KCFB Director Joe Engel of Harvard paid a visit to his family’s dairy farm in early December from Brandon McKee, a Washington D.C.-based aide and agricultural policy staff advisor to 14th District Congressman Randy Hultgren of Wheaton. Engel reported that McKee made time to discuss what Engel believes are real and current issues facing production agriculture.

“We spent a lot of time talking about the relationship between farmers and consumers. Since consumers are so far removed from the production of their food, farmers have many concerns about the public obtaining accurate information,” Engel said. “Consumers hold food companies more accountable than farmers, and consumers are often educated from random internet sources, so they look to companies for information before asking farmers.”

Engel shared with McKee that consumers communicate their fears and opinions to the government, and the government then instructs farmers what to do. He explained that instead of enforcing more regulations on farmers, the government should assist farmers in educating the public about their food.

McKee emphasized that government staff and officials need to hear positive stories from farmers. They are aware that there are many examples of farmers being good stewards of land and practicing food safety, but the stories need to be shared so they can be passed on toconsumers. Oftentimes, only negative stories from consumers are shared, since people are often more quickly react to something that upsets them. It is important to remember the value of sharing positive stories with elected officials.

Of his 1 ½ hour visit to the Engel farm, McKee said, “I thoroughly enjoyed the tour of the Engel Farm. Joe was so gracious. Top: McKee (l) and Engel (r) discussed farm issues and consumer perceptions during the tour. Here newly weaned calves are kept in a warm, dry environment with lots of bedding and protection from the elements in the hay barn at Luck E Holsteins. Below: Farm Host Joe Engel (l) and Congressional Staffer Brandon McKee (r) see a tour of the Engel dairy farm, Luck E Holsteins, near Hampshire on December 11.

Join the Kane County Young Farmers at Northern Illinois Food Bank on Jan. 28 from 5-7pm to recap food for redistribution to local food pantries. FFA members from area high schools are invited too. You’ll help in the fight against hunger, make some new friends and learn about the good things the Young Farmers Committee is doing in Kane County.

We’re especially interested in connecting with 18-35 year olds looking to get involved in community service or agriculture related events. No experience is necessary, just a genuine interest in farm and food related concerns. As this is a community service, and the fight against hunger can and should be waged by all, all Farm Bureau members, friends and potential members are welcome! Call the Kane County Farm Bureau to RSVP at 630.584.8660.

Out of 18,239 Chicagoland non-profits, the Northern Illinois Food Bank was included in Chicago Magazine’s Top 20 Best Charities list in the November issue. The Food Bank provided their five millionth (5,000,000) serving of milk in December through their Milk2MyPlate program! All of Kane County Farm Bureau’s and member donations to Harvest for ALL support the Milk2MyPlate program.

Thank you...The Kane County Farm Bureau would like to thank Jay Schroock and the staff at Heinz Brother’s Greenhouse in St. Charles for the use of their greenhouse and assistance with the KCFB annual citrus sale distribution in December. The Schroock family has allowed Farm Bureau to use it’s warm and inviting greenhouses for citrus distribution to our members on cold December days for a quarter century. We appreciate their generosity in helping to provide this service to Kane County Farm Bureau members.

Didn’t get your citrus this year? Watch the Kane County Farmer for information on “truckload” sales on citrus, fresh Illinois peaches, local turkeys, hams and other foods throughout the year, or call us at 630.584.8660 to be put on a mailing list for all our food specials.
by Wayne Gehre, Secretary

The Kane County Farm Bureau’s 2016 Women in Ag Committee met in November to review the past year and plan future activities. Old business included discussing the Harvest for ALL program and the state fair quiz bowl. This year, Andy Lenkaitis, Wayne Schneider, Gerald Gaitsch and Chase Bornemann participated in the state fair quiz bowl, and finished in second place in the consolation bracket championship. First prize would have taken the team into the finals, allowing them to compete for the quiz bowl championship prize. Despite not bringing home the hardware, a good time was had by all and we look forward to competing again next year.

