

**This book is dedicated to the men and women who are
Kane County Farm Bureau;
To the pioneers who took an idea, a dream of farmers
working together for their common benefit, and formed it into reality;
To the many leaders, past and present, who have guided us
through good years and bad;
To everyone who was, is and always will be a part of this
organization, our past, our present and our future;
To some of the world's truly wonderful people, the members of the
Kane County Farm Bureau, we dedicate
this brief look at our past.
Remember it with pride, but look to the future.
May your next 100 years
provide even greater cause for celebration.**

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A Movement Begins

Reprinted from January 2012

Kane County Farmer

Kane County Farm Bureau Begins Centennial Celebration

Editor's Note: *This is the first installment in a 20 part series on the 100 year history of the Kane County Farm Bureau. In the coming months, the Kane County Farmer will focus on a decade by decade history of the Farm Bureau, its' affiliates, services, public policy and community services through the past 100 years.*

The Kane County Farm Improvement Association was organized by leading local farmers in December 1912 and the organization's Articles of Incorporation were certified by the Illinois Secretary of State on December 31, 1912. (The name Kane County Farm Bureau was adopted locally in 1919.)

Kane County Farm Bureau was among the earliest of similar associations to form in the State and Nation in a movement started in Broome County, New York in 1911. DeKalb and Kankakee Counties in Illinois formed Soil & Crop Improvement Associations by June of 1912 and by 1916, with the need for farmers to organize to coordinate and cooperate on a broader scale, 13 County "Farm Bureau's" gathered at Davenport Hall on the campus of the University of Illinois to form the Illinois Farm Bureau. A national organization, the American Farm Bureau Federation followed three years later and was organized and headquartered in Chicago.

On December 31, 1912 the founders of the Kane County Farm Bureau formed the association by filing the articles of incorporation with Secretary of State, C.J. Doyle. The original name was Kane County Farm Improvement Association. Three individuals, Judson P. Mason, Edwin W Wing, and Henry Barnes submitted the object for which the corporation was formed as follows:

"To conduct special investigations, experiments and demonstrations relating to the soils, crop culture and animal husbandry in said Kane County to promote good roads, and to improve the social and educational interests of the farm communities of said Kane County; And in general to establish and maintain experiment and demonstration stations, schools, laboratories, and all equipment for the improvement of farming science and conditions, and to promote and stimulate the interests of farm communities.

Judson P. Mason was the first president of the Kane County Farm Improvement Association. While the current KCFB board consists of 15 members, each representing a different township, the original articles set up a 32-member board, two each from each of 16 townships. The directors that formed the first board carry names that many Kane County residents will easily recognize:

Township

Elgin	Harry D. Barnes	Edwin W Wing
Hampshire	Charles H. Backus	J.S. Reed
Rutland	John L. Hood	George W. Sowers
Dundee	Frank H. Reese	Fred Schuring
Burlington	Frank Randall	Henry McGough
Plato	John McDermott	James Muirhead
Virgil	John Read	Nicholas Reames
Campton	George Beach	John Winterhalter
St. Charles	Wirth F. Dunham	Fred Ward
Batavia	George Keller	L.D. Cronk
Big Rock	A.W. Davis	C.C. Harbour
Sugar Grove	Guy L. Phillips	W.W. Wilson
Aurora	William George	W.C. Evans
Geneva	Frank Peck	Charles Snow
Kaneville	Charles Lovell	C.B. Ames
Blackberry	A.C. Matheson	Benjamin Shepard

While some of these names may have faded from prominence, they are surnames that were common among the leaders of generations past. Many may be seen now only on street and road signs.

The volunteer efforts of generations of our members and leaders have helped keep Kane County a great place to be a farmer, and to benefit from the bounty that farmers provide. Throughout 2012, the *Kane County Farmer* will recall the history of the organization, issues and people that have helped make the Kane County Farm Bureau a vital part of the fabric of our community.

We invite all of our members to help us celebrate our 100th year of member and community service, ag education, leadership development and sound public policy advocacy. If you have a bit of history you'd like to share, we'd love to hear from you.



KCFB Directors gather on the step of the former Farm Bureau building at 324 East State Street in Geneva in 1937. The building was purchased on Sept. 5, 1936 at auction for \$6,000.00 to serve as the Farm Bureau Office. It was sold in 1956. Pictured (l to r) are: Front row - Peterson, Getzelman, Keslinger, Beith, Hardy, Lawrence, Foley, Damish, Sherman; First step - Fisher Dauberman, Lind; Second step - Davies, Johnson; Third step - McDonough, Russell; On porch – Warne, Zeller, Wilson. Interestingly, only the last names of those pictured were listed. Many of these names can be seen today on street and road signs throughout Kane County.

Steve Arnold, Editor
Kane County Farmer
2N710 Randall Road
St. Charles, Il. 60174

January 2, 2012



Dear Steve:

The picture on the front page of the January 2012, issue of the Kane County Farmer is the 1937 class of the Board of Directors of the Kane County Farm Bureau. The president of the Board is my father, Marcus W. Damisch. He was also Chairman of the Kane County Board of Supervisors and became Kane County's Sheriff in 1938 with the help of the other 18 men in the picture. Marcus, his father and siblings farmed in Rutland Township on farms that were settled by their great great grandfathers in 1837. Marcus' mother was born and raised on a farm south of 1-90 on the east side of Route 47. This farm is recognized today with a large pumpkin on top of the silo.

Some Damisch farms are still in the family 175 years later. Marcus' paternal great grandfather operated a stable/hotel in Elgin where the Wells Fargo stage coach changed horses. At present the Illinois Appellate Court parking lot is on the site of the stable. Damischs' ancestors raised the horses that stocked the stable. The Damisch family still farm in Rutland, Hampshire, and Virgil Townships as well several other Illinois counties.

Some of the 19 men in the picture held the Kane County Bureau together through the 1930's depression. To build membership in 1937 each member was urged to recruit a new member. For each new member the recruiting member received a No. 16 scoop shovel. In 1937, the No. 16 scoop shovel was the preferred method of moving grain from box wagon to bin to feed bunk.

Charles Keslinger was a large cattle feeder near Elburn. Keslinger served with Damisch as a member of the Kane County Board of Supervisors. There was always friendly rivalry on the Farm Bureau and County Board between cattle feeders and dairy farmers. Keslinger chaired the Kane County Farm Committee. The County Farm was located east of Geneva on Fabyan Parkway.

Fred Wilson farmed on Highland Avenue Road, south of Coombs Road, Elgin. In 1933 the Elgin Road race went by the Wilson Farm. The road race circuit was: start/finish line at McLean/Route 20(then Route 5)/Highland Road/Coombs Road to Udina/Route 5/ back to the finish line. This race was the predecessor to the Indianapolis 500.

Fred Wilson was Country Companies insurance agent for the Damisch Farms. On July 3, 1933, a tornado struck the Damisch Farms. A silo went down. A roof was taken off a barn and windows blown out of the house. The entire crop of corn was flattened. Fred Wilson came on the 4th of July and handled the loss. A new silo was up by silo filling time. A new roof was on the barn. Corn was replanted and the Damisch Farms survived this disaster with the help of Fred Wilson and Country Companies.

Marshall Sherman was a large dairy farmer. His 100 foot barn is still standing on the west side of Randall Road across from the new Sherman Hospital Elgin.

The members of the Board of Directors of the Kane County Farm Bureau were like fraternity brothers. They were the closest of friends for their entire farming careers.

Thanks for the memories.

Very truly yours,

Damisch Family Farm, L.L.C.
John W. Damisch

The Early Years
Reprinted from February 2012
Kane County Farmer

Early KCFB History Shows Strong Leadership

As the Kane County Farm Bureau grew at the beginning of the 20th century, the directors who governed the association worked to advance the interests of farmers in Kane County and build membership. The fact that many of the actions they took then were very closely related to their farming operation demonstrates the way Farm Bureau on a local, state and national level decided to operate from the beginning – through the leadership of farmer members.

In “A History of the Illinois Farm Bureau”, Dan Leifel chronicles the developmental years of IFB and its affiliates. His description of the state association is applicable on the local level too:

“...the organization has remained responsive to the sometimes inconsistent but always vocal desires of individual members – the “grassroots.” Second, the success (or failure) of the organization depends on the clear thinking and effort of the individual member, both in setting policy and doing work, whether that work involves signing up new members or lobbying government officials. Third, the active farmer leadership, the Board of Directors, The President, and Vice-President are forced to take time out of their busy lives on the farm with their families to perform the tasks of organizing and leading a complex organization and responding to its membership.”

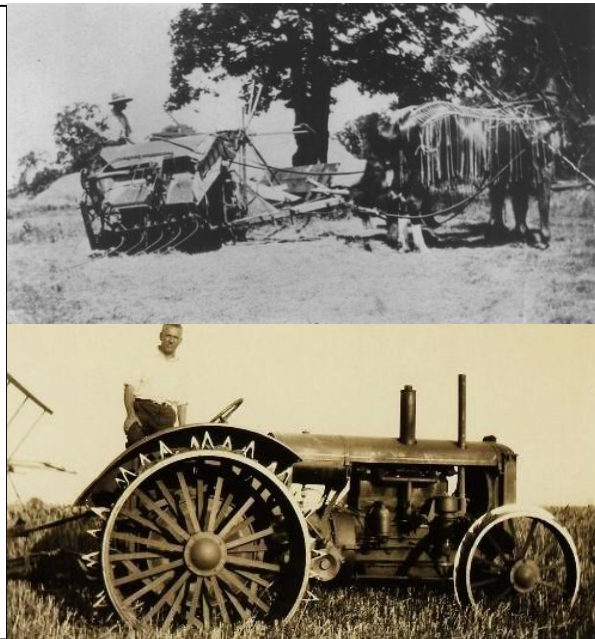
As KCFB directors worked on the foundations for the new association here in Kane County, they faced many changes in their farming operations. New farm technology in the late 1910’s included big enclosed-gear gas tractors being used in areas of extensive farming.

The 1920’s, just after World War, brought a sharp post-war recession and the collapse of agricultural prices. It also brought a period of gradually increased farm production due to the expanded use of mechanized power. The chief

agricultural issue was agricultural surpluses. Despite the uncertainty of the market and economy, KCFB farmer members used some of their crop to help those in need with a special request in 1921 for hunger relief in Europe and Asia.

Prior to the Immigration Act of 1924, which brought a significant reduction in the number of immigrants, thousands of people from countries around the world made the voyage to America to pursue a new life. The country adapted to life in the wake of the First World War and would soon find itself in the worst economic depression in its history.

The switch from actual “horse” power to tractors in the 1920’s increased productivity in the post World War I era, resulting in commodity surpluses leading into the years before the great depression.



Below is a glimpse of the issues addressed by the members and volunteers of the Kane County Farm Bureau in its first ten years. Events were gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisors, staff and volunteers that give us an idea of the pressing issues of the time that likely affected all farmers during these years. Some, involving purchases or housekeeping items, may seem a bit more trivial, but still help to give us a picture of the times.

- 1919 Name changed from Kane County Farm Improvement Association to Kane County Farm Bureau. Resolution adopted requesting six months pay from the Federal Government to discharged soldiers. Advisability of raising membership fee to \$2.00 was considered.
- 1920 Henry McGough, Burlington Township, was elected a Director of I.A.A. Kane County Farm Bureau cooperated with I.A.A. in making livestock survey. Resolution adopted in support of French – Copper Truth in Fabric Bill - designed to compel manufactures to stamp cloth with its content of virgin wool and of wool substitute.
- 1921 Appeal made to members for 1500 Bu. Corn for the starving people of Europe and Asia. Letter sent to Congress opposing a tax on butter made from neutralized cream. County Supervisors were asked for an appropriation of \$2000.00 for support of Kane County Farm Bureau.
Committee appointed to buy carload of apples for members.
U.S. Grain Growers, Inc. marketing made available to K.C. Farmers.
3rd cow testing association organized.
Reorganization of Elburn Co–Operative Company.
- 1922 Kane County Farm News issued bi-monthly.
T.B. Eradication Program begun on 14 Kane County Herds.
75 Sheep owners took advantage of sheep shearing ring.
Kane-Kendall County Farm Loan Association organized.
Resolution endorsing state program of reduced corn acreage and increased legume acreage.
Plan outlined for reorganization by Mr. Sailor of I.A.A was adopted.
Authority given to purchase either battery or generator as advisable to operate picture machine.
- 1923 Services of Asst. Farm Adviser Discontinued.
\$4,000.00 Appropriation from Board of Supervisors to hire county veterinarian to work on tuberculosis eradication.
Soil tested on 55 farms – 46 carloads of limestone were ordered through Farm Bureau.
Kane County Farmers Protective Association organized.
Resolution passed endorsing the appropriation for tuberculosis eradication in Illinois.
Work started to get a satisfactory assessment of farm property compared with city property.

How times have changed. At a time when only farmers could belong to Farm Bureau, a Kane County Farm Bureau Membership Drive in 1937 offered a No. 16 scoop shovel for recruiting a new member to the association.





At the 2012 KCFB Harvest Picnic Mike Kenyon, Jeff Bornemann, Bob Gehrke, Beth Engel, Joe White, and Tim Metz were presented 100th Anniversary commemorative scoop shovels for recruiting members, as part of a 100 x 100 Membership Drive. Not present, but qualifying for the incentive, Alan Volpp.

KCFB Presidents 1913 - 1929

Judson P. Mason	1913
William F. Graham	1915
C.S. Lovell	1916
J.F. Reid	1918
E.E. Hughes	1919
Henry McGough	1920
Dan G. Davies	1921
Henry W. Lees	1922
Ira R. Judd	1923
W.C. Mcqueen	1924
E.L. Hoyt	1925
Frank Widmayer	1926
Glenn Warne	1927
W.A. Beith	1928
Conrad Lind	1929



Kankakee County Farm Adviser John Collier, pictured here in 1912, assisted farmers in improving their productivity and profitability. Farm productivity was the primary focus of early Farm Advisers, who traveled the countryside testing the soil of Farm Bureau members, suggesting crop rotations, limestone or other soil amendments and advising on animal husbandry practices. Collier, and his counterpart in Kane County Jerome Readhimer, helped farmers focus their efforts and get better results.

The 1920's

Reprinted from March 2012

Kane County Farmer

Kane County Farm Bureau Roars into the 20's

As Kane County Farm Bureau entered its second decade, Americans were experiencing a period of economic prosperity. The period was characterized by dramatic social and political change. For the first time, more Americans lived in cities than on farms. The nation's total wealth more than doubled between 1920 and 1929, but deflation hit farmers hard, as prices increased and farm prices fell to disastrous levels. Nationwide advertising and the spread of chain stores changed the way people shopped. Industrial and agricultural developments prompted by the needs of the war effort were paving the way for changes in production practices.

By the 1920's, farm advisers like Jerome Readhimer in Kane County, had laid the groundwork for helping farmers improve their production practices as well. Readhimer, who began work in June of 1913, had made great strides just four years later. According to published histories of Farm Bureau work, his campaign lifted barley production from 129,859 bushels in 1910 to over a million bushels in 1917. Farm advisers traveled the countryside, testing the soil of Farm Bureau members, suggesting limestone use or other soil amendments, and then followed up to make sure farmers were following recommendations. The work of Readhimer and his counterparts, including Ed Heaton in DuPage and John Collier in Kankakee, are credited for greatly improving not just the production and profits of farmers, but the way they kept their records.

