact Rodney Knittel, IFB's associate director of transportation and infrastructure, at 309-557-3662 or RKnittel@ilfb.org





Jansen

Continued from page 1

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"Our Clinton County Farm Bureau and the Agriculture in the Classroom program help me bring these ideas to life. Through the books, supplemental materials and creative lessons they provide, I can make agricultural connections meaningful, engaging and accessible to my students," Jansen said.

"These resources allow me to build on our curriculum and give students opportunities to learn about agriculture in ways that connect directly to their own experiences. Susan Kleiboeker, our Clinton County ag literacy coordinator, is a huge help to me, and I appreciate all of her extra steps," she said.

Jansen will be recognized at the 2026 Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Chicago and will receive a trip to the 2027 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She will also be the Illinois nominee for the USDA National Excellence in Teaching Agriculture Award.

For Jansen, going to the national event in Oklahoma is "an educational field day" where she will see demonstrations and learn from others. She looks forward to sharing a lesson or two she teaches to students, one featuring ice cream.

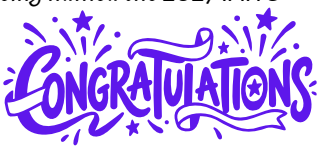
"We use local ingredients to make homemade ice cream," she said. "We talk about what we can put on it to make it even yummier and what is nutritional and what is not."



District 12 third- and fourth-grade students are celebrating Mrs. Sandra Jansen's recognition as the 2027 IAITC Teacher of the Year!



A Surprise Celebration! Mrs. Jansen's husbands and daughters joined her in the celebration of her being named the 2027 IAITC Teacher of the Year!





Aviston Park District Awarded Community Impact Grant



Through a Clinton County Farm Bureau Community Impact Grant, the Aviston Park District installed an additional security camera system at its new soccer park and pavilion. The system enhances safety and security for athletes, families and visitors by improving visibility throughout the facility, helping deter vandalism and unauthorized activity, and providing better monitoring of the park and pavilion for community members to enjoy with greater peace of mind.



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Photo Finish

End of Harvest Calls for a Camera

Dad calls Mom from the cab, putting her on speaker so she can be part of the moment. Meanwhile, I take photos from my windshield view to record the final pass of harvest. I pause to send a mass message with photos to the farm crew and family, celebrating the removal of the last crop standing and the sense of freedom that comes with it.

Bring on the final tax prep. The lingering input decisions. The year-ending fieldwork. The winter maintenance. And especially the holidays. You know me: I had Christmas music playing on the first frosty morning in October.

In a harvest process that rewards the efficiency of combines, auger carts and trucks always moving grain, we pause to share in the moment with everyone who played a role from the field to the office to the voids covered at home. The harvest photo finish represents a familiar farm tradition that in just a second captures the checkered flag for a marathon of a season.

Six to eight weeks prior, we had been excited to start. We ended just as excited to finish. The final field brings an emotional shift from maintaining momentum to the realization of a job done well and, most importantly, done safely. That single smartphone snapshot captures relief, gratitude and exhaustion in a single moment. It archives the machinery we used that year and the fact that parents grow older, grandparents retire, employees remain committed and grandkids graduate from buddy seats to operator controls. My son harvested the final pass last year.

The photo carries a story unseen by the eye: yields both big and disappointing; recollection of excessive June rain that hindered potential; and the season's trending crop moisture. Within that season, life's story put social calendars on pause as we watched the sun rise and set within the workday, experienced dewy mornings and moonlit nights, ate field meals and monster cookies, handled the truck that got stuck, and were stunned by the record-level raccoon damage.

The relief in that final pass is incredible, and so is the gratitude for the crop gathered and the camaraderie of the people who carried the work. For a short time, we don't know what to do with ourselves. It takes a couple days to readjust to a non-harvest workday, a social life beyond the farm and even the brief sense of loss that comes with not seeing the season's crew every day.

Perhaps that's why the photo matters so much.

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.

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ILLINOIS FARMER
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ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU
TAKING STALK PODCAST

Episode 50

Beyond what's for dinner: A conversation with Deanne Frieders

Long days, unpredictable weather and the demands of farm life -- especially during harvest -- can make farm life harder. But food can help. That's a lesson that farm wife and food writer Deanne Frieders learned quickly after she married a farmer following a corporate career in Chicago.