New business included information regarding the annual meeting and reviewing the meeting dates for future events. The Young Farmers gathered December 16 for a Christmas Party at the Fireside Grill in Sugar Grove. The annual FFA achievement program was discussed and set for January 28 at the Northern Illinois Food Bank, the same location and program as Future Young Leader events: Jan 22nd–23rd ILF Young Leader’s Conference in East Peoria March 11th: Eucheore Tournament at the Kane County Farm Bureau last year. Officer elections for the 2016 calendar year were held, with Heather Pierson elected as Chairwoman, and Wayne Gehre as Secretary. Ryan Klassy announced his acceptance of a new position at Elgin Community College for next year, the Young Farmers and we thank him for his years of service and wish him the best in his new role at ECC.

Annual Meeting report: on Saturday, December 5th, Kristin DeRaedt and Follman Farms. Food. Food donors included Joe & Bonnie White, Jim Bickle for the Mary Heckel-Bickle Memorial Scholarship. Management reported on several new and continuing initiatives including support for a grant application for continued operation of the St. Charles Research Farm for beginning farmer training, a stakeholder meeting on the future of the County of Kane’s Food Hub Feasibility Study; a new IFB initiative to reduce Farm Link Reduction and a potential grant application from the IFCB and the Kane DeRaedt SWCD; and a new IFB pilot program for Direct Mail fundraising for County Farm Bureau Foundations.

Delegates and alternates to the IFB Annual Meeting in Chicago discussed changes in IFB resolutions on public policy at the local, state and national level. The IFB meeting concluded on December 7. Director and former IFB Board member Mike Kenyon presented the IFB statement before the Illinois Farm Bureau’s 100th Anniversary logo, purchased at a silent auction at the convention. IFB celebrates the 100th Anniversary of its founding by county Farm Bureau, and thanks you for your flower arrangement from Donna Ryterske, an Illinois Farm Bureau announcement of Kane County Young Farmers as Harvest for ALL award winners; Richard Guebert Jr., President, IFB, for naming you the County Farm Bureau’s 11th Annual Touch-A-Tractor event brings a little bit of the farm to the city April 8-10 at the Kane County Farm Bureau, Randall Road at Oak Street, in St. Charles. Hours for this free event are Friday noon-4pm and Saturday and Sunday from 10am-4pm. This event is fun and educational for people of all ages and makes a great family outing. Kids can participate in hands-on activities, ride real farm equipment, see corn, com farm animals, sit in the seat of a real tractor or combine, and enter for a FREE chance to win their very own pedal tractor. At the conclusion of the events on Sunday, April 10.

You receive the Kane County Farm Bureau because you are a Farm Bureau Member. If you are a farm owner or operator, you benefit from a local, state and national organization committed to agriculture and your way of life. If you are a farmer directly tied to farming, your membership helps promote local farms and farming, encourages wise use of our limited natural resources and preserves farmland and our agricultural heritage and way of life, allowing you to enjoy COUNTRY INSURANCE and the many other benefits of one of the state’s largest member organizations.

We appreciate your membership, your support and we welcome your comments on the content of the Farmer. We encourage you to write recommendations about farm, home, food, natural resource, renewable energy or agricultural heritage and history related topics for inclusion in future issues of the Farmer.
Farming economy continues to concern Illinois farmers

Considering the current farm economy, 66 percent of Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) members surveyed prior to the organization’s Annual Meeting feel less optimistic about the farm economy in the coming year compared to 2015. The answer was in response to an email survey of IFB members registered with IFB’s Legislative Action Center.

“For the second year in a row, IFB members said they feel less optimistic about the coming year, and it’s no surprise as to why,” said Richard Gueret, Jr., president, Illinois Farm Bureau. “Over the last year, commodity prices have stayed below break-even levels. Input costs like cash rent, crop protection and seed have not receded to follow the drop in commodity prices.”