Farmers didn't always have a good way of determining the reasons for a disparity in results, and profits, compared to those of their neighbors with similar soil types and conditions for their livestock. As farmers began to follow prescribed methods of accounting and record keeping, at the request and urging of their farm advisers, they began to see that they could better focus their efforts and get better results.

Today, U.S. farmers are able to get more than 150 bushels of corn per acre, which totaled over 13 billion bushels of corn in 2011. While advanced technology and developments in seed hybrids have greatly increased efficiency and production capabilities, the early accomplishments of farm advisers working in cooperation with Farm Bureau farmer-members cannot be underestimated.



Jerome Readhimer, Kane County Farm Bureau's Farm Adviser through 1919, worked with farmers to improve their production and record-keeping practices. The tireless work of Readhimer and his counterparts was key in the creation of the Farm Bureau and provided a valuable service that increased membership even through hard economic times.

The Farm Bureau made great strides during the 20's in helping farmers lower their seed costs and to get better prices for their harvest. This was done largely through the formation of farmer-owned cooperatives.

Early examples include the Elburn Cooperative Company, which Kane County Farm Bureau helped to re-organize in 1922 and a farm supply and service company, Kane County Farm Service Company, in 1929. On the state level, the IFB in cooperation with county Farm Bureaus formed the first group of accountants cooperatively organized solely to audit grain elevators and farm related business, the Illinois Agricultural Auditing Association, in 1925; a fire and casualty reinsurance company for farm property, Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Company, in 1925; an automobile insurance company, again for farmers, Illinois Agricultural Mutual Insurance Company, in 1927; a life insurance company, Country Life Insurance Company, in 1929 along with numerous others to purchase supplies and serum and market milk, eggs, fruits, vegetables grains and livestock..

With post-war prices for farmland sky-rocketing (as high as \$500 an acre) then falling dramatically in the mid 1920's, the Farm Bureau played a pivotal role in getting equal taxation for farmland. Statewide the Farm Bureau help to get decreases in equalized state land valuations that amounted to a reduction in farm taxes of \$557,000 for 1922. In 1924, Farm Bureau secured a seven percent reduction in assessed valuation on farmland in Kane County alone, a savings of over \$942,000. In March of that year, the first issue of the Kane County Farmer was printed to update members about these and other important activities of their association. (The publication began in 1922 as the *Kane County Farm News*.)

Ernest F. Yurs,
Elgin,
Ill.
B.F.D. #1

Kane County Farm News

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION Official Publication of the Kane County Farm Bureau AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

VOLUME 7 GENEVA, ILL., FEBRUARY 1, 1924. NUMBER 3

TESTING FOR TUBERCULOSIS IN KANE CO.

Kane County in its drive for progressiveness to place the live stock industry on par with other counties and to eliminate the black stain, which the live stock has suffered in the past, has availed itself to the opportunity the U. S. Government and the State of Illinois have offered, namely, Co-operative Tuberculin Testing. Under this Co-operative Testing Plan, Kane County can again be placed on the market basis and remove itself from the discriminated area in which it now

County Veterinarian Appointed

The tuberculosis committee of the Board of Supervisors, consisting of Messrs. A. M. Fitchie, chairman, Ira R. Judd and R. C. Hollister, employed Dr. W. A. Hahn of Chicago as county veterinarian. Dr. W. A. Hahn was selected after a very careful investigation by the committee of several of the most prominent and leading veterinarians in this section. Dr. Hahn has been in the employ of the U. S. Department of Agriculture as a field veterinary inspector, working under Dr. Lubiner, for the past eight years. During these eight years his work was practically confined to bovine tuberculosis eradication work. He comes well recommended as a man capable of successfully dealing with the many phases of the county work. He has tested many herds in Kane County and other counties in Northern Illinois and is not unknown to many breeders and dairymen of Kane County. The board of supervisors were exceedingly fortunate and are to be congratulated in securing the services of a man so unusually well fitted for the handling of the tuberculosis eradication work for Kane County. Dr. Hahn will have office quarters with the Kane County Farm Bureau.

This is the opportune time, do not overlook it.
The indemnities paid on reacting

FARM ACCOUNT SCHOOLS HELD FEBRUARY 14-15

Farm accounting schools will be held at the Court House in Geneva on February 14th and 15th. This will be the third year these schools have been held in this county. Prof. M. L. Mosher of the University Extension Service will be present and conduct the school. This school will be held for the purpose of giving instruction in the details of keeping simple farm cost accounting records. Farmers who have in the past year been keeping records will have an opportunity of having their books closed for the year.

Producers Commission
Association Grows.

Issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 'Roaring 20's', gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisers, staff and volunteers.

- 1924 Protest filed on present tax against farmlands.
 Tax reduction on farmlands of 7% proposed by Board of Review.
 Farm Bureau secured a 7% reduction in assessed valuation on farmland in Kane County, a savings in money of \$942,838.12.
 First issue of *Kane County Farmer* printed and mailed in March.
 Severe outbreak of the Army Worm in Kane County.
- 1925 \$100.00 reward offered for arrest and conviction of bootleggers of tuberculosis cattle.
 Kane County Farm Bureau joined the Illinois Agricultural Auditing Service.
 Committee appointed to investigate insurance sales.
 Motion on record opposing the proposed county forest preserve project.
 Special membership meeting held at fairgrounds at Aurora, by-laws were amended raising annual dues from \$10 to \$15. Proposition carried by 2/3 of members present.
Kane County Farmer Coverage extended to DuPage & Kendall counties.
 Calcium Cyanide used in ground hog eradication program.
 OX Warble considered a problem in the county.
 Farmers Mutual Fire Insurance Company organized by Farm Bureau.
- 1926 Resolution adopted that the law discriminating against corn sugar be repealed or amended so as to place corn sugar on an equal basis with cane and beet sugar.
 Voting records of all candidates for re-election were secured and made available to all farmers in the county.
 Calcium cyanide demonstrations for destruction of rats.
- 1927 Organized opposition to the tuberculosis test in dairy cattle.
 Farm Bureau Membership drive secured 204 new members.
 Constitution of Farm Bureau changed to provide 15 directors where there were only 9.
 Statewide I.A.A. Picnic held at Mooseheart in Kane County.
 Articles changed at annual meeting to provide for one director from each township – 7 to be elected one year – 8 for two years.
 Illinois Agricultural Mutual Insurance Company proposal as outlined by Mr. Metzger of I.A.A. accepted for Kane County Members.
 30 cars of limestone ordered at .57 cents per ton.
- 1928 Committee appointed to protect rigorously the proposal of daylight savings time.
 Country Life Insurance program was presented by the IAA and adopted by Kane County Farm Bureau Board of Directors.
 Hail insurance program accepted for Kane County.
 100 new members signed to Farm Bureau on drive.
 Attendance of 400 at Farm Bureau Annual meeting.
 Total membership at 628.
- 1929 Committee of I.R. Judd, E.D. Spencer & Fred Wilson appointed to investigate advisability of forming the Kane County Farm Bureau Supply Company.
- Mar. 16 1929 Kane County Farm Service Company (later FS) organized with Farm Bureau Executive Committee to be governing body.
- July 6, 1929 Kane County Farm Bureau signed contract with Country Life Insurance Company.
 Farm Bureau Membership reached 788.
 Higher price demanded by dairymen from Chicago Milk Dealers.
 Six farmers in county aided by Farm Adviser in septic tank installation.

The 1930's
Reprinted from April 2012
Kane County Farmer

Leaders Improve Association in Face of Great Depression

As the nation struggled through the Great Depression, Farm Bureau maintained its efforts to build membership, as well as services to its members. Mechanization and improved production practices had added to the productivity of farmers. In 1930, one U.S. farmer supplied food for nearly 10 people. Surpluses drove farm prices and income lower, reaching a bottom in 1932. U.S. leaders had to figure out how to balance production with consumption and enact an effective trade policy. The Farm Bureau was key in shaping legislation to control the effects crop surpluses and the poor economy had on farmers.

According to John Lacey, in his book *Farm Bureau in Illinois*, “the depression made heavy inroads on membership lists.” Banks were failing and many farmers were failing to pay dues. Farm Bureau membership dropped from 60,076 in 1930 to 54,355 in 1933. A plan was formed to stem the tide of membership losses, and improve accuracy of record keeping, as well as morale, throughout the County Farm Bureaus. In 1933, CFB leaders met and approved a plan to appoint one man in each county as County Directors of Organization, to oversee collection of past-due fees and the signing of new members.

In 1934, Kane County Farm Bureau joined all but one of the County Farm Bureaus in signing the Uniform Cooperative Agreement with IAA, which served as a binding agreement for collection and



The Wall Street stock market Crash of 1929 signaled the beginning of the Great Depression. Production fell sharply, unemployment skyrocketed, and people lost their jobs and savings. Many depended on charity to survive, waiting for hours on “breadlines” to provide meals to their families. In 1933, more than 15 million U.S. citizens—one-quarter of the nation's workforce—were unemployed. Even during this time of economic struggle, Kane County Farm Bureau worked hard to provide meaningful services to its members, and strived, not just to maintain its membership, but also to grow.

sharing of dues. It also instituted new methods for keeping membership records. That same year, Dan Davies became Kane County's first county director of organization. He and his counterparts succeeded in building membership and morale, through publicity campaigns and 200 community meetings. Statewide 4,400 memberships were sold and 6,000 members were restored to good standing.

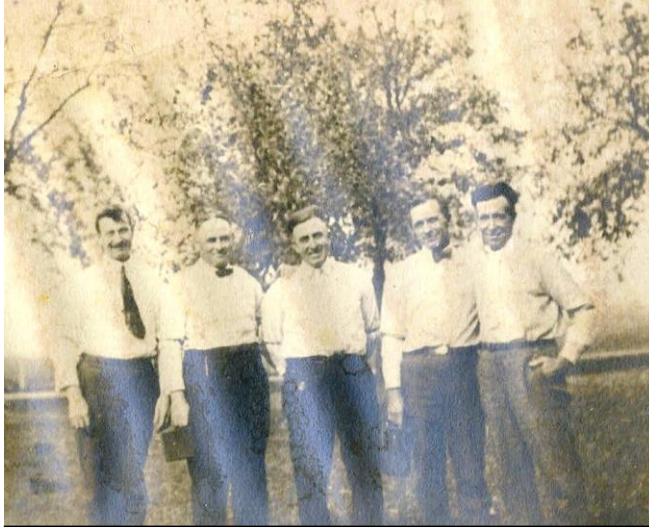
Recognizing that a strong membership base means a strong organization, Kane County Farm Bureau's leaders continued membership-building efforts throughout the decade. As the association celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1937, KCFB members were encouraged to sign new members with the offer of a No. 16 scoop shovel, a popular and much needed item at the time for moving grain.

Davies spearheaded these efforts through 1940. KCFB records show that five men filled the role through 1950: Clifford Naden, John Harber, E.C. Hoffman, Charles Rasmussen and Frank Randall.

Even during this decade of economic struggle, KCFB leaders were not content with the status quo, and strived to improve the lives of Farm Bureau members. In 1930, KCFB formed a three-member committee was formed to study extending the reach of power lines to rural areas – known as rural electrification. At that time, only 13% of U.S. farmers had electricity. In 1936 the Rural

Electrification Act greatly improved the quality of rural life by providing federal loans for the installation of electrical distribution systems.

In 1935, the Bankhead-Jones Agricultural Research Act more than doubled federal support of extension work. That year KCFB signed the first Memorandum of Understanding Agreement with the University of Illinois. In the 30's Farm Bureau developed relationships with the U of I and the Extension Service, expanding the reach of 4-H programs, and forging a partnership that remains strong to this day.



Earl Hardy, KCFB President in 1939, (center) is pictured in this KCFB file photo.

In 1936, the Kane County Farm Bureau board of directors approved the purchase of a building at 600 East State Street in Geneva at auction for \$6,000.00. The building served as the KCFB Office until 1957, when the office moved to its current St. Charles location on Randall Road.

Between 1932 and 1936 drought and dust-bowl conditions put a strangle hold on what is now some of our country's most productive farmland in the plains. Here in Kane County, member discounts were secured for farmers on products such as phosphate, crucial to maintaining good soil conditions.

Earl Smith, IAA President from 1926 to 1945, was intent on developing a sound national policy for agriculture. Smith believed strongly that making sure farmers received a

fair price for their crops was of utmost importance in seeing the country through its toughest financial times ever. In 1939, members of the Kane County Farm Bureau sent a letter commending Smith for his work in securing the appropriation for the farm program.

By 1940, the IAA and the County Farm Bureaus had weathered the depression, as had affiliates such as Illinois Farm Supply and Country Life Insurance. Farm Bureau membership was the highest it had been in 17 years.

KCFB Presidents of the 1930s

As was customary in the first thirty years of the Kane County Farm Bureau, KCFB Presidents served for just one year during the 1930's. Many of the surnames in a list of those who volunteered for the post will likely be familiar to you, as they and their families were influential in the growth of our community.

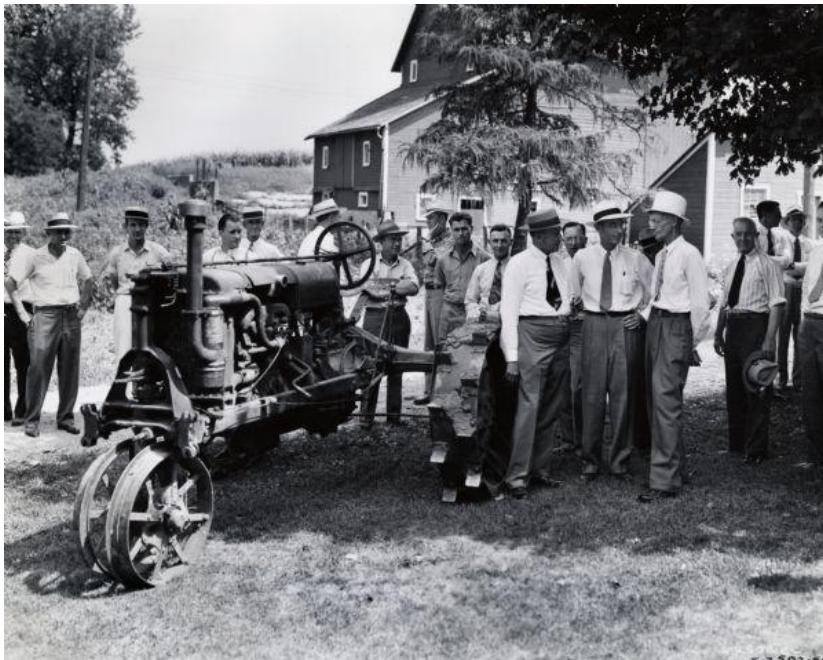
Fred Wilson	1930
Clarence Tanner	1931
Alex Fitchie	1932
Charles Keslinger	1933
W.C. Davis	1934
Henry W. Lees	1935
James E. Foley	1936
Marcus W. Damisch	1937
Arthur Fisher	1938
Earl Hardy	1939

Below are several of the issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1930's gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisers, staff and volunteers.