The woman behind "This Farm Girl Cooks" joins host Rita Frazer in this episode of Taking Stalk to talk about food, family and the role a good meal can play in bringing people together on the farm.

Scan to listen

Listen: FarmWeekNow.com/podcasts
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Sprout Scouts Bring Agriculture Lessons to Second Graders

The Clinton County Farm Bureau's Sprout Scouts program is back for another year of hands-on agriculture education, connecting high school FFA members with elementary students throughout Clinton County.

In October, four Wesclin High School FFA members visited Trenton Elementary School in the morning, while five Carlyle FFA members visited their local grade school in the afternoon to teach second-grade students an Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) lesson titled "Vegetables and Zombies." Students began by learning about flowers and the important role pollinators, including bees and butterflies, play in growing many of the fruits and vegetables found in grocery stores. They then listened to the book Zombies Don't Eat Veggies before putting their creativity to work by making their own vegetable monsters.

Throughout the school year, Sprout Scouts from Carlyle and Wesclin will meet monthly with the AITC coordinator to prepare for upcoming lessons before visiting second-grade classrooms to lead engaging, hands-on activities. The program provides elementary students with opportunities to learn about agriculture while helping high school FFA members develop leadership, communication and teaching skills.

Watch for more Sprout Scouts activities and agriculture lessons in the coming months!



Voss selected for Illinois Farm Bureau Student Showcase

Alex Voss, a senior at Central Community High School in Clinton County, has been selected to participate in the 2026 Illinois Farm Bureau Student Showcase at the organization's Annual Meeting in Chicago.

Voss, the 2026 Illinois FFA State Proficiency Winner in Nut Production, will showcase his Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) focused on pecan production. Through his family's pecan business, Voss has gained hands-on experience in planting, orchard management, harvesting and marketing.

The Illinois Farm Bureau Student Showcase highlights outstanding student leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs from across the state. Selected students have the opportunity to share their businesses, research and projects with attendees at the Annual Meeting, with accommodations and registration covered by Illinois Farm Bureau.


Alex Voss

Voss's selection highlights his dedication to agricultural entrepreneurship and the knowledge and skills he has developed through his involvement in pecan production. His experience demonstrates the value of hands-on agricultural education and the opportunities available to students pursuing their interests in agriculture.

Congratulations to Alex on this outstanding achievement and for representing Clinton County!



Western Clinton County Senior Services Awarded Community Impact Grant

Western Clinton County Senior Services used grant funds to purchase two benches and flowers for a perennial garden at the senior center, creating a welcoming outdoor space where seniors and community members can relax, enjoy nature and build connections. The addition supports social interaction, well-being and the center's mission of keeping seniors active and connected.

Registration open for Holiday Porch Pot Workshop

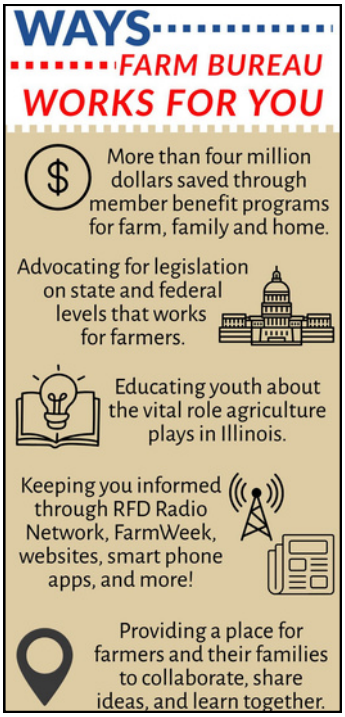
Get creative this holiday season while supporting agriculture education in Clinton County! The Clinton County Farm Bureau's Adult Ag in the Classroom Workshop Series offers opportunities to learn new skills, create seasonal decorations and support agriculture education for local students.

Registration is now open for the Holiday Porch Pots Workshop on Thursday, Dec. 3, from 6 to 9 p.m. This event will be held at the St. Rose Development Club, participants will create a festive porch pot to brighten their homes for the holiday season.

There are also still openings available for the Petals and Pumpkins Workshop on Monday, Nov. 23, from 6 to 9 p.m. Participants will create a pumpkin centerpiece featuring fresh flowers, perfect for fall decorating.

Proceeds from the workshops support Clinton County Farm Bureau's Ag in the Classroom program, which provides monthly agriculture lessons to first- and fourth-grade students throughout Clinton County schools.