As a result of their concerns over the farm economy, 84 percent of respondents said they plan to reduce inputs or expenses in 2016. When asked specifically how they would do so, 91 percent of respondents plan to delay implement purchases over the coming year, while 45 percent said they would delay or cut back on chemical and fertilizer purchases. Additionally, 38 percent said they would negotiate lower cash rent; 37 percent said they would buy less expensive seed; 24 percent said they would incorporate new technology; 11 percent said they would choose a lower level of crop insurance coverage; and 9 percent said they would give up a portion of rented ground for 2016. (Respondents were instructed to choose all options that apply.)

Concerns over the farm economy were added to concerns regarding regulatory and legislative issues. Respondents were asked to rank several priority issues in terms of importance in the coming year.

The top concern was striking down the Waters of the U.S. rule followed by tax reform, maintaining the viability of federal crop insurance; preserving the Renewable Fuels Standards and making transportation infrastructure improvements.

“As we look toward the coming year, farmers are going to have to carefully consider every decision they make to ensure they’re protecting their farms and are able to survive the farm economy downturn,” Gueret said. “We’re doing our best to provide our members with the information they need to make those tough decisions that will keep their farms on secure financial footing.”

Members also were polled regarding their conservation and nutrient management efforts.

Just over 92 percent of respondents said they regularly test soil for potassium and phosphorus levels; 65 percent said they use variable rate technology for fertilizer applications; 56 percent split nitrogen applications and 55 percent follow the University of Illinois AgriPrints Handbook recommendations for phosphorus and potassium applications. (Respondents were instructed to choose all options that apply.)

Additionally, 46 percent of farmers said they have used cover crops in the past, with 76 percent having planted cover crops for five years or less. Of those who have not used cover crops, 64 percent said they would be willing to do so in the future.

Eighty-four percent of farmers said they have installed buffer strips along streams or ditches on their farms. Nearly 53 percent of farmers said they receive no cost share or incentives for their best management practices.

“This is the fifth consecutive year we’ve surveyed members to gauge their feelings on key IFB issues, concerns and concerns for the coming year,” Gueret said. “It helps us as leaders ensure we’re tackling the issues and needs of our members and prioritizing our resources to the best of our abilities.”

Thanks to our donors...

The KCFB Foundation offers its sincere appreciation to the following donors for their contributions to our community service, education and scholarship programs. Names shown are contributions received November 15 through December 15, 2015.

Donor
Follman Farms
Dale and Linda Drendel
Suzanne Myers
Marlene & Rick Pump
Bruce & Angie Stastny
Beneficiary
Burlington-Hampshire Food Pantry
Northern Illinois Food Bank
Northern Illinois Food Bank
Burlington-Hampshire Food Pantry
FFA Chapter Grants

Awards

The Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation Winner’s Choice Raffle offers a chance to win one of two antique IH tractors: a 1953 Farmall Super C or a 1947 Farmall Super A (with belly mower) or a John Deere riding lawn mower or $2,500 cash. The farm, food and fuel theme is rounded out with second prize of $500 in groceries, third prize of $500 in fuel, and fourth prize of $250. The winner a choice of two nicely restored IH antique tractors: a 1953 Farmall Super C or a 1947 Farmall Super A or a John Deere riding lawn mower or $2,500 cash. The drawing is April 10 at Touch-A-Tractor.

This Winner’s Choice Tractor Raffle is the Foundation’s primary fundraising endeavor. Last year’s raffle helped the Foundation provide college scholarships to 25 students and funded internships to help future Ag industry leaders gain practical experience. Tickets are $10 each or 3 for $25. All proceeds benefit college scholarship and Kane County Farm Bureau Ag literacy programs. Call 630-584-8660 or complete the form below to request tickets.

Help raise Foundation scholarship funds with TRACTOR RAFFLE

The Winner’s Choice Tractor Raffle offers a chance to win one of these great prizes:

Grand prize: Winner’s choice of a 1953 Farmall Super C, or a 1947 Farmall Super A or a John Deere riding lawn mower or $2,500 cash.