- 1930 Pure Milk Association re-organized their locals.
 1st county 4-H Club Committee appointed.
 80 boys participated in county livestock judging contest.
 Farmers league to be continued with Farm Bureau Moral and Financial support.
 Bills for organization work of Kane County Service Company paid by Farm Bureau
 which in turn accepted 30 shares of class A preferred stock of service company.
- 1931 Classes opened in 4-H club work for purebred calves and grade.
 Seventy-six 4-H members entered the acre corn contest.
 Aggressive Insurance Sales campaign kicked off.
 Farm Bureau pledged support to the farmers aid society
 Increased efforts to see that farm collateral is recognized as a basis on
 which to do business.
- 1932 Arrangements made from Kane County Federal Crop Production loans.
 Hog Cholera serum handled by Farm Bureau.
 Northern Illinois Junior Fair Association organized under sponsorship of
 the Farm Bureau.
- 1933 Survey of projects in relation to dues was conducted.
 Fred Wilson appointed General Agent of Insurance services, sub-agents hired – Will
 Linnell, Henry Lees, Charles Keslinger, Clarence Tanner & Harry Cochran.
 Twenty per cent of the year's membership dues were refunded to members.
 Promissory notes accepted for membership to allow members to receive patronage
 from service company.
 Corn-hog program started through Farm Bureau office.
- 1934 Co-operative agreement with IAA on membership adopted. Also, county
 organization director agreement accepted.
 Dan Davies, first County Organization Director.
 Committee appointed to secure action on chicken thieves.
- 1935 First Memorandum of Understanding Agreement signed with U of I.
 New insurance contracts with Farmers Mutual Reinsurance Company, Illinois
 Agricultural Mutual Insurance Company and Country Life Insurance Company
 were signed by Kane County Farm Bureau.
- 1936 Resolution adopted in opposition to Eastern Standard Time in Kane County.
- Sept. 5, 1936 Purchased building on East State St. in Geneva
- 1937 First county corn husking contest held.
 Contract signed with Ruhm Phosphate company, which allowed Farm Bureau
 members a 7% discount.
- 1938 Motion passed to donate two blackboards to Kendall County Farm Bureau.
- 1939 Cold storage locker as affiliate of Farm Bureau considered.
 Farm Bureau sent letter commending Earl Smith (*IAA President, 1926-1945*) for his
 work in securing the appropriation for the farm program.
- Dec. 13, 1939 Recognition given to 20-year members at annual meeting.

A look at significant events in agricultural history during the 1930's.

- 1930s All-purpose, rubber-tired tractor with complementary machinery popularized
Farm-to-market roads emphasized in Federal road building
- 1930 Smoot-Hawley tariff raises rates to prohibitive levels, prompting retaliation from other countries
Total population: 122,775,046; farm population: 30,455,350; farmers 21% of labor force; Number of farms: 6,295,000; average acres: 157
- 1930-35 Use of hybrid-seed corn becomes common in the Corn Belt
- 1930-39 Agricultural exports: \$765 million/year or 32% of total exports
- 1932-36 Drought and dust-bowl conditions develop
- 1932 Farm prices and income reach Depression bottom
- 1933 Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) initiates crop and marketing controls; Farm Credit Act
- 1934 Thatcher wheat distributed; Landrace hogs imported from Denmark
Executive orders withdraw public lands from settlement, location, sale; Taylor Grazing Act
- 1935 AAA amended to provide marketing orders and continuing funds for removal of agricultural surpluses; resettlement Administration created to combat rural poverty, leads to 1946 Farmers Home Administration
- 1936 Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act follows Hoosac Mills decision
Rural Electrification Act greatly improves quality of rural life
- 1937 Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act
- 1938 Agricultural Adjustment Act provides acreage allotments and quotas, ever-normal granary, price-supporting loans, regional research laboratories, and Federal crop insurance
Motor Carried Act brings trucking under ICC regulation
Cooperative organized for artificial insemination of dairy cattle
- 1939 Food stamp plan initiated
Technical agricultural collaboration with South American countries



July 31, 1941, Representatives of KCBF, Illinois Farm Bureau, American Farm Bureau Federation, International Harvester and the media gather around a Farmall Regular tractor on the farm of Clarence L. Dauberman near Kaneville. A ceremony sponsored by the Kane County Farm Bureau and Illinois Farm Bureau honored Dauberman for being the first farmer to adopt the high compression tractor in the United States. In July, 1934, he changed the cylinders of his Farmall Regular for high compression. Dauberman received a new Farmall H for his contribution to the advancement of agriculture.

IAA

Reprinted from April & May 2012

Kane County Farmer

The roots of the Illinois Agricultural Association

Editor's note: The following is a look back at the formation of the Illinois Agricultural Association, otherwise known as the Illinois Farm Bureau, taken directly from the 1963 book, Farm Bureau in Illinois by John J. Lacey.

In his 1963 book *Farm Bureau in Illinois*, John J. Lacey describes the first years of the farm advisers and how their work led to the formation of the Illinois Farm Bureau:

“The farm advisers, though still a small group in 1913, lost no time in getting organized for exchange of information and experiences at their new jobs. Late in the year, Ed Heaton of DuPage wrote to his fellow advisers to suggest that at the next extension meeting they organize an association. In December they did just that at Champaign, naming Jerome E. Readhimer of Kane county, president; J.W. Eckhardt (of DeKalb county) vice president; and Heaton secretary-treasurer. John S. Collier of Kankakee county was the fourth farm adviser at the meeting.

“Name selected was the Illinois Association of County Agriculturalists. By mid-1914 there were thirteen members, meeting regularly twice a year, with special meetings called occasionally. Charter members, in addition to the officers named above, were: H. Oathout of Champaign County, Lewis W. Wise of Iroquois, Delos L. James of McHenry, Ernest T. Robbins of Tazewell, Albert M. TenEyck of Winnebago, Henry Truitt of Peoria, Roy C. Bishop of Livingston, John S. Collier of Kankakee, Frank C. Grannis of Will, and D. S. Blair of Lake. (The Lake County organization was not recognized by the University, and didn't last. A permanent organization was set up in 1917.) Charles J. Mann of Bureau County joined in 1914. It was customary for the members to take with them to the regular meetings two or three farmers from their respective counties.

“Issues discussed are indicated by the resolutions adopted at the meeting in Champaign on January 28-29, 1915, with sixteen counties represented. The advisers asked that” hog cholera laws be enforced, importing (into the state) cattle with tuberculosis or other infectious diseases be stopped, all milk and creamers by-products be pasteurized, foot-and-mouth disease indemnities be paid from state and federal funds, a veterinary college to be established at the University of Illinois.

“All the following summer, the farm advisers, particularly Robbins, Heaton, and Eckhardt, had been discussing the need for the county crop improvement associations to band together for mutual helpfulness. They were convinced that it was inevitable that within a few years matters involving state legislation would require united action by farmers, and further that if limestone and rock phosphate and seeds were to be purchased cooperatively, much better terms could be secured by pooling county orders to make up a huge volume.”

The Formation of the IAA

“At their meeting in December 1915, they instructed Ed Heaton, as secretary, to send invitations to farmers in the organized counties inviting them to attend the meeting of the Illinois State Association of County Agriculturalist to be held in January at the University of Illinois.

Accordingly, a number of interested farmers showed up at the meeting on January 26, 1916. After consideration of routine business, a motion was adopted to the effect that Herman W. Danforth of Tazewell county take the chair while the matter of forming a state federation of county agricultural associations be considered by the advisers and farmers present. Danforth took the chair. After some discussion, Howard Leonard of Woodford county moved that the chair appoint a committee of five consisting of Danforth, two farm advisers, and two farmers to consider the matter of a state association, and report at a later date. Eckhardt moved to amend the motion so that the committee would be made up

entirely of farmers, leaving out the farm advisers. The amendment carried, and then Dean Davenport offered an amendment, which would permit the committee to call the farm advisers for consultation. This also carried, the amended motion was adopted, and arrangements made for the committee to report back at 8:30 that evening. The committee consisted of the following: Herman W. Danforth of Tazewell county, Mark McClure of Will county, Henry H. Parke of DeKalb county, Andrew Jackson Gilfillan of Iroquois county, and Howard Leonard of Woodford county.

At the appointed hour, in Room 903, Agricultural Building, the committee reported to the entire group which got right down to work, adopted the name "Illinois Agricultural Association," set the dues at \$100 a year for each county association, elected Danforth the president, and Leonard secretary of the temporary organization. Thus was set in motion the mightiest force that had ever appeared in Illinois agriculture. It was to bring profound changes for all farmers in Illinois. No arrangements for a permanent office or staff were made.

Farm paper editors were enthusiastic. "Who can foretell," asked the Orange Judd Farmer, "the power of such an organization of leading farmers of the state with hearts set on rural betterment, and with selfish interests far in the background?" Prairie Farmer commented as follows:

"The work of organizing was done by the officers and representatives of the local associations with the help of the county advisers. It is planned to make the Illinois Agricultural Association a strong, statewide organization that will have the strength and the purpose to work for the best interests of Illinois farmers in every possible way. There has been a great need of such as association in Illinois and farmers' interests have suffered for lack of it!"

"The organizers of this new association are hard-headed, practical farmers. They realize that it will take hard work and good judgment to make the association live up to its possibilities. But they are enthusiastically for it, and will spare no efforts to make it the real representative of the interests of Illinois agriculture. One of the most powerful effects of this association will be its wholesome influence on Illinois politics. While it will not be partisan in any sense, it will stand for better and more business-like state government..."

"Farmers can accomplish almost anything by working together. Let's all work together to make the Illinois Agricultural Association the greatest constructive force in the state."

The meeting to "perfect" the organization was held in the Farm Bureau office in the courthouse at Ottawa on March 15, 1916. A constitution and set of bylaws were adopted, permanent officers elected, and representatives of thirteen county associations signed up as members of the state organization: namely, Adams, Bureau, Champaign, DeKalb, Iroquois, LaSalle, Livingston, Macon, Mason, McLean, Tazewell, Will, and Woodford. (Later, Adams county withdrew because of lack of funds, and DeKalb dropped out with no explanation, but both counties reaffiliated later.) DuPage county came in within three months, with others following soon after.

Permanent officers elected were: Herman W. Danforth of Tazewell county, president; Guy Carlyle (Lyle) Johnstone of McClean county, vice president; Howard Leonard of Woodford, treasurer; and Ernest T. Robbins of Tazewell, secretary.

Herman W Danforth practiced law for eight years before he went back to the farm in 1907. A strong believer in cooperatives, he helped organize the farmers' elevator in Danforth and became its president. Later he served as president of the Farmers National Grain Dealers Association. He was one of the founders of the Tazewell County Farm Bureau, and became its first president. Danforth was the outstanding choice for the presidency of the original IAA. He resigned within a year, to become president of the Federal Land Bank of St. Louis.

The 1940's

Reprinted from May 2012

Kane County Farmer

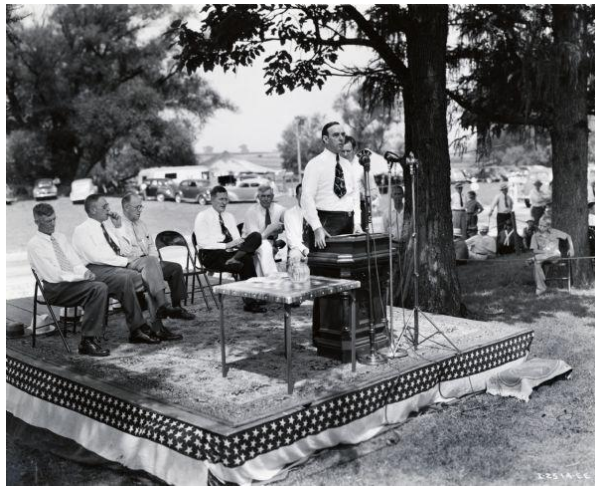
KCFB Inspires Confidence During the Turbulent 1940s

By 1940, the Kane County Farm Bureau had been in existence for nearly three decades. The association had done well through a period of economic struggle, and now its members were about to take on the immense challenges presented by the Second World War

World War II lasted from 1939-1945. It affected every part of the globe, with over 100 million people serving in military units worldwide. The U.S. entered the war in December of 1941 after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. More than 16 million American men and women served in the war.

The Farm Bureau still had lofty goals of increasing the ranks of farmers taking advantage of its services. Organization Directors in each county continued membership drive and publicity efforts. KCFB records show that in July 18, 1940, Clifford Naden was named General Insurance Agent (KCFB had signed contracts with Farmers Mutual Reinsurance Company, Illinois Agricultural Mutual Ins Company and Country Life Insurance Company in 1935) John Harber replaced Naden and served as Organization Director from 1941-1942. In 1943, the IAA set and reached a goal of reaching 100,000 members.

Many items were rationed during the war, including firewood, butter, bicycles, footwear and gasoline. Because the country's rubber manufacturing capabilities were limited, the last three were done primarily to conserve rubber. KCFB records show that plans for the 1942 Annual Meeting were contingent on whether or not gas rationing was still in effect, thereby limiting the ability to travel.



Earl C. Smith, President of the Illinois Agricultural Association, speaks into a microphone at an event to honor Clarence Dauberman of Kaneville for creating the first high compression tractor in the U.S.



A bronze plaque dedicated at the ceremony in 1941 still stands on the Dennis Long Farm near Kaneville.

The war effort depleted the nation's workforce, and made things especially hard on the farm. Farmers needed to produce greater amounts of food, with dwindling manpower. Women and children were required to do much of the labor previously done by men, who were being drafted to the war effort. In 1941, Kane County Farm Bureau passed a resolution to urge Uncle Sam to defer the draft orders of some farmers so they could stay to operate their farms.

One Kane County Farmer played an important part in the advancement of motorized power on American farms. On July 31, 1934, Clarence Dauberman converted a 1925 Farmall Regular from low to high compression on his Kaneville farm. This is said to have been the unofficial start of the race for more horsepower in farm machinery. Increased horsepower made up for some of the lack in manpower during the war years, and the accompanying need for all-out farm production.

The seventh anniversary of that momentous event in farm machinery development was marked by a ceremony on the Dauberman Farm on July 31, 1941. KCFB volunteers and representatives of the state association honored Dauberman for his accomplishment. The event was broadcast on the NBC National Farm and Home Hour radio program. Speakers included IAA President Earl Smith and Sydney G. McAllister, chairman of the executive committee at International Harvester Company. During the ceremony, a bronze plaque was dedicated, marking the Kaneville farm on Dauberman Rd as the birthplace of the high-compression engine. The farm is currently owned by Dennis Long, and the plaque stills stands today, between two tall cedar trees.

The Farm Bureau continued its work in helping farmers improve their seed and soil. In 1943, a seed certification program was developed in Kane County to preserve the genetic identity and purity of field crop seed varieties. The variety and origin of certified seed is verified by the certification agency and made it possible to trace the seed through information on the label.