Ag in the Classroom Brings Agriculture Lessons to Carlyle High School

The Clinton County Ag in the Classroom program expanded its educational outreach this year by introducing a new series of lessons to the Life Skills class at Carlyle High School.

In September, students participated in their first lesson, exploring corn, soybeans and wheat and discovering how these crops are used in everyday products. Beyond providing food, these agricultural commodities are used to make a variety of items, including ethanol and biodiesel for vehicles, lotion, makeup, dog food, bicycle tires, Band-Aids and batteries.

Students also learned about biodegradable and nonbiodegradable materials. They discussed how Styrofoam is made from petroleum-based materials and does not readily break down in the environment. The lesson then introduced an alternative: packing peanuts made from cornstarch, corn oil and water.

To put their learning into action, students used the biodegradable packing peanuts to create projects of their own choosing. The hands-on activity demonstrated how agricultural products can provide innovative, more environmentally friendly alternatives to everyday materials.

In October, students continued their agricultural learning with a seasonal lesson featuring pumpkin pie in a bag. Through this hands-on activity, students explored pumpkins as an agricultural product while learning how ingredients from various sources come together to make a familiar fall treat. The activity provided a fun, interactive way to connect agriculture to everyday foods.



Carlyle High School Life Skills students participated in their first Ag in the Classroom lesson in September, learning how corn, soybeans and wheat are used in everyday products. Students also explored biodegradable materials and created projects using cornstarch-based packing peanuts.



Carlyle High School Life Skills students put their Ag in the Classroom lesson into action by creating projects with biodegradable packing peanuts made from cornstarch, corn oil and water.





Carlyle High School Life Skills students celebrated fall with a hands-on Ag in the Classroom lesson, making pumpkin pie in a bag while learning about pumpkins and the agricultural products used in everyday foods.

Fresh Citrus Program available to members

Clinton County Farm Bureau will be offering Fresh Citrus and premium nuts for our members. You can rest assured that the quality of your product is second to none. Our Grapefruit comes fresh from Florida and Navels and Clementine's fresh from California. Nuts are new crop from Georgia.

Fruit and Nut orders need to placed and pre-paid by November 20, 2026.

Pick up is scheduled be at the Clinton County Farm Bureau office (1165 N 4th St., Breese, IL) on December 18 (exact details for pickup will be given once we receive confirmation closer to the date).



CLINTON COUNTY FARM BUREAU

FARM BUREAU FRESH

CITRUS & NUT PROGRAM
2026 ORDER FORM

Fresh citrus is back for the holidays! The Premium Holiday Fruit Box includes a mix of oranges, grapefruit, pears, clementines, lemons, limes, pineapple, mixed apples and gourmet popcorn kernels.

Orders and payment are due November 20.

All fruit and nut orders must be paid in advance. Please pick up your order as soon as possible after delivery; quality cannot be guaranteed after two days.

FRESH FRUIT | Check quantity and enter your total

Qty.	Product	Member	Non-member	Line total
____	40 lbs. Navel Oranges	$44.00	$46.00	_____
____	20 lbs. Navel Oranges	$28.00	$30.00	_____
____	40 lbs. Grapefruit	$41.00	$43.00	_____
____	20 lbs. Grapefruit	$26.00	$28.00	_____
____	Premium Holiday Fruit Box	$37.00	$39.00	_____
____	20 lbs. Clementines	$36.00	$38.00	_____

NUTS & OTHER PRODUCTS | All nuts are NEW CROP, not cold storage!

Qty.	Product	Price each	Line total
____	16 oz. bag — Extra Large Pecan Halves	$11.00	_____
____	12 oz. bag — Salted Jumbo Cashews	$9.00	_____
____	12 oz. bag — Chocolate Covered Pecans	$10.00	_____
____	10 oz. bag — Cinnamon Glazed Pecans	$8.00	_____
____	8 oz. bag — Pecan Caramel Clusters	$9.00	_____
____	12 oz. shaker bottle — Pork Spice	$12.00	_____

TOTAL REMITTED WITH ORDER $_____

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

Name _____ **Phone** _____

Address _____

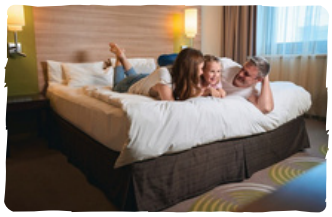
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