Second prize: $500 groceries

Third prize: $500 fuel

Fourth Prize: $250 Farm Bureau Bucks

The Winner’s Choice Tractor Raffle (continued from page 1) in terms of the overall amount of funds, volunteer hours and food collected for the state’s Harvest for ALL hunger relief effort. Past chairman Andy Lenkaitis also received the KCFB Foundation Winner’s Choice Tractor Raffle.
Have a child, grandchild, niece or nephew in 4th grade? Want them to know where their food comes from? Why natural resources like water and soil are important? How the source of all things in their daily life is either agriculture or mining? Here’s a chance for them to ask questions of people in dozens of careers, in the job field that feeds us all – in a fun, interactive way.

Now is the time for teachers and parents to sign up. Public and private school 4th grade classrooms as well as home schooled students are welcome. As many as 2,000 fourth-grade students and their teachers attend this agricultural themed expo in celebration of National Agriculture Week. Ag Days includes local farmers and presenters from many facets of the agriculture industry, an indoor farm and an outdoor farm equipment showcase.

The 31st Annual Ag Days will be held at Mooseheart Fieldhouse near Batavia on March 15 and March 16, 2016. Students get to talk to farmers about their jobs, play interactive games and see farm animals and modern farm machinery.

“There’s no cost for this two-hour field trip,” noted Suzi Myers, ag literacy coordinator. “We’ll send you a lesson to get them ready for the experience.” To register, contact Suzi Myers at 630-584-8660 or by email at aitc@kanecfb.com for more information.

Volunteer at Ag Days

This March, Kane County Farm Bureau and dozens of Ag Literacy volunteers will organize the 32nd annual Ag Days at Mooseheart. Please consider being a part of this great tradition by volunteering your time on any of the days listed below.

For three decades, hundreds of Kane County 4th grade students have been gathering at Mooseheart Fieldhouse in March to learn about agriculture from farmers and representatives from local agribusinesses. This year’s event will take place, March 15 and 16 and the Farm Bureau would like your assistance with this Ag in the Classroom event.

Students rotate through a series of more than a dozen presentations on agricultural topics. This is one of the Farm Bureau’s longest running and most popular programs. Students will learn about crops, livestock, natural resources, farm machinery and more. Call 630-584-8660 to sign up for specific dates and times when volunteers are most needed.

Helping you protect what matters most

Bob Effner St. Charles – Ag Hall Manager 630-584-0001
Bobbi Boston St. Charles 630-485-5155
Donna Tonovitz St. Charles 630-549-7964
Orazio Difruscolo St. Charles 630-549-7966
Ashraf Gerges Geneva 630-898-3750
Edward Stuehm Geneva 630-845-8845
Rowena Gerges Geneva 630-262-1059
Candy Hanslik Geneva 630-762-1239
Michael O’Brien Geneva 630-762-0852
Keith Ealkins St. Charles 630-762-1324
Bob Kearns S. Elgin 847-888-3200
Todd Wilcox St. Charles 630-762-1326
Luke Fawkes Elgin 847-742-0001
Jonathan Gonzalez Elgin 630-742-0001
Chuck Quick Hampshire 847-683-2100
Suzi Myers 630-584-8660
Sonny Ellen Sugar Grove 630-466-9600
Dan Cooper Sugar Grove 630-466-9600
Ted Schuster Sugar Grove 630-466-9600
Josh Austin Hampshire 847-683-2100
Dominick Davero Elburn 630-365-5900
David Murray Montgomery 630-897-2346

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What makes popcorn pop?

Each kernel of popcorn contains a small drop of water stored inside a circle of soft starch. Popcorn needs between 13.5-14% moisture to pop. The soft starch is surrounded by the kernel’s hard outer surface. As the kernel heats up, the water begins to expand. Around 212 degrees the water turns into steam and changes the starch inside each kernel into a superheated gelatinous substance. The kernel continues to heat to about 347 degrees. The pressure inside the grain will reach 135 pounds per square inch before finally bursting the hull open.