In 1944, KCFB directors recommended the establishment of a Soil Conservation District in Kane County. Kane County Soil & Water Conservation District, now located on Dean Street in St. Charles, was formed later that year, and later combined with DuPage County. The 1937 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District Act gave SWCD's the responsibility to provide technical information to individuals and groups on methods of soil and water conservation. Additions to KCFB member services included the opening of a soil laboratory at the Farm Bureau.

Long-time KCFB Member Dexter Norton Jr., who owns and operates Norton Farm on Rt. 64 in St Charles, remembers coming into the Farm Bureau office in Geneva, now the site of Malone Funeral home, with his father. Dexter Sr. served as KCFB President in 1947.

“There was a receptionist, Claudette I believe, who had just returned from a trip to the south, and when she talked to my dad she had a southern accent,” Norton recalled. His father remarked that surely she didn't pick up such a drawl from just two weeks down in the south. Said Norton, “And she said of course not, I'm just talking that way to put on a show for you farmers.” Norton and his father both got a kick out of that.

Norton recalls that his father always made time for the Farm Bureau because he had a strong, positive opinion of the association and its value to farmers. That confidence extended to the Kane County Service



Gas was rationed during the 1940's restricted travel and conserved the United States' slim supply of rubber needed for military use in WWII. KCFB leaders had this in mind when they made plans for the 1942 annual meeting. They knew the meeting would need to be cancelled if rationing limited a member's ability to drive. In 1940, 58% of all U.S. farms had a car, 25% and 33% had electricity. Technological advances through the decade helped farmers keep pace with the need for increases in production. Change from horses to tractors and increasing technological practices characterized the second American agricultural revolution and productivity per acre began to rise sharply. Families were asked to do a little farming of their own. Raising vegetables to help feed your family was seen as a patriotic way to help speed a victory in the war.

Company, the predecessor of Northern FS and Conserv FS, as a stalwart company that could always be relied upon.

“He always said it was the only place to buy gas,” said Norton, who later served on the KCSC Board. He recalls that standards for gas distribution weren’t as tight as they are today. “But with the Service Company, if you paid for 100 gallons of gas, you could be sure that’s exactly what you were getting.”

More than six decades later, the Kane County Farm Bureau strives to uphold that same high standard of confidence from its members.

Below are several of the issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1940’s gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisers, staff and volunteers.

- 1940 Fund of \$290.00 + of protective association was transferred to Farm Bureau fund
- 1940 Approval of Board given to Soil Conservation Cooperation for Kane County
- 1940 4-H fair held at James Rees & William Rowe Farm.
- July 18, 1940 Clifford Naden named General Insurance Agent providing he continue as Organization Director until a successor is named. (*John Harber replaced Naden and served as Org. Dir, from 1941-1942*)
- 1941 Resolution passed to urge deferment of draftees to operate farms
- 1941 \$50.00 worth of stuff purchased in Yorkville Poultry Egg Auction
- 1941 7th Birthday of the first high compression tractor in the United States celebration held on Clarence Dauberman farm. Sponsored by Farm Bureau and IAA with presentation of a Bronze plaque mounted on a stone in the front yard
- 1942 Kane County Service Company named as distributor for Blue Seal Feeds
- 1942 Annual meeting plans made, but all plans to be cancelled if gas rationing interferes
- 1943 Development of a seed certification program in Kane County
- 1944 Farm Bureau Board recommended the establishment of a Soil Conservation District in Kane County
- 1945 Soil Laboratory opened in Farm Bureau building
- Oct. 1946 Vern Landmeier hired as Agency Mgr. of Insurance Services
- 1946 New publisher printing the new “Kane County Farmer”
- 1946 Frank Randall hired as County organization Director
- 1947 Farm Bureau sponsored Kane County Plat Book
- Dec. 1947 George Peters hired as Manager of Kane County Service Company
- 1948 Northern IL Breeding Co-op offices opened in county
- 1949 Fox Valley Livestock Center Inc. given sanction of Farm Bureau Board
- 1949 Stock selling campaign for producers seed company

KCFB Presidents of the 1940s

Robert Getzelman	1940
George Dauberman	1941
J.N. Russell	1942 – 1943
Lorin Davis	1944 – 1945
Edgar Allen	1946
Dexter Norton	1947
Arthur Lind	1948
Wayne Wirsing	1949 – 1952

The 1950's

Reprinted from June 2012

Kane County Farmer

FB move mirrors post-war trends

The post war era in the U.S. meant increased production, a spike in development, and a move away from downtown centers and toward outlying areas. In the 1950s, people and businesses were headed to the suburbs, a new concept at the time, and the Farm Bureau was about to follow suit. First though, there were a few changes in store.



The Kane County Farm Bureau office in St. Charles was constructed during 1957 and 1958. The entrance then faced Randall Road.

One not-so-welcome change came from outside the Farm Bureau walls. Efforts were being made to change the historic relationship between the Farm Bureau and the Extension Service. In Nov. 1954, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson issued a memo under which farm advisers, such as Lyle Kerly and James McCurdy in Kane County, could no longer accept office space, salary or expense directly from a farm organization. They would be employed by the University of Illinois and the Department of Agriculture.

The change was partly the result of the growth in farm organizations during the 1950s. Farm Bureau membership in Illinois had reached 200,000 by 1953. New associations were formed too, including the National Farmers Organization

that year. A *Prairie Farmer* article in 1956 explained that the “divorce” of Extension and Farm and Home Bureaus was meant to indicate to the public that education services were available to all and were not a part of belonging to any one association.

These provisions meant Extension work would no longer be carried out through the Farm Bureau. Despite this change, the Kane County Farm Bureau to this day, continues to work closely with the Extension on educational programs that benefit farmers and city people alike. An example is KCFB’s annual Summer Ag Institute, which for 14 years has featured a visit to the University of Illinois Horticulture Research Station in St Charles, where Extension Specialist Bill Shoemaker explains some of the important research that assists farmers who produce food crops.

U.S. involvement in the Korean War, from 1950 to 1953, affected farm life in many ways. Post-war inflation left many County Farm Bureaus with less buying power. By 1951, KCFB leaders were in serious discussions about the need to raise dues from \$15, where they had



The east facing doors were replaced by a window when the KCFB entrance was moved to the north side of the building during renovations in 1984. A mansard roof was added.

been for more than 30 years, to \$20. Fifteen dollars would pay for around half the service it bought in the 1920's. In October of 1952, the KCFB Board of Directors passed a motion to present the \$5 increase in dues at a special county membership meeting. The increase did eventually go into effect on Nov. 1, 1958.

The Farm Bureau was also important in social activities for farmers. One of the groups formed by Farm Bureau that was going strong in the 1950's was Rural Youth. It gave young people from the country a chance to gather for dances and meetings to share their similar interests. Farm Bureau member and former director Mike Wurtz participated in Rural Youth activities and appreciated the opportunities it provided for young twenty-somethings who could no longer participate in 4-H activities.

Square dancing was popular at the time and Wurtz and his friends competed in an IAA sanctioned square dancing competition against teams from other County Farm Bureaus. "We all had matching suits and the ladies' dresses were the kind that swirled out when you did turns," he said. Wurtz remembers that Kane County's team qualified for the state competition in 1957.



Square dancing was quite popular during the 1950s. Meetings of the KCFB Young Married Couples Club could include a guest speaker, but they rarely missed a chance to clear the floor for a dance. Singles in the Rural Youth club competed in square dancing competitions with other County Farm Bureaus.

"We met on the second floor of the Farm Bureau office in Geneva," Wurtz said. "That floor would bounce two inches or so when we'd get dancing, sometimes I wondered if it would give way."

In 1952, the KCFB Rural Young Married Couples Club was formed for members who, once married, were no longer eligible for Rural Youth. The club allowed members to keep up with other young married couples they'd met in Rural Youth. Similar clubs were formed in many Illinois counties. Meetings could include a business element or guest speaker, but they always ended with the tables being cleared for a dance.

Many met their spouses at Farm Bureau function and dances, like Lynette Werdin of Elburn, who met her husband Dave at a

Rural Youth dance. "Once we all started getting married we'd get together as couples," she said. Werdin said the Married Couples Club gave them a way to we keep getting together, and there was still lots of dancing. She also remembers that the group made a lot of popcorn.

"We'd make popcorn to sell at the county fair for a fundraiser," she recalled. Part of those funds went to the construction of the new Farm Bureau office. There, a bouncing floor was not a problem. Dances were held on a large cement floor, painted red, in the building's auditorium.

Wurtz organizes an annual reunion that attracts a group of about 50 former Kane County Rural Youth members. They meet on the fourth Sunday in September at Lions Park in Elburn to enjoy some food and refreshments, and to reminisce.

Sixty years later, young KCFB members age 18-35, some married and some not, still gather for leadership-building, community service and social activities through the Young Farmers Committee.

KCFB farmer members' concern for the health of their animals and the health of those consuming agricultural products made brucellosis a hot topic. In 1952, the brucellosis ring test was required of all milk and cream delivered in Illinois and at that time approximately 33 percent of herds were infected. That year, the KCFB board of directors discussed the topic. Veterinarian, Dr. Hohn, appeared before the board on this subject. They had the ambitious goal, or least the hope, that the infection could be eradicated from Kane County by 1955.

A steeper decline in human cases did start in 1955 with the requirement of pasteurization of Grade A milk that year. It took another nine years to get the statewide herd infection rate below 5 percent. Illinois achieved brucellosis-free status in swine in 1984 and in cattle in 1992.

In 1957, KCFB leaders organized a meat promotion program. The impetus for this campaign happened in October of 1955 when the IAA, in cooperation with the American Farm Bureau and the 99 County Farm Bureaus put on a statewide meat promotion campaign. The IAA ran quarter-page advertisements in most Illinois newspapers with more than 50,000 inhabitants and County Farm Bureaus ran ads in smaller newspapers.

In 1955, KCFB leaders began a search for a new property for the association's offices. The property on Randall Road was purchased that same year and in 1956, the Farm Bureau building in Geneva was sold.

The state association was also looking for more office space during this time. By 1957, the IAA headquarters on East Ohio Street in Chicago was not adequate to house the operations of IAA and its affiliates, and a decision was made to move to a more centralized, mid-state location. A new office was built in Bloomington and the IAA moved in June of 1961.

The Kane County Farm Bureau's move was much less drastic, taking the Farm Bureau office only a few miles west. But the result was just as significant and mirrored the decade's trend of moving to the burbs. While it's hard to imagine now, with hardly an inch of property facing Randall Road that isn't developed, there were few neighbors at the new location.

August W Wilson and Sons worked on construction of the new KCFB building in 1957 and 1958. Minutes from board meetings, and most held during the year prior to and following the construction, are filled with decisions on plans, purchases, improvements, and punch lists, for the new office.

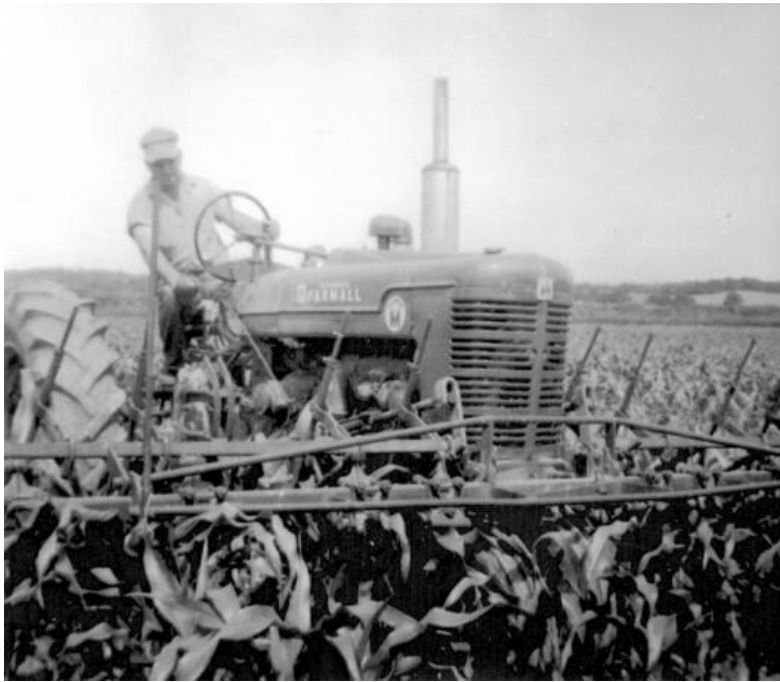
A new office on Randall Road, then only a two-lane affair, meant there was room to grow. The office provided space for volunteer meetings, ample office space, and three acres of land that today allows the association to host public events and hold a prominent spot on what is now one of the county's busiest roads.

The first KCFB Board meeting at the new office location in St. Charles was held in April of 1958. An open house was held on November 9 that year, and the Farm Bureau began to settle in to its permanent home.

KCFB Presidents of the 1950s

In the 1940's, Kane County Farm Bureau Presidents began to serve for more than just one year, and by the end of that decade and into the 1950's, serving for two years or more was the norm.

Wayne Wirsing	1949 – 1952
Arthur Peterson	1953 – 1954
John Gunderson	1955 – 1956
A.N. Healy	1956 – 1961



Farmers in the 1950s benefitted in the fields from new technology and in all aspects of their operation from the benefits provided by Farm Bureau membership.

Below are several of the issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1950's, gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisers, staff and volunteers.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1950 | Grounds purchased for permanent site for Kane County 4-H Fair.
Fiscal closing date of Farm Bureau set as July 31. |
| 1951 | G.W. Blanchard hired as Executive Secretary of Farm Bureau.
Discussion held on a \$5.00 per year dues increase |
| 1952 | Directors discussion striving for a brucellosis free county by 1955
KCFB Rural Young Married Couples Club chartered |
| Oct. 1952 | Motion passes by Board of Directors to present the raising of dues from \$15 to \$20 at a special county membership meeting |
| 1953 | \$1,000,000 annual production of Life Insurance in Kane County for 1 year attained |
| 1954 | Pipeline crossing northern section of county was discussed and farmers were assisted in receiving a fair amount for easement privileges
Facts on dues increased presented to members via open letter in Kane County Farmer. |
| 1955 | Search for building site for new Farm Bureau building started.
Land site purchased on Randall Road for erection of Farm Bureau building. |
| 1956 | Future Farmers of America day program organized
Policy development program organized
Offices of right-of-way purchased by toll road commission discussed
Farm Bureau building on State Street in Geneva sold |
| 1957 | Meat promotion program organized |
| 1958 | G.W. Blanchard, Secretary of Organization resigns
Alden P. Kilian hired as Secretary of Organization.
Group of Japanese farm leaders tour Kane County
Open house held at new KCFB office, Nov. 9
Dues Increased to \$20.00 |

The 1960's

Reprinted from July 2012

Kane County Farmer

Technological, demographic changes abound as FB turns 50

The Kane County Farm Bureau entered the 1960's with 2,869 members. Despite snow playing havoc with many membership drive efforts throughout the state, by May of 1960, Kane County members were able to sign 84 new farmer members.

Alden P. Kilian was the Secretary of Organization throughout the decade. He and the volunteer directors of the KCFB Board organized a flurry of activity in many areas, including education, member benefits and services.

In 1960, the Kane County Service Company opened an FS Farm Store on Main Street Road in Elburn. The store, reported to be the first of its kind in Illinois, was a "complete, departmentalized farm supply center." Charles Keslinger, chairman of the Service Company Board said it would offer "4,000 items now being distributed" by the Service Company.