As it explodes, steam inside the kernel is released. The soft starch turns into a “leg” of sorts, which catapults the kernel like a gymnast as the remaining starch spills out. This is why popcorn jumps up and down.

There’s a great video showing kernels of popcorn popping at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okj0QqKZcVIA&feature=player_embedded

Did you hear about the popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.

Did the baby corn say to momma corn? Where is popcorn?

Why aren’t there many jokes about popcorn? They made him a kernel.

Did you hear about the popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.

Did you hear about the baby popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.

Why aren’t there many jokes about popcorn? They made him a kernel.

Did you hear about the baby popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.

What did the baby corn say to momma corn? Where is popcorn?

Why aren’t there many jokes about popcorn? They made him a kernel.

Did you hear about the popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.

Did you hear about the baby popcorn that joined the army? They made him a kernel.
Food Bank to celebrate success of Milk2MyPlate

The Northern Illinois Food Bank invites harvest for ALL donors to join in a celebration of the 4 million and 5 million serving – of their Milk2MyPlate Program.

This collaboration highlights the support of Prairie Farms Dairy, financial donors like the KCFB’s Harvest for ALL.

Harvest for ALL Donors (invited as honored guests)

Bobbi Boston, Kane County Farm Bureau

Kane County Farm Bureau honored the 455 people or persons who sign the most members into our organization. This month the honor goes to Bobbi Boston who signed up four new members. Bobbi has been a financial representative with COUNTRY Financial since October 2003. She serves clients from her office at 2N 710 Randall Rd, St. Charles IL 60174. She may be reached at 630-485-5155. Thank you all for your continued support of Kane County Farm Bureau and congratulations on your success!

zc

New traditions

Val Johnson was a participant in the 2013 Illinois Farm Families Field Mom Program. This program exposed her to the field of agriculture and about topics discussed in the news late. Yoder said, “But I’ve been involved in consumer advocacy and legislative outreach and the discussion meet ties it all together. I really enjoy meeting the different perspectives everyone brought to the table. Being able to collaborate, discuss and come up with different solutions for different problems was a great experience because, being involved in the dairy industry, I don’t always get to discuss a lot of these topics.”

The IFB discussion meet judged contestants’ ability to manage a small group discussion. Each contestant gives an opening presentation. Participants exchange facts and insights on a pre-determined topic. Judges award points based on how well participants work with one another, how well they express themselves, and on their knowledge of the topic.

Topics for the 2015 discussion meet included a discussion on how Farm Bureau should protect and encourage producers’ ability to use new technology and how the organization can work with government and the public to ensure public acceptance while encouraging innovative solutions; whether Farm Bureau should craft policy to protect livestock producers from false accusations regarding animal welfare; how to balance agricultural water needs with maintaining vibrant communities and how historical water rights influence the discussion; how Farm Bureau could get the public to support right-to-farm laws and if those laws should be determined on the state or federal level; and how young farmers can influence state and local policy that more effectively balances the social and economic interests of farmers and ranchers versus burdensome federal regulation.

IFB promotes and sponsors the discussion meet with the goals of developing young people’s leadership and communication skills on behalf of agriculture and of working together and reaching consensus on how to deal with current issues in agriculture.

Snow, Snow, and More Snow! – According to the Farmer’s Almanac

The Farmer’s Almanac is predicting more snow in January starting in mid-month, changing to chilly windy days. Clear skies are predicted to shine around the 25th, and more snow will close out the month.

The Farmer’s Almanac also suggests the days to accomplish certain tasks, such as, when to ask for a loan, to buy a home, or get married. These predictions are based on both the phase of the moon and its position in the ecliptic. Many people believe that if you do these tasks on the dates the Almanac provides, you will get the best results possible. You can pick up your free copy of this year’s Farmer’s Almanac at the Kane County Farm Bureau while supplies last.

KCFB Young Farmers member Kristin DeSutter competed in the 2016 IFB Young Farmer and Rancher Convention. She became a member of the U.S. Farming Team in December 5. This was DeSutter’s first state level appearance, and she advanced to the State level.

DeSutter commented on her experience, saying “I enjoyed meeting other farmers from across the state and getting to learn from them. Kane County was so supportive of me every step of the way – from members sending me good luck messages and watching my rounds to giving me pointers and one friend even Snapchatting part of my speech.” She was honored to represent Kane County at the Illinois Farm Bureau’s 100th anniversary convention.

Tara Yoder of Knox County was named the Young Leader discussion meet winner. In addition to receiving a trophy, Yoder will receive two months or $10,000 in cash from AGCO, and $2,500 cash from the IFB. She will also receive expense-paid trips to the 2016 AFBF Annual Meeting, 2016 GROWMARK Annual Meeting, courtesy of GROWMARK, Inc., the 2016 AFBF Young Farmer and Rancher Convention and the 2016 IFB state Young Leader Convention.

Yoder, who is in her final year of eligibility for the discussion meet, met, engaged other young farmers to get involved early so they get a taste of the activities and how the discussion meet works.

“The discussion meet was one of the things I always wanted to do, but didn’t know I’d be competitive,” Yoder said. “But I’ve been involved in consumer advocacy and legislative purposes representing virtually all aspects of agriculture, working to engage in dialogue with consumers who have questions about how today’s food is grown and raised. USFRA is committed to continuous improvement and supporting U.S. farmers and ranchers efforts to increase confidence and trust in today’s agriculture.

For more information, contact Suzi Myers at the Kane County Farm Bureau, 630-584-8661 or amir@kenitefarm.org.

Larsen house brings Christmas Cheer to Kane County

People from all over the county both young and old (our family included) went to visit the Larsen house light show in Elburn this year ending on Jan 2nd. For all the Christmas lighting, their websites state they used over 1 million lights, 1200 channels, 20,000 feet of extension cords, 60 hours to program the lights, and 85 gallons of coffee consumed. The line of cars waiting to park was long, but we all agreed it was well worth the wait. Make sure and mark your calendars for this exciting next year.

http://www.larsens lightshow.com for more information.

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PAGE 6 KANE COUNTY FARMER JANUARY 2016

DeSutter represents Kane County in state discussion meet
Kane County Farm Bureau will host its 14th annual Food Check-Out “Challenge,” a Shopping Spree to benefit local food pantries. The public is invited to come watch two local public officials race to collect food to help restock the shelves of two area food pantries. The contest will once again be held at the Batavia Jewel-Osco, on Randall Road at Main Street in Batavia. Food Check-Out Week teaches Americans how to stretch their grocery dollars with healthy, nutritious food. Typically, consumers spend just 10 percent of their discretionary income on food. This low number is thanks to the efficient efforts by America’s farmers and ranchers, who work hard every day to provide a safe, abundant and affordable food supply. All of the groceries collected during the 5-minute spree are purchased by the Farm Bureau and donated to the respective food pantries. Many State Senators and State Representatives representing Kane County, local Mayors and elected officials have competed in the event, raising thousands of dollars in groceries for local food pantries.

Through this and other hunger relief efforts including Harvest for ALL and the related Million Meal Challenge, KCFB members have donated the equivalent of nearly 1.5 million meals to area food pantries.

As the Illinois Farm Bureau (IFB) looks toward 2016 to celebrate its 100th anniversary, delegates to the 101st IFB Annual Meeting celebrated one of its longest-lasting traditions: grassroots, member-driven decision making to set the organization’s policy for the coming year.

One of the most important actions the delegate body took was to pass their sense of the delegate body resolutions, one of which dealt with the importance of the Illinois General Assembly, governor and legislative leaders to get a state budget completed for fiscal year 2016. “Many agricultural entities have been negatively impacted by the lack of a state budget,” said Mark Gebhards, director, Governmental Affairs and Commodities, IFB. “We know that Soil and Water Conservation Districts, University of Illinois Extension Service, and county fairs have all felt the negative impact of not having a budget in place. The delegate body simply wanted to send a message that a strong message to get this budget done as soon as possible and that certainly was conveyed through that sense of the delegate body resolution.”