Your Kane County Farm Bureau and affiliated companies display at the Kane County Fair. Photo reprinted from Kane County Farmer, Aug. 30 1965.

In July of 1962, The Kane County Farmer reported on a farm-city tour put on by KCFB and the Chicago Association of Commerce & Industry. About 25 tour participants visited the farms of Harmon Bros. beef and hog farm in Elburn, John Nepermann's dairy farm in Elgin and John Smith's poultry farm in Elgin.

Farm Bureau was as active as ever in the legislative arena, advocating for passage of many bills before the general assembly, including: a ten percent allocation of gas tax to rural roads; making two wagons behind farm tractors legal; school and road districts not being required to consolidate; legalizing farmers' use of hypodermic needles in

care of livestock and poultry; and expanded marketing research.

According to the monthly narrative report by Kane County Farm Adviser Philip Farris, "Weather conditions in January of 1960 played a big role in agricultural production. Many farmers were without electrical power for almost four days due to a heavy ice storm. This created real hardship on supplying water feed, heat and ventilation for livestock."

KCFB Presidents of the 1960s

A.N. Healy	1956 – 1961
Gerhard Tamms	1961 – 1965
Jack Young	1965 – 1968
John White Jr.	1968 – 1973

Farris and Assistant Farm Adviser J Errol Baxter submitted reports to the Farm Bureau board on the many activities they carried out in crop and soil improvement, 4H activities and other programs to improve the efficiency and production of area farmers.

Farm Bureau members were encouraged to participate in safety and citizenship projects, as well as leadership development and agricultural marketing promotions. KCFB Director Gerhard Tamms, president of the association from 1961-1965, was pictured in a Nov. 1960 issue of the Kane County Farmer taking part in a meat promotion campaign. "Give Meat for Christmas – it's always in good taste" was the slogan of the seventh annual campaign. A Golden Goodness Egg promotion was also conducted that year to increase egg consumption.

In 1963, the Kane County Farm Bureau celebrated its fiftieth annual meeting. At their September meeting, directors decided to honor past presidents of the association with a special seating arrangement and send them a complimentary ticket. All members were honored in five-year increments dating back to 1913.

Kane County Farm Bureau's sports festival was an important annual event and the annual bowling competition was often front and center in terms of association news. Members were active in IAA sponsored activities too. Violet Anderson of Batavia and Edith Phelps of Elburn attended the IFB Women's Committee conference in April 1965 in Peoria, where they learned about topics including leadership and legislative involvement. Young people were encouraged to attend state conferences that began in the late fifties, to build their leadership skills.

A significant change in membership happened in 1964. American demographics were changing, and fewer Americans were farming. The Kane County Farmer reported that America was facing a technological revolution" leading to a decline in farm and rural populations. The IAA wanted the association to be led by farmers, but there were also many non-farmers who wanted to be members. Many had once farmed, had relatives who did, or were involved in some way in the agriculture industry.

The IAA Board recommended the adoption of a bylaw which would provide for two types of members, voting and non-voting. Voting members were essentially those engaged in farming. An amendment to the original resolution later stated that associate, or non-voting members must have a "genuine bona fide interest in agriculture." Guidelines were created in January of 1965 to help County Farm Bureaus reclassify their members appropriately. Requirements for an interest in farming were later changed to open up membership to people from all walks of life.

In December of 1965, Jack Young of St. Charles was named to the Board of the newly formed Agricultural Business Service Company. Young, a farmer and President of KCFB at that time, was one of the individuals tasked by IAA President William Kuhfuss with overseeing a pilot program to see how the new IAA affiliate could improve farm accounting and associated services for farmers. Total affiliate business that year totaled nearly \$600 million. Young served as KCFB President through 1968 and would later serve on the IAA Board of Directors.

KCFB's neighbor to the south expanded during the decade, as new infrastructure and activities were added at the Kane County Fair. A carcass barrow show and milking derby were new additions at the fair in 1964. A new gate and a new building awaited fairgoers at the 97th Kane County Fair in 1968

KANE COUNTY FARMER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE KANE COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Volume 18 July 30, 1962 As Aurora Beacon News Supplement



FARM-CITY TOUR — The Kane County Farm Bureau Farm-City tour was well attended as indicated by the picture. The Harmon Brothers of Elburn are explaining the farm operation to Chicago visitors.

On July 11 the Chicago Association of Commerce & Industry cooperated with the Kane County Farm Bureau in helping to better our relationship with our city neighbors. Farm visited during the day when Harmon Bros., 32.

With tours such as this, we are bound to have a better knowledge and understanding of each others problems. This should be a constant public relations goal. The monthly publication of the farm news at.

Richard, Int. Min. & Chem. Corp., J. Glass, American People Public Opinion Service, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Sobel, Chicago Livestock Exchange, H. V. Miller, Sears, Roebuck & Co.; E. T. Lester and the Harmon Bros. Co., Elburn, Ill.

Planning Mistakes Can Be Costly

WASHINGTON, D. C. — As the nation's population explodes, so much depends on making good use of our land and water resources that a single mistake in planning could be very costly to the economy.

Addressing the 30th annual meeting of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers here, J. Herbert Snyder, agricultural economist, University of California, said the man who decides about use of resources need for more facts.

Engineers and economists must learn more about the alternatives in land and water use, and tell the farmer about them, he said.

The other, Snyder said, engineering or economic studies are based on a specific set of circumstances which may or not apply to the problem faced by a farmer or farmer at some later time.

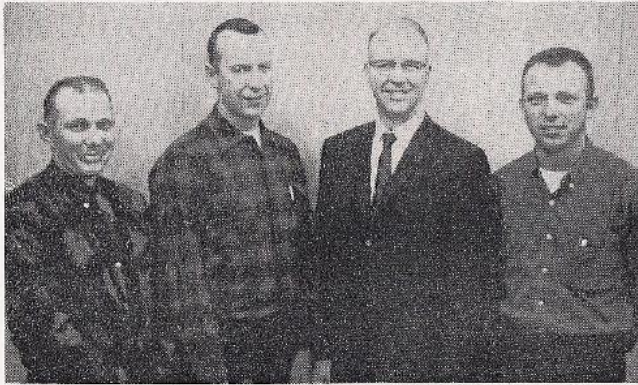
He cited several examples:

FB Farm-City Tour Well Attended

The Harmon Brothers of Elburn are shown explaining their farm operation to Chicago visitors during the Kane County Farm Bureau Farm-City Tour in 1962. Photo reprinted from the July 30, 1962 edition of the Kane County Farmer. At that time, the publication was included as a magazine insert in the Aurora Beacon News.

By the 1960's nearly all farms had electricity. Modern farm machinery, combined with the efforts of farmers and their farm advisers to improve soil fertility had greatly increase farm production. During this time, each U.S. farmer supplied food for approximately 26 people.

Several programs during the decade helped U.S. farm surplus make its way to help the needy at home and abroad. Farm Bureau members continued community service and outreach by helping to feed the hungry in Chile, Hong Kong and 25 countries around the world through the CROP program. Kane County farmers joined others across the state to fill thousands of trucks with corn for the program.



New officers of the Kane County Farm Bureau for 1966 (l to r): John Schingoethe, vice-president; Jack Young, president; A. Kenneth Johnson, treasurer; and Robert Konen, secretary. Photo reprinted from Kane County Farmer, Dec. 6, 1965.

Compensation for farm workers was a hot topic of discussion. The Fair Labor Standards Act was extended to include agricultural labor in 1966. The federal minimum wage was extended to some farm workers. A House Labor Committee report expressed a belief that the minimum wage for farm workers should be equal to that for workers in other industries, which rose to \$1.75 per hour in 1968.

That same year, a young farmer named John White Jr. of Elburn would become KCFB's 39th President. During his tenure White would help shape the face of the local association, and the state association as well.

Agriculture in the 1960's

Below are several dates important to agriculture along with some issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the '60's.

1960s	State legislation to keep land in farming increases
1960s	Soybean acreage expands as an alternative to other crops
1960	96% of corn acreage planted with hybrid seed
1960	Orion Samuelson began his career as farm broadcaster at WGN
May 1960	Hog Cholera outbreak threatens swine industry
June 1960	Kane County Service Company opens FS store in Elburn
February 1962	Prairie Farms Dairy Inc. is formed (merged with Equite Union Creamery and Produce Company of Pana)
April 1962	Kane County Farmer offered as magazine section in Beacon News
July 1962	KCFB farm-city tour held on Harmon Bros., Nepermann and Smith farms
1962	Rural Electrification Association authorized to finance education TV in rural areas
September 1963	Directors approve order of 3,000 plat books, Farm Bureau building on cover
December 1963	KCFB celebrates 50 years
1964	First IAA trade mission to Europe
October 1965	Bail Bond Service first offered to Farm Bureau members
December 1965	Jack Young, Pres. Of KCFB named to board of Agricultural Business Service Co., a new IAA affiliate
1966	Fair Labor Standards Act extended to include agricultural labor; Federal minimum wage extended to some farm workers
1966	President's Committee on Rural Poverty appointed; Child Nutrition Act
April 3, 1967	Radio program RFD Illinois was born
1967	Wholesome Meat Act passed
1968	Wholesome Poultry "Products Act"; food service program for children enacted
July 1968	100 th Kane County Fair is held in St. Charles

The 1970's

Reprinted from August 2012
Kane County Farmer

KCFB leaders set the tone at local, state & national levels

As Kane County Farm Bureau wrapped up another busy decade of programs and activities aimed at improving the lives of member families, community involvement was an important part of the association's efforts.

While today's hunger relief efforts program are focused largely on feeding those closest to home, Farm Bureau members four decades ago were helping to feed the hungry in Chile, Hong Kong and 25 countries



KCFB members were active in promoting farm products in the 70's. This photo from a beef promotion appeared on the back of the 1972 annual meeting program. Nearest the wagon (r to l) is Farm Bureau Secretary of Organization Earl Struck, who came on board in 1971, and Young Farmers Chairman Ted McCannon.

around the world through the CROP program. Several programs during the 1960s had helped U.S. farm surplus make its way to help the needy at home and abroad. Kane County farmers joined others across the state to fill thousands of trucks with corn for the program. KCFB's current Harvest for ALL program along with food drives and annual shopping spree featuring local legislators

have combined to generate well over \$100,000 in donations in the first decade of the 21st century.

In 1968, a young farmer named John White Jr. of Elburn became KCFB's 39th President. The association entered the 1970's strengthened by White's leadership, which served as an example for many other Kane County farmers who would take on agricultural leadership roles in the years to come. White was IAA (Illinois Farm Bureau) Vice President from 1973-1983 and was the only Kane County farmer to serve as President of the statewide Association, from 1983-1993.

Illinois farmers confronted several major issues throughout the 1970's. Inflation and staggering food prices followed efforts to pay for the Viet Nam War. Labor demands and work stoppages took their toll on Illinois' farm economy, the ability to get inputs at fair prices, and on the nation to market farm produce to a growing international market.

A constitutional convention, or "con-con", wrapped up at the end of 1970. Kane County Farm Bureau members made their voices heard during the year-long process to make changes to the state's constitution, which took effect in 1971. The framers decided that voters would decide every 20 years on whether or not they'd like a new con-con.



Kane County Farm Bureau directors in 1971, (back row, l-r): John White, Jr.; President, William Theis, Donald Vanthournout, James Kautz, Charles Swanson, Vice-President, Lester Landmeier, Wilbert Heinrich; Treasurer, Herman A. Wesemann, Jr., (front row) Harvey Bulchholz, Spencer Volpp, Michael Fabrizius, Micheal Wurtz, Eldon Gould, John Nepermann; Secretary, and Arthur F. Nagel.

In 1971, KCFB Secretary of Organization, Alden Kilian reported to the board of directors that Kane County had been selected as one of two counties in Illinois to institute an IBM membership program. Later that year, Kilian was promoted to the post of district fieldman with Illinois Farm Bureau. His replacement was Earl Struck, who served in that capacity until 1974. John White described Struck as

“an energetic, personable young man.” Struck said the staff and volunteers “made me feel I was a member of the team which has one goal in mind, serving the farmers of Kane County.”

At the annual meeting that year, Struck reported that KCFB membership was at

an all-time high, 3,700 members, and was enjoying the strongest financial position in the history of the organization. Struck reported that the Young Farmers and Women’s Committees were expanding their programs and had completed several new projects.

The Young Farmers sponsored a tour to the Board of Trade, held a rural-urban day to acquaint urban people with issues affecting the agricultural community, delivered fruit baskets at the state mental hospital, and helped organize an annual membership drive banquet & picnic.

The Women’s Committee also helped coordinate new member recruitment & orientation. In addition to safety programs, farm visits and legislative efforts, new programs organized by the committee in the 70s included a one-day baby-sitting clinic and an ecology program featuring qualified speakers for local organizations. Committee members promoted beef in May, dairy at the county fair, and pork in October. They created posters for display at meat and dairy counters at local grocery stores and 12,000 placemats were placed in restaurants around the county.

In his 1971 annual meeting address, John White commented on the unexpected resignation of long-time IAA President Charles Shuman, and the subsequent election of William Kuhfuss as AFBF President and the elevation to IAA president of Harold Steele as IAA President. White said, “New faces indeed expose new ideas and innovations, and for this we are grateful.”



KCFB mobile marketing in the 70's.

A marketing task force committee of the IAA, under the chairmanship of former KCFB President Jack Young, submitted a report on breakthrough agricultural marketing programs. The Illinois Contract Marketing Association had recently been added to the IAA's endeavors. Its goal was to help farmers optimize their income through production contracts and negotiations.

What legislative issues were farmers and the Farm Bureau concerned with in the 1970s? Schools, taxes, foreign trade, government spending and environmental quality, according to a pamphlet distributed to voting members in 1971. The extension of the East-West tollway and the closing of some rural roads was a topic of conversation in farm shops and in the KCFB board room. Several landowners who would be affected by the proposed extension voiced their concerns at the board meeting in June of 1971. In response to members' requests, directors approved a motion to formally oppose the extension of the toll way and encouraged the state association to do the same.

In public relations and education of non-farmers, the women's committee placed 22 books "Food from Farm to Home" in libraries and hospitals throughout the county. Women's Committee Chairman Phyllis J. Young reported in 1972, "For grades 2-6 [the book] tells the agricultural story from the early years of farming, the now and the future, where the chances of planting and spraying crops will be done by aircraft and harvested by the mere push of a button! Sound feasible?" Forty years later of course, farmers are able to fill that prophecy fairly completely, with the use of GPS and auto-steer on their combines.

Membership drives had helped grow KCFB membership to over 4,000, helping put the association in good financial standing and expanding programs to serve the farmers of Kane County. The Farm Bureau Group Life Insurance Plan was expanded during the year, and additional benefits were granted to existing participants.

KCFB Presidents of the 1970s	
John White Jr.	1968 – 1973
John Nepermann	1973 – 1975
Eldon Gould	1975 – 1978
James Collins	1978 – 1981

surfacing issues for submission to the Resolution Committee and ultimately leading to consideration by the delegates at the IAA annual Meeting. That procedure is the make-up of the grassroots development of Farm Bureau policy still today.