Delegates also focused their energy on several important resolutions, including property rights, renewable fuels, local government, transportation and nutrient management.

“Property rights have been Farmers that serve as voting delegates to the Illinois Farm Bureau need to debate and discussion on policy resolutions at the IFB Annual Meeting in Chicago. In December, Delegates representing Kane County at the meeting were KCFB President Joe White of Elburn, Donna Lehrer of Big Rock, Nan Long of Sugar Grove, and Frank Carlson of St. Charles. Alternates included Beth Gehlke of Elgin, Karl Kettelkamp of Elburn, Secretary/Treasurer Mike Kenyon of South Elgin, Craig Bradley of Elgin, Dale Pittick of Genoa, Vice President Wayne Schneider of West Dundee, and Joe Engel of Hampshire. They were among the 370 plus voting members of county Farm Bureau Illinois in Illinois who helped set policy on local, state and national issues for the state’s largest organization of farmers.”

one of the core principles that the IFB has included in the policy book for many, many years,” Gebhards said. “And it’s important now because of the multitude of utility projects either underway or proposed in the state of Illinois. The resolution focused on making sure that the Illinois Department of Agriculture has the ability that it needs to enforce the ag mitigation agreements that the companies would enter into and the Illinois Department of Agriculture would enforce on behalf of the landowners.”

Delegates also discussed the need to ensure markets for their products, especially given the current market prices. “There was some emphasis placed on the renewable fuels industry,” Gebhards said. “The delegates were interested in making sure that IFB looks for all opportunities to use renewable fuels, whether that means flex fuel vehicles, or various state agencies and federal agencies using that renewable fuel as part of their day-to-day operation.”

Delegates also debated the need for a reduction in units of local government, funding for transportation and infrastructure, and the need to follow the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy.

Delegates also focused their attention on land use, including property rights, renewable fuels, local government, transportation and nutrient management. “Property rights have been a core principle that the IFB has included in the policy book for many, many years,” Gebhards said. “And it’s important now because of the multitude of utility projects either underway or proposed in the state of Illinois. The resolution focused on making sure that the Illinois Department of Agriculture has the ability that it needs to enforce the ag mitigation agreements that the companies would enter into and the Illinois Department of Agriculture would enforce on behalf of the landowners.”

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Delegates also debated the need for a reduction in units of local government, funding for transportation and infrastructure, and the need to follow the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy.
College scholarship corridor

Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation – 2016 scholarship applications are now available. Visit www.kanechb.com to download an application and view all available KCFB Foundation Scholarships. You will also find scholarship requirements and a brochure to help in identifying careers and areas of study. Last year, the Foundation awarded over $30,000 in scholarships and interested in the study of farming or a related field. The application deadline is February 15, 2016, and recipients will be notified by April 1, 2016.

Applicants must be dependents of a current Kane County Corn Growers member. The application will be available at www.kanecountycorngrowers.com by February 1, and is due April 1, 2016.

Kane County Fair scholarships – Available to high school seniors who plan to attend college in the fall. Applications will be available online by 1:30 p.m. on February 1, 2016. For more information, contact the Kane County Fair office at 630-557-2230, or e-mail smoree@ilfb.org. Scholarship awards are available to students pursuing higher education in agriculture.

The fair is seeking applications by April 1, 2016. Please visit http://kane-county-farm-bureau.com/apps/2016-kane-county-fair/scholarships. Your application must be submitted by April 1, 2016.

The Kane County Farm Bureau and Kane County Water Conservation District are cooperating again to offer a water testing program in February 2016. A high quality water supply is vital for families, and this program helps provide peace of mind and identifies potential problem areas for homeowners of Kane County.

The program works simply as follows: Step 1. Monday, February 8 – Friday, February 19, 2016
Pick up water test kits from the Kane County Farm Bureau, 8:30am-5 pm or from Kane/DePage Soil and Water Conservation District, 8am - 4:30pm. M-F. Payment due for each test kit upon pickup.
Step 2. Sunday, February 21, 2016
Collect the water sample.
Return water sample to Farm Bureau or Kane/DePage Soil & Water Conservation District.
Costs vary depending on which tests you have performed on your water. These kits are available by appointment, and call 630-584-6926 with any questions.

Iowa Farm Bureau celebrates its Centennial in 2016. Centennial events began at the 2015 Farm Progress Show, continue with an IPB celebrity celebration for employees on January 26, 2016, and conclude with a Day on July 26 in Bloomington with all Kane County Farm Bureau Presidents. The timeline below highlights a few of the many significant “mileposts” in the organization’s history.

The 16th annual Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference will be Feb. 17-18 at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center in Columbus, Indiana. The conference is aimed at meeting the needs of women in the industry by addressing the personal, family and farm issues that affect their lives, families and farm businesses. Conference sessions and topics include “What it Worth If You Stay on the Farm?”, “Show Me Your Operation via Social Media.” “Improving Your Farm Financial Management Skills”, “How SHOULD We Talk to Consumers about Farming Today?” “Protecting Your Profit Margins in an Unstable Market,” “DNR Water Regulations: What Do I Need to Know to Stay Out of Trouble?”, “Taking the Dys out of Dysfunctional Developing Farming Organizational Meetings, and,” “Farmstead Planning.”

Please “Leasing Land on a Tight Margin.” A panel of experts is available for an additional $20 fee. Presenters include Jolene Brown – an award winning communication professional and certified speaker; Karen Plaut – Senior Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs at Purdue University, and representatives of Farm Credit, Purdue Extension, DNR Division of Water, University of Kentucky, University of Illinois Extension, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Illinois Farm Bureau, and AGrability.

If registering before February 3, the cost is $90 for both days, or $80 for single day attendance. Registrations after February 3 increase to $140 or $110 respectively. To find out more about the conference and register, visit https://ag.purdue.edu/extservice/wia/Pages/default.aspx.

The 2016 Kane County Farm Bureau Fair offers its thanks to Bob Gehlke of Elgin for serving as District I IAAR Director, serving in Kane, Lake, DeKalb and McHenry counties on the Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors for the past 4 years. In his many years of dedicated service to the Farm Bureau, as KC FB Director for the past 4 years. In his many years of dedicated service to the Illinois Farm Bureau, Bob has always represented the interests of the state association and Illinois farmers with integrity and a vision for the future.

As a Director of the Illinois Farm Bureau, Gehlke also served as a Director of the Illinois Farm Bureau Foundation. He was also an elected representative of the interests of the state association and Illinois farmers on the Boards of Directors of Bloomington based Country Trust Bank and Bank and Trust.

Bob thanks you for the hard work, self-sacrifice and dedication to serving both Kane County and Illinois Farm Bureau. We look forward to a continued relationship with you and hope you will continue to put your talents and skills to work for the betterment of Illinois farms, families and food.

Midwest Women in Ag conference

The 15th annual Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference will be Feb 17-18 at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center in Columbus, Indiana. The conference is aimed at meeting the needs of women in the industry by addressing the personal, family and farm issues that affect their lives, families and farm businesses.


Please “Leasing Land on a Tight Margin.” A panel of experts is available for an additional $20 fee. Presenters include Jolene Brown – an award winning communication professional and certified speaker; Karen Plaut – Senior Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs at Purdue University, and representatives of Farm Credit, Purdue Extension, DNR Division of Water, University of Kentucky, University of Illinois Extension, Indiana Soybean Alliance, Illinois Farm Bureau, and AGrability.

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Farm, Food & Fuel briefs

Illinois farm incomes down sharply for 2015. Gross incomes will have dropped significantly for several years. The mid-2010s are shaping up as a period comparable to 1998-2002, the last time grain farming experienced a protracted period of low prices.

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