Women's Committee Chair Phyllis Young (left) said at the 1972 annual meeting, "We can pursue our goals both as Americans and farmers but we must work hard. We are most fortunate to be Americans, we are most fortunate to be Farm Bureau members." Among the committee's many activities were coordinating new member recruitment & orientation, get out the vote campaigns, safety programs, farm visits and legislative efforts.

In 1973, a program was initiated at the state and local level to ensure that the association correctly identified and reflected the goals of its more than 200,000 members statewide. "Members' Viewpoint" laid out a prearranged and regular schedule, beginning in the county,

In April of 1974, the title of KCFB Manager was introduced, when Dale Espel came on board. Espel was KCFB manager for nearly two decades, his last day being June 6, 1993.

One of the issues foremost in the minds of nearly everyone was taxation. How long would farmers be able to farm the land and still be able to pay the taxes? There were challenges in the courts of property taxes for financing education, taxation of real estate by classification, revolt of taxpayers over assessments, and other disputes.

Illinois' Farmland Assessment Law was passed in 1977, driven by the efforts of the Illinois Farm Bureau. Jack Young, KCFB President from 1965-68, and later the President of DuPage CFB, again chaired an IFB task force, this time to achieve equitable property tax assessment revisions and help develop Illinois' Farmland Assessment Law.

Over the years, several amendments were made to that law, which uses a formula including capitalization rates, crop costs and returns, and the potential of the soil to produce a crop, known as the soil's Productivity Index (PI), to arrive at uniform and equitable assessments. Prior to the Farmland Assessment Act, farmland in Illinois was assessed based on market value.

KCFB member drives contributed to IAA membership growth, which in 1977 firmly established Illinois as the largest state member of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Kane County leaders continued to shape the face of the local association, and the state association as well.

Eldon Gould of Maple Park, KCFB President from 1975-1978, was elected to the post of District 1 IAA Director in 1978. Gould was on the IAA Board until 1985. His dedication to the industry and effective leadership led to his appointment as Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Risk Management Agency in Washington, D.C., under President George W. Bush and Mike Johanns, secretary of agriculture.

By all accounts, Kane County Farm Bureau leaders of the 70's, on every committee and at every level, were hard at work promoting the interests of farmers.



This car parked in front of the Farm Bureau office in 1975 is typical of the era – but an even better mark of the passing of time can be seen in the background. The spruce trees at the end of the sidewalk, just a few feet tall in the 70s, have now grown together and tower over the parking lot. Behind them, in the front lawn, a Sycamore tree has grown tall and wide over the past 36 years.

Issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1970's gathered from the notes of KCFB farm advisers, staff and volunteers, along with dates of importance to the agriculture industry.

- 1970s No-tillage agriculture popularized
- 1970 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Norman Borlaug for developing high-yielding wheat varieties
Plant Variety Protection Act passed
One farmer supplies food for nearly 48 people
Agricultural Act reduces controls; Environmental Quality Improvement Act passed;
Earth Day is celebrated for the first time
- 1970-80 Inflation rates increase, while economic growth slows
- 1971 KCFB members hold get out the vote campaign and support passage of changes to IL Constitution (Con-Con)
Secretary of Organization Alden Kilian promoted to IAA district fieldman and is succeeded by Earl Struck – the last to serve in the position under that title
80 girls schooled in baby-sitting basics at one-day Women's Committee clinic
- June 1971 KCFB directors approved a motion to formally oppose the extension of the east-west tollway.
Directors approve purchase of a Kodak instamatic camera
- Oct., 1971 IDOA Director Gordon Ropp, is guest speaker at KCFB 58th Annual Meeting
- 1972 KCFB membership climbs to over 4,000 members
- April 1972 Board approves bid to plant trees at east end of KCFB parking lot
- Sept. 14, 1972 Orion Samuelson, WGN Farm Director guest speaker at 59th Annual Meeting
- 1973 John White, Jr. of Elburn elected to IAA Vice President
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act emphasize maintaining or increasing instead of controlling production
- April, 1974 Dale Espel becomes first to serve under the title of KCFB Manager
- August, 1974 Kane County Farm Bureau office remodeled
- 1974 Agreement between USDA and land-grant colleges establishes Council on International Science and Education
- 1978 Eldon Gould of Maple Park elected to IAA Board of Directors
- 1978 Hog cholera officially eradicated
- 1979 Purcell winter wheat introduced
The American Agriculture Movement organizes a "tractorcade" demonstration in Washington, D.C.



This KCFB file photo from 1975 shows the marquee at Randhurst Mall advertising the start of "Farm Animals on the Mall", a precursor to KCFB's Ag Days program, now in its 28th year of educating Kane County youth about agriculture. When built in 1962, at the corner of Rand Road and Elmhurst Road in Mount Prospect, Randhurst Mall was the first enclosed regional mall in the Chicagoland area and the largest enclosed air-conditioned space in the United States.

Leadership Profile

Reprinted from August 2012

Kane County Farmer

Drafted by the Farm Bureau

by Ryan Klassy

Over the past 100 years, many farmer-members of the Kane County Farm Bureau have stepped up to take leadership roles on the local level, many have represented our area farmers by serving on the boards of state associations, and some have even taken on prominent roles in shaping the debates national & international agricultural policy. During our centennial celebration, the KCFB is proud to recall the accomplishments of these leaders and salutes their sacrifice of time and effort to help advance agriculture and farming in Kane County both as an occupation, and a way of life.

In 2012, I had the pleasure of sitting in on an interview by Elgin Courier News, of John White, Jr. of Elburn, for a story about KCFB's anniversary. This is just a snapshot, of one story, of someone with humble beginnings who made a mark on the Farm Bureau landscape. .

One of nine kids, John White, Jr. was born in 1930. His parents lived on a farm in Blackberry township, as he puts it “about 100 rods across the field” from where he lives now on Main Street in Elburn. Like many rural houses of that time, they had no electricity and used candles or lanterns for light.

His father told him stories of ice-skating from Elgin to Aurora when he himself was a boy.

John White Sr. courted a girl from Aurora who he made his wife. “She was the May queen,” John said. “And how he pirated mom away from those guys in Aurora – he never did say.” John Sr. told of one trip to court his soon-to-be wife, at the end of which his horse was missing. “He had to walk home, which was a hike, and when he got there his horse was waiting for him in the barn.”

John Jr. was involved in 4H as a kid, and even got to meet President Harry Truman as a part of his activities. The 4Hers went to Washington DC as a part of the recognition. “He was a very nice man, and everything the history books say he was,” John said.

John’s father was very active in the Pure Milk Association. Maybe it was his example that led John to stay active in 4H, and go on to be instrumental in the development of the Kane County Fair. Much could be said about his work for the fair and moving it to St. Charles.

However, it wasn’t until he was 35 years old that John got more involved in the activities of the association north of the fair grounds, when others took note of his leadership abilities and thought it would be good to have him on the Farm Bureau team.

“I kind of got drafted,” he said. “When we moved to this farm (on Main Street Road in Elburn) in 1965, the local director was retiring, and the Farm Bureau manager stopped in one day and said, ‘Ya know, why don’t you come to the annual meeting?’ It was that night and they were going to elect a new director for the township.”



John White Jr. pages through a book while discussing Farm Bureau history during an interview earlier this year. He shared some of his favorite stories and told how a knock on his door led him to decades of Farm Bureau service.

John explained that he was hesitant to go, in part because he had just decided to take a break from his involvement with the county fair because he needed to have some time away from it. He said he'd go anyway.

“When I got there, the retiring director and Charley Keslinger, who Keslinger road is named after and who was county board chairman at the time, grabbed me by the back of the neck and said they were going to elect me director, and I said no I'm just here to see what's going on.”

John was elected, and served on the KCFB board for eight years, the last five as president. And like he had after years spent advancing the cause of the county fair, he decided that was enough, and that he would concentrate just on farming. It wasn't to be.

John explained, “The Cook County Farm Bureau president and a couple other neighboring presidents decided they were going to run me for vice president of the state association because the vice president wasn't going to run again. I laughed and said no way a farmer from Kane County could get elected to the state board.”



John White Jr. in the cabin he moved from Wisconsin to his Elburn farm, and restored.

Nonetheless, John's name was one of seven candidates on the ballot that year. After six ballots, his was the name that shook out on top. He served as IAA Vice President for ten years behind Harold Steele.

“One of the main jobs of the vice president,” John said, “is chairing the resolutions committee. After doing that for 10 years I felt kind of uncomfortable because it felt like everyone knew what I felt personally, and the policies began to reflect my personal beliefs in many cases. That's not the way it should be and it bothered me. It should be that the grassroots policy controls.”

So, in the fall of 1983, John told the IAA directors that he planned to retire. IAA President Steele called John into his office to say he thought it would be better if he himself retired, and that John should be president.

“I said well, the delegates need to determine that. And I did my darndest to talk him into staying on, because I felt he was doing such a good job. But he announced that he wouldn't run again.”

Still, John wasn't confident in his chances of becoming IAA president.

“I told the guys that there wasn't a chance,” he said. “But, I was elected and stayed on for ten years.”

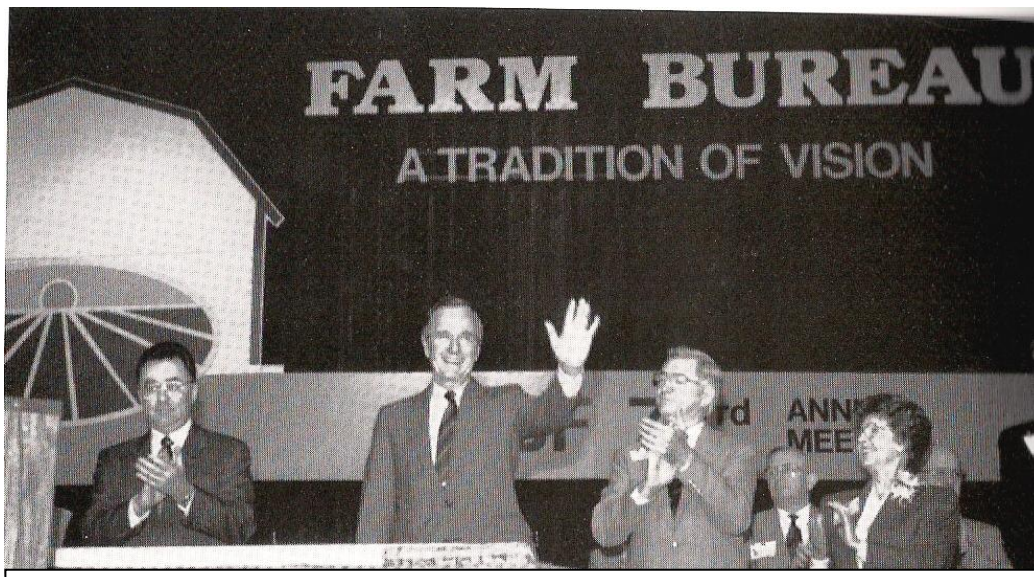
John was on the national Farm Bureau board each of those ten years and was president of the national executive committee for six. He worked with six different presidents during his time in Farm Bureau. A call from one left him with an experience he won't forget.

He received a call from the White House one night because President Jimmy Carter wanted him to sit in on a briefing on a treaty the President was trying to get passed. Carter was seeking the Farm Bureau's support.

“So I went, and we were in the green room in the White House, and President Carter had just got to the podium and boom! It was like a bomb went off, and everybody hit the floor and chairs were flying. One young gal, a reporter, looked at me and said, ‘what do we do now’, and I said, ‘I don’t know but stay down!’ By that time, the secret service had Carter buried, I mean you couldn’t have gotten to him with a tank. By the time all the dust settled, they figured out that a light had blown overhead. They got him back on the podium and he went ahead and did his thing.”

One of John’s highlights while IAA President was to help initiate a program at the national level to educate the public about the harm that high interest rates on bonds were doing to the family farm. Farm Bureau members delivered 750,000 post cards to the desk of Vice President George H.W. Bush. “We were close, and from then on, whenever he needed something, I would get a call,” John said.

Little did Alden Kilian know in 1965 that his knock on the door would lead to John being on the President’s speed dial. But, it took someone to knock, someone to answer and an association that provides a way for members to really get involved, to make it all happen.



As IAA President, John White Jr. had a close relationship with President George H.W. Bush after working with him to reduce the impact of high interest rates on the family farm. At the AFBF annual meeting in 1992 Bush commented on another important issue for farmers. “Open markets are the key to our economic future, both for American agriculture and business,” said Bush, adding that he wanted farmers to get a “fair shot” at trade around the world.

The 1980's
 Reprinted from September 2012
Kane County Farmer

Global politics, local growth shape FB policy in 1980's

Heading into the 1980's Farm Bureau members were tackling issues of immediate importance, as well as considering how to provide the very best environment for farmers to thrive. Comments from Eldon Gould, in his last KCFB President's Report, revealed this balance between putting out fires and planning for the future.

"It often seems that we are preoccupied with a present crisis, while we must also keep an eye to the future," Gould said at the 1979 annual meeting.

Gould explained that KCFB members had been part of a "Future of Illinois" hearing to alert a task force about the importance of agriculture to Illinois' future. They also participated in a Kane County planning seminar to focus attention that in such an urban county, growth must be harmonious with agriculture. That forward-thinking approach aided Gould in his service as an IAA Director from 1978-1985.

In 1980, KCFB President James Collins spoke to attendees at the September annual meeting about the embargo on grain to Russia, enacted in January of that year. Collins spoke about the efforts of KCFB members and "many hours of work and dollars spent to get President [Carter] to take off the embargo, or do some other things to improve the price of grain". Carter enacted the embargo because he felt Soviet movement into Afghanistan was a threat to the U.S. interest. President Ronald Regan lifted the embargo the following year.



Pictured holding a ceremonial shovel at the ground breaking for the KCFB auditorium in June 1986 are KCFB Past-President Jim O'Connell (left) and KCFB Director Mert Miller. Looking on are building committee members (all of whom were or eventually would be KCFB Directors) (r to l) Chris Feldott, Lois Miller, Joe White (holding his daughter Jennifer) and John Pollnow. To the left are two representatives from the construction contractor.



Dan Leifel of Illinois Farm Bureau legal staff addressed a standing room only crowd at the Centennial Building at the Kane County Fairgrounds in this KCFB file photo from April 1980. Leifel, KCFB President James Collins, and attorney Warren Strom of Elgin discussed the reasons and procedure for farmers to pay their tax bills under protest.

That same year, KCFB was instrumental in the protest of using an unfair 13.66% tax multiplier on farmland. It was standing room only at a meeting at the fairgrounds in April where Farm Bureau leaders and legal counsel explained the process.

Members lined the halls of the KCFB office with tax bills in hand. KCFB bookkeeper Audre Pack, who started work at the Farm Bureau in 1979, remembers that parcel and tax information was hand written on ledgers for each member. She remembers that it was a big job.

"You have to remember that farmers don't have just one tax bill," said Pack. "They may farm many different parcels so all of that information had to be recorded, and there was a big turnout."

The Women's Committee was active, with the Farm Bureau Women to D.C. trip, estate planning seminars, sponsorship of the Dairy Princess contest, and district and state women's conferences among their many activities.

The Kane County's Young Farmer's Committee doubled in size in the first year of the decade and organized a dozen programs and events, including a hayride to welcome new members, paramedic and EMT training in farm equipment extraction, and participation in the Home and Garden Show in



Workers raise the walls on the KCFB auditorium in this 1986 file photo.

Rosemont. Many of their activities last to this day, including a farm zoo at the Kane County Fair and an annual acquaintance day with local FFA members that is aimed at getting young men and women interested in the leadership-building programs offered by Farm Bureau. Such programs have much to offer youth as they ready themselves for a career, possibly in agriculture, and help to ensure a bright future for Farm Bureau with the infusion of new young leaders.

In 1977, the General Assembly had passed the Farmland Assessment Act, which required farmland to be assessed under a formula that included both the value of crops produced on the land and the price of the farmland if sold (market value). The law was the brainchild of farmer leaders and Farm Bureau staff.



Farmers gathered at a rally in Peoria in 1992 in support of corn-based ethanol. Farm Bureau volunteers were vocal about the advantages of ethanol, or gasohol as it was originally known, in the 1980's. Today, motorists benefit from advances made in the production of this home-grown renewable fuel.

In June of 1981, James Collins, Vice Pres. Ray Grommes and Director Kenneth Christensen joined FB leaders from other counties in Springfield to testify in front of the general assembly about why the farmland assessment act should be amended to eliminate market value and substitute capitalized income to calculate farmland value. As they had in the 20's, KCFB members helped lead the charge to ensure that farmers were not being overtaxed. Tax protests, visits to legislators and letter writing campaigns in Kane and other Illinois counties helped convince legislators that changes were needed. The law passed later that year.

KCFB received a letter from IFB leaders including Len Gardner, long-time head of Governmental Affairs at IFB. In part, the letter said, "We sincerely believe that your meeting with members of the Illinois General Assembly contributed significantly to the passage of the farmland assessment law".

Also that year, Dale Espel, Farm Bureau Manager, gave details on legislation passed making farmers participation in soil erosion control voluntary and touted the importance of farmers controlling soil loss on their farms. During the decade, farmers increased their use of no-till or low-till methods to curb erosion.

In 1983, KCFB members supported the efforts of John White, Jr. in his run to become IAA President. He became president of the state's largest farm association as farmers entered a period of tough challenges. Illinois' farm economy during the mid to late 1980's was in perhaps its worst crisis since the 1920's. Falling land prices and skyrocketing interest rates combined with commodity stockpiles and low prices to present extreme financial challenges to farmers. Exacerbated by drought conditions in 1983 & 1988, the decade saw a reduction in farm numbers and decline in populations of many rural communities.

In 1985, members participated in a letter writing campaign to explain the difficulties farmers were facing. IAA President White, along with IAA board members, including former KCFB Pres. Jack Young, delivered 750,000 cards to U.S. Vice President George Bush. Improvements in the farm economy, however, came slowly – assisted by USDA acreage reduction programs and eventual recovery of export markets lost in the embargo of 1980.

Farmer leaders were also looking ahead to ensure the long-term financial stability of the state association and county farm bureaus. At IFB, John White appointed a membership and market planning committee that worked for three years and developed a plan to do just that. A special meeting of delegates in 1987 approved the program, which set a standard dues amount for associate members and define the role of farmers as voting members with full participation rights in the association.



Similar to 2012, the weather dominated the thoughts of farmers and the media in the mid-to-late 1980's. A CNBC reporter interviewed KCFB Director Joe White about the effects of the drought on his crops. As they did then, KCFB Directors have done numerous interviews with local and national media this year.

In 1986, the KCFB board of directors and a committee headed by then KCFB President James O'Connell of Maple Park finalized plans to add on to the office on Randall Road. The groundbreaking ceremony was held in July, and construction began on the addition on the southwest corner of the building. The new space would become not only the meeting space for the KCFB Board, but a venue for meetings with legislators, community service activities, prep for Farm Bureau activities, and gatherings of Farm Bureau affiliates and friends for decades to come.

These changes, and many more, left Kane County Farm Bureau better equipped to increase and improve member services and serve as a resource for the improvement of farm life in Kane County.

Kane County Farm Bureau Presidents of the 1980's	
James Collins	1978 – 1981
Raymond Grommes	1981 – 1984
James O'Connell	1984 – 1987
Clyde Hagemann	1987 – 1990

Agriculture in the 1980's

Below are several dates important to agriculture along with some issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1980's.

1980s	Biotechnology becomes viable for improving crop and livestock products
1980	Total population: 227 million; Farmers make up 3.4% of labor force Railroad and trucking industries deregulated KCFB members urge President Carter to lift the grain embargo on Russia and work toward fair taxation on farmland
1981	Farmland assessment law amendments passed by Illinois General Assembly President Reagan lifts grain embargo against the Soviet Union KCFB membership reaches 8,000 members, providing nearly 8% of the increased membership statewide Soil Conservation Service prints first prime farmland map. Kane County shown to have 50-75% of its land area in prime farmland.
1983	John White, Jr. elected President of Illinois Farm Bureau
1985	Food Security Act promotes exports and sets up the Conservation Reserve Program
1986	Construction of board room addition at KCFB office The Southeast's worst summer drought on record takes a severe toll on many farmers, low prices affect many farmers in the Midwest
1987	Farmland values bottom out after a 6-year decline, signaling both a turnaround in the farm economy and increased competition with other countries' exports IAA Foundation is formed
1988	One of the worst droughts in the Nation's history hits Midwestern farmers The U.S.-Canada trade accord initiates free trade in all commodities
1989	After several slow years, sale of farm equipment rebounds



Young Farmers put their brains and brawn to work in these KCFB file photos. Above (l to r) Paul Ramm, Albert Lenkaitis Jr., Jerry Swanson and Jeff Nesler competed in the Agri-Quiz Bowl. Right, a YF group builds gates for the Farm Zoo – to display farm animals at KCFB events for years to come, like Ag Days, Touch-A-Tractor and County Fair.



The 1990's

Reprinted from October 2012

Kane County Farmer

Farmers stand strong in face of environmental, government influences

In the 1990s, rural areas experienced a bit of growth, making up some of the losses in farms and population from the decade prior. Farm families still made up less than 10 percent of rural population.



Gerard Fabrizius and Dan Heinrich, both of whom served as KCFB president during the 1990s, are joined by Tom Milnamow for an on-air 1480 AM radio interview.

Three farmers led Kane County Farm Bureau as presidents during the decade: Gerard Fabrizius of Maple Park, Dan Heinrich of Hampshire and Mike Kenyon of South Elgin. The association saw its first new manager in decades, as Dale Espel retired in 1993. Bob Rohrer took over the position in June of that year and managed KCFB until nearly the end of the decade, when he handed the reins to KCFB's current manager Steve Arnold in January of 1999. Rohrer became manager of Cook County Farm Bureau.

Biotechnology brought important new developments in dairy, corn, and other commodities, and genetically engineered crops and livestock began to appear. Distance education became an increasingly important way to make cooperative research and extension resources accessible. USDA meat inspection

programs were modernized in response to concerns about food safety.

As described in "Improving the Economic Well-Being of Agriculture – A History of the Illinois Farm Bureau", Dan Leifel explained that there were several themes that took main stage in terms of Farm Bureau concerns in the 90s: (1) CHIEF (Change How Illinois Education is Financed) – an effort to bring quality education to Illinois public schools and break the dependence of public schools on the property tax; (2) preparation and pursuit of U.S. Agricultural policy known as the 1995 and 2002 Farm Bills; and (3) relations with the government of the state of Illinois, particularly in response to increasing environmental regulations and government spending practices.

The issue of environmental regulations was an emerging issue throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s. Farmers in the Chicago area faced opposition from a variety of groups, bringing worry over who might be offended or what new regulation might be crossed in the process of doing what farmers had done for centuries, which is raise livestock and grow crops. Farmers were left open to complaints for farming on Saturday mornings (disturbing the peace), storing livestock waste and a plethora of issues related to environmental regulations. In 1991, Kane County Farm Bureau helped initiate a county ordinance that was passed to protect farms from such nuisance lawsuits.

The decade also saw more farms turning to production and marketing contracts. In 1995 Kane County Farm Bureau formed a marketing committee to provide a forum for local farmers to discuss the best way to market their crops – what crop would be best to plant, when to sell, at what price, etc. That committee, as with many programs developed by the county association since its early days, shows how practical

needs lead to cooperation and the formation of productive and progressive agricultural and business practices.

The subject of free trade and market expansion were at the forefront of national farm policy. Farm Bureau members put their support behind the North American Free Trade Act, which was eventually approved in November of 1993.

That year, weather was again in the headlines. Illinois experienced a 500-year flood with 500,000 acres of cropland affected by flooding and 15 counties declared disaster areas by July. Farm Bureau took a lead role in pushing for help for affected farmers and improvements to provide a safe and efficient river system.

Kane County saw rapid housing development during the period. Developments pushed further and further into farm country. That provided some farmers a welcome way to exit the industry after a decade of overwhelming conditions of drought and debt, but the majority, the farmers that remained, needed strong leadership to ensure that their land could remain in production despite the financial temptations development offered.

In 1995 KCFB Manager Bob Rohrer noted in the *Kane County Farmer*, “There continues to be more land purchased by contractors. Kane County is a rather vast county in overall acreage; consequently agriculture will remain a key part of the west side.”

Rohrer stressed the importance direct marketing would have in the success of many farms. KCFB committees were formed to help farmers organize around that goal, and the Bounty of Kane Directory was created in 1996 to provide a list of farmer members who sell farm products to the public fresh from the farm. The period also saw an increase in the popularity of farmers' markets as a way for farmers to reach consumers directly.



KCFB leaders were instrumental in helping the county develop land use strategies for the 21st century that would promote agriculture, despite increasing pressures from development.

KCFB leaders would be instrumental in assuring that farming remain a vital part of the county’s identity and its economy. The framework for the county’s 2020 land use plan, adopted in June of 1996, listed agriculture and rural villages as a distinct land use strategy area and stressed that agriculture must continue to be a desired land use.

Kane County Farm Bureau’s influence on public policy was relied upon heavily as the decade drew to a close, and at the beginning of the next, as the storm water ordinance and farmland protection program were developed in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

In May of 1995, KCFB leaders renewed and adopted the current mission for the association (Read it on the masthead of this publication). The June '95 issue of the *Kane County Farmer* reported that the mission statement was developed by a Planning Advisory Committee led and facilitated by board member Tom Milnamow. He and other volunteers helped develop ideas to help the board of directors build goals to guide the organization into the next millennium.

As the year 2000 drew near, information

technology and precision techniques were increasingly being used to increase efficiency and productivity on America's farms. Illustrative of how quickly technology has advanced, a February 1997 course held at KCFB invited farmers to "learn how to surf the 'net'", with explanations provided on what the internet was and who was using it.

And so, Kane County farmers headed into the 21st century having weathered several real and metaphorical storms. Advances in seed technology and information technology applied to farm equipment would continue to change farming, present exciting challenges and distinct advantages over past generations.

KCFB Mission:
**"Enhance the quality of life for member families,
 promote all aspects of agriculture and
 advocate for good stewardship of our land and resources."**



A photo taken during a retirement party for KCFB Manager Dale Espel in June of 1993, shows Espel "handing over the keys" to incoming manager Bob Rohrer.

KCFB Presidents of the 1990's	
Gerard Fabrizius	1990 – 1993
Dan Heinrich	1993 – 1996
Michael Kenyon	1996 – 2002

Agriculture in the 1990's

Below are several dates important to agriculture along with some issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau during the 1990's.

- 1990** Congress passes the Organic Food Production Act, authorizing the U.S. Department of Agriculture to establish a nationwide definition for organic food
Negotiations begin for a free-trade agreement with Mexico
- 1991** Kane County Farm Bureau helps passage of county ordinance which protects farms by ordinance from nuisance lawsuits
- 1993** Revised GATT and new North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) lower trade barriers and enhance export prospects.
Adams County Farm Bureau Manager Bob Rohrer chosen to replace Dale Espel upon his retirement.
- 1994** Farmers begin using satellite technology to track and plan their farming practices.
The use of conservation tillage methods, which leave crop residues in the field to combat erosion, continues to rise.
FDA grants first approval for a whole food produced through biotechnology, the FLAVRSAVR tomato.
- 1995** KCFB Marketing Committee formed
- 1996** Kane County Farm Bureau member Marla Sue Harkins is the 50,000th person to sign up for membership in the association since it was formed in 1912.
- 1997** The first weed and insect-resistant biotech crops (soybeans and cotton) are available commercially
- 1998** Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century greatly increases highway spending
- 1998-99** Price slump caused by large commodity surpluses
- 1999** Steve Arnold succeeds Manager Bob Rohrer following Rohrer's move to the Cook CFB.
Teeple Barn in Elgin named one of "Ten Most Endangered Historic Sites in Illinois"
KCFB members worked to preserve barn, with a restored cupola installed in April, 1999. A wind storm would later collapse the structure.
- 2000** USDA unveils organic standards and official organic seal

Leadership development programs like Farm Bureau's ALOT (Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow) have helped prepare successive generations of farmers to step into leadership roles in the organization and their communities.



In 1999, the 16-sided Teeple Barn in Elgin was named one of the "Ten Most Endangered Historic Sites in Illinois".

2000- 2012

Reprinted from November 2012

Kane County Farmer

Association broadens reach entering 21st century

Editor's Note: *The following is the final installment in a series on the 100 year history of the Kane County Farm Bureau. In coming*

months, the Kane County Farmer will focus on Farm Bureau affiliates, public policy and community services through the past 100 years.

By the year 2000, Kane County Farm Bureau had over 11,000 members. Efforts to educate the public about agriculture's role in their lives were going strong. In the decade to come, Farm Bureau would put an increasing emphasis on the public getting to know farmers, and farmers sharing stories about their family-run operations.

Meanwhile, KCFB leaders were working with local legislators and planners to protect farmland from rapid development on the edge of farm country in western Kane County.



Farm Bureau member Lynette Werdin shows NRCS Chief Bruce Knight a field that is protected through the Kane County farmland Protection program. Enrollment of the 334-acre sesquicentennial farm was funded in part from the Federal Farm and Ranchlands Program. KCFB leaders worked with local policy makers on formation of the program, the first of its kind in the state.

In a November 2000 article in the *Farmer*, Manager Steve Arnold explained that the a storm water ordinance passed by the county board that year, prompted by historic rainfalls in 1996, was the result of over two years of planning, debate, and meetings with various interest groups.

“Kane County Farm Bureau has, in my opinion, represented farmers well in the drafting of this new ordinance to develop uniform storm water management standards for the entire county,” Arnold wrote. “Your organization’s Board of Directors has worked tirelessly to assure that the ordinance protects the integrity of existing agricultural drainage systems, allows for maintenance and expansion of drainage.”

Arnold credited Kane County farmers for avoiding additional regulation and paperwork through an impressive record of environmental stewardship. The ordinance moved authority from the county’s twenty plus

municipal governments to the county level, for oversight and resolution of problems with excessive runoff from development onto farm fields.

The next issue for Farm Bureau leaders to consider was increasing amount of Kane County farmland being turned over for development. In cooperation with the Kane County Board’s development committee, American Farmland Trust provided a study entitled “Planning for Agriculture and Protecting Farmland.” That initial work led to the formation by the county board of the Kane County Farmland Protection Program in 2001.

The ordinance established the Kane County Farmland Protection Commission whose duties include maximizing resources and coordinating efforts to preserve the rural character of the county. The first and only funded farmland protection program in Illinois, it has permanently protected some of Illinois’ most productive farmland.

To date, 39 farms, totaling 5,156 acres, have been permanently protected under the program, which is jointly funded by Kane County, using riverboat funds, and by the federal government, through the Federal

Farm and Ranchlands program. The county has invested almost \$20 million dollars, and the federal government has matched with over \$12.6 million in investments.

Several KCFB events and activities came into being in this decade. Touch-A-Tractor, an annual event on the front lawn of the Farm Bureau each spring, began in 2006. What started as an idea to invite the non-farm public in to see some farm machinery and learn about agriculture grew to a three-day event that welcomes thousands of visitors.

KCFB President Mike Kenyon reported in 2001 that the major issues at the IAA Annual Meeting in Dec. 2000 had been biotechnology, government farm policy and cooperative marketing. That year, Kenyon was elected to the IAA Board of Directors.

In 2002, the Governmental Affairs and Public Relations Committees came up with an event that would foster a closer relationship with legislators and provide much needed hunger relief in the county. Senator Chris Lauzen and Representative Pat Lindner were “challenged” to participate in the first ever Kane County Farm Bureau Food Check-Out Day Shopping Spree. The participants chose Holy Angels Food Pantry and Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry to receive the over \$800 worth of groceries they collected during the contest. The Kane County Farm Bureau bought the groceries and pledged additional money to result in a total contribution of \$1,000.

Good relationships and communication with policy makers that resulted from such community events put the



KCFB Director Alan Volpp chats with K.C. Board Chair Karen McConnaughay at the first Harvest Leadership Picnic in 2005. Such legislative events initiated in the past decade help form positive relationships between farmers and policy makers.

association in a good place to provide input on legislation such as the establishment of the Kane County Farm Drainage Assistance Program, passed in May of 2003. This began as a discussion between the Kane County Board Chairman and the Farm Bureau’s Board of Directors. Like the Farmland Protection Program, the Farm Drainage Assistance Program was the first in the state – if not the nation. The program was significant in that it attempted to reestablish drainage districts and drainage district infrastructure in order to retain agricultural land uses in Kane County. The program allows the County to use discretionary funds to remediate drainage problems.

That same year, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed a law designed to boost growth in the state's corn and soybean industries by investing in ethanol and other biodiesel fuels. The law extended the state's sales tax exemption on ethanol, created a new tax credit for biodiesel fuels and created a new grant program to encourage construction of renewable fuel plants and research facilities.

In a report on the 2003 KCFB annual meeting, the association’s President Steve Pitstick of Maple Park commented that it was a great pleasure to be on stage with not only Hastert, but also legendary farm-broadcaster Orion Samuelson who introduced

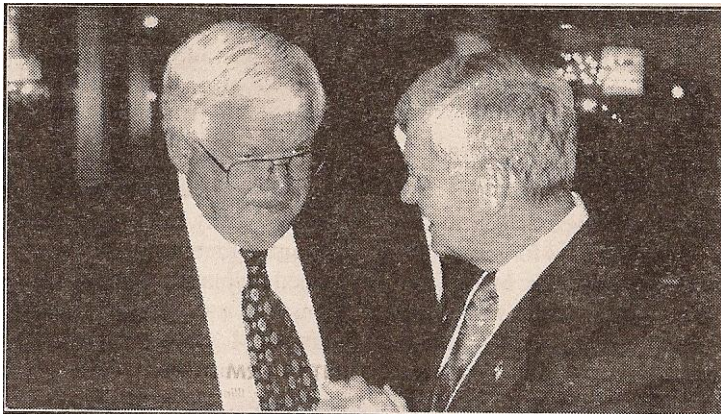


KCFB volunteers have worked to create activities and events, such as Touch-A-Tractor, that would help teach the non-farm public about agriculture and offer an up-close look at farming.

Hastert, and IFB President Ron Warfield, who also delivered remarks.

Hastert told the crowd that House-Senate conference committee agreement on a comprehensive national energy plan including increased use of corn and soybeans was a high priority. He also promised his continued effort to obtain a total repeal of the Death Tax.

Hastert complimented Kane County Farm Bureau for creating a “shared vision” among farmers, and for remaining powerful and effective through all of the changes in agriculture. “The Farm Bureau is known throughout the state as a strong and respected advocate for farmers,” Hastert said.



Speaker of the House, J. Dennis Hastert talks with then IFB President Ron Warfield at KCFB's 90th annual meeting in September 2003.

In 2008, the KCFB celebrated its 95th anniversary. The housing bubble had just burst, and the U.S. was in the midst of the worst economic downturn since the great depression. The annual meeting was held in September at Eagle Brook Country Club and included recognition of local public officials, reports of the organization's accomplishments and a keynote address by America's best-known Farm Broadcaster, Orion Samuelson.

Samuelson walked guests back through time, recounting some of the milestones that took place in 1913, the first full year of the Kane County Farm Bureau's existence, including the opening of the

Panama Canal, the introduction of the moving assembly line, the first drive-up gas station, and the printing of the very first crossword puzzle.

He commented on the current state of the markets and the U.S. economy. “Of the lessons I've learned observing markets, remember this, prices never go the same way forever,” Samuelson said. “There is always a correction. And it's happened time and time again in my rather short history.”

He suggested there should be more accountability today, and attributed many of the problems with the mortgage market to people not taking responsibility for their actions and relying on credit and loans that looked too good to be true, rather than buying what they could actually afford.

Samuelson advised the farmers in attendance to get young people involved in their farming operations, and also to give them room. He said, “You made mistakes when you were young, they'll make mistakes when they're young, but you have to let them learn.”

The association's hunger relief efforts went into overdrive in 2009. The program, named Harvest for ALL, allows farmers to donate a portion of the proceeds from their harvest to a local food pantry. The response was impressive, with over \$13,000 in donations collected in the first year. Ag businesses and FFA Chapters joined in the effort to turn “grain into groceries”, some farmers donated vegetables, eggs, and other in-kind offerings, and non-farmers got involved with cash donations.

By 2012, the program had provided the equivalent of over a half a million meals to twenty different food pantries in Kane County. It received an AFBF County Activity of Excellence Award, a Summit Award from the American Society of Association Executives (the highest honor an association can receive) and accolades and recognition from the Illinois General Assembly, Kane County Board,

Governor Pat Quinn, and IAA President Philip Nelson, just to name a few.

KCFB Director and Past-President Mike Kenyon of South Elgin wrapped up ten years of service on the IAA Board of Directors in 2011. At the 2011 IAA annual meeting Bob Gehrke of Elgin, who served as KCFB President from 2004-2010, was elected to fill Kenyon's spot as District 1 Director. Gehrke would be the sixth KCFB leader to serve at the state level. Also at that meeting, KCFB received the Liberty Bell, a traveling award that recognizes strong legislative efforts. And, for the first time, KCFB's overall programming efforts were recognized with the President's Award.

In 2011, to allow more consumers to ask questions of farmers and get to know where their food comes from, IFB joined other commodity groups to form Illinois Farm Families. KCFB members Dale and Linda Drendel of Hampshire, Steve and Elizabeth Ruh of Big Rock, and Chris and Dana Gould of Maple Park all hosted a group of inquisitive moms, dubbed Field Moms, on farm tours.

The association kicked off its centennial in 2012 by asking members to contribute historical Farm Bureau and agricultural items to a display at the Farm Bureau office. A permanent tribute to the anniversary was started in the spring of 2012, when thirteen trees were planted on the Farm Bureau grounds at Randall and Oak Street. These lasting tributes to farm families and Farm Bureau members will grow, along with the association, and provide a welcoming place for Farm Bureau members and visitors to gather, as the Kane County Farm Bureau starts its second 100 years.

As a tribute to the Association's centennial, world champion chain saw carver Mike Bihlmaier was commissioned to turn an ash tree on the Farm Bureau lawn into a lasting tribute to the organization, and Illinois' leading cash crop, during the 2012 Touch-A-Tractor event.

A "curly" maple in the newly established Centennial Grove was given a similar treatment by Bihlmaier in 2013, with relief carvings of a walking plow, the Teeple Barn, a combine and semi-tractor-trailer.



Agriculture in the first decade of the 21st century

Below are some important dates and issues addressed by the Kane County Farm Bureau since the year 2000.

- 2000 KCFB members help craft legislation creating a county storm water ordinance to protect farmland
- 2001 Kane County becomes the first county in Illinois to create a farmland protection program.
Mike Kenyon of South Elgin elected to IAA Board of Directors.
- 2002 Governmental Affairs and Public Relations committees organize first annual Food Check-Out Challenge shopping spree to benefit two local food pantries.
- 2003 County of Kane assists farmers in maintaining productive soils with a farmland drainage assistance program
Speaker of the House, Congressman Dennis Hastert is keynote speaker at 90th KCFB annual meeting at Gaslite Manor in Aurora.
- 2005 KCFB begins annual “Harvest Picnic” to improve legislative and government relations.
First annual Touch-A-Tractor welcomes spring and hundreds of visitors to KCFB to learn about agriculture. Event recognized with American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) “County Activity of Excellence” Award.
KCFB Specialty Growers Committee leverages an Illinois Dept. Of Ag grant to create *Discover the Bounty of Kane* local farm and farmers’ market directory and website.
- 2007 Foundation begins annual “Winners Choice Raffle” to raise funds for college scholarships.
Program recognized with AFBF “County Activity of Excellence” Award.
- 2008 KCFB celebrates 95th anniversary with annual meeting at Eaglebrook Country Club.
KCFB “Bounty of Kane” promotion receives AFBF “County Activity of Excellence” Award.
- 2009 KCFB steps up hunger relief in response to the great recession; creates Harvest for ALL program.
- 2010 Harvest for ALL recognized with AFBF County Activity of Excellence Award.
- 2011 KCFB staff accepts ASAE Summit Award at a ceremony in Washington D.C. for KCFB members’ Harvest for ALL hunger relief efforts for local food pantries.
KCFB recognized at IAA Annual Meeting for legislative and overall program efforts with Liberty Bell and Presidents Award.
Robert Gehrke of Elgin elected to IAA Board of Directors.
- 2012 SPROUTS reading program recognized with AFBF County Activity of Excellence Award
Ash tree on KCFB front lawn carved into an ear of corn in honor of the organization’s Centennial
KCFB recognized by the Illinois General Assembly for 100 years of farm advocacy and community service with House Resolution 1116.
13 trees planted in “Centennial Grove” on KCFB grounds for farm family tributes and memorials.
Board authorizes planting of 6 parkway trees in tribute to KFCB leaders who served the association on the local and state level.

KCFB Presidents of the 2000’s

Michael Kenyon	1996 – 2002
Steve Pitstick	2002 – 2004
Robert Gehrke	2004 – 2010
Joseph White	2010 – Present

The IAA

Reprinted from December 2012

Kane County Farmer

The Illinois Agricultural Association

Editor's Note: Background and excerpts are included from Farm Bureau in Illinois, John J. Lacey & The Diamond Harvest, A History of Illinois Farm Bureau, Dan Leifel and Norma Maney, and the IFB brochure, Glimpses of a Rich History.

In December 1913, a group of farm advisers met in Champaign to organize the Illinois Association of County Agriculturalists, naming Jerome E. Readhimer of Kane County, president. The farm advisers had been discussing the need for the county crop improvement associations to band together for mutual helpfulness.

At their meeting in December 1915, they instructed Ed Heaton of DuPage County, as secretary, to send invitations to farmers in the organized counties inviting them to attend the meeting of the Illinois State Association of County Agriculturalist to be held in January at the University of Illinois.

On January 26, 1916, Herman W. Danforth of Tazewell County was appointed chair while the matter of forming a state federation of county agricultural associations be considered. A committee was appointed consisting of Danforth, two farm advisers, and two farmers to consider the matter of a state association, and report at a later date. Eckhardt moved to amend the motion so that the committee would be made up entirely of farmers, leaving out the farm advisers. The amendment carried, and then Dean Davenport offered an amendment, which would permit the committee to call the farm advisers for consultation.

At 8:30 that evening, in Room 903, Agricultural Building, the committee reported to the entire group which adopted the name "Illinois Agricultural Association," set the dues at \$100 a year for each county association, and elected Danforth the president. Thus was set in motion the mightiest force that had ever appeared in Illinois agriculture. It was to bring profound changes for all farmers in Illinois.

The Illinois Agricultural Association RECORD
Issued Every Month for 63,000 Thinking Farmers

Volume 5 JUNE, 1927 Number 6

Legislature Draws to Close

Gas Tax, Increased Bonding Bills, Appropriations, and Traction Feature Last Week's Session

THE Fifty-Fifth General Assembly is scheduled to adjourn this week. While there is nothing in the law to prohibit the session continuing, any bills passed and signed after June 20, can not become effective until July, 1928. Hundreds of measures, both good and bad, are listed on the calendar or lie in committee, and the mad scramble has begun to put them through before the curtain goes down next Saturday.

The Arnold gas tax bill, Chicago's increased bonding and traction measures, Lee O'Neil Brown's vitriolic reply to the Chicago Tribune's recent attack on him, and the omnibus bill were the prominent subjects at the Legislature last week.

The fight over the gas tax opened on Wednesday afternoon when this bill was called up on a second reading by Rep. Arnold. Cook county members sought at once to strike out the enacting clause, but a motion to that effect by Weber lost eighty-two to sixty-one. Failing in this attempt, Rep. Schnackenberg offered an amendment providing for a referendum on the proposition at the next general election. This motion, likewise, was defeated but by a smaller margin.

The debate was continued on Thursday morning when David Hunter, Jr., of Rockford, submitted an amendment providing for the distribution of the gas tax funds on a 70-30 basis with seventy per cent refunded to the counties, thirty-five per cent on the basis of hard road mileage, and thirty-five per cent on the basis of license fees. His amendment provided further for collection of the tax by the Secretary of State instead of by the Department of Finance.

Amendments Voted Down

Homer Tice of Greenview defended these amendments on the floor of the House in which he repeatedly referred to the I. A. A. asking that the Association endorse them because the new plan offered more money to the counties to build secondary farm to market roads. He further attacked the provision in the bill for the refunding of fifty per cent of the funds to the counties after expenses for administering the act had been deducted.

"This leaves a loophole for an unlimited number of political appointees and white-collared loafers," he said, "why they can have an inspector in every filling station in the state to administer the act at such expense that little money will be left to build roads."

This criticism was obviated, however, when Rep. Arnold of Quincy introduced a bill providing for

A SCENE at Mooseheart showing the beautiful lake and dam where the I. A. A. picnic will be held on Thursday, Aug. 11. Preparations are under way to entertain a crowd of 50,000 people.

This photo appeared on the front page of the IAA Record in June 1927. The accompanying caption read, "A scene at Mooseheart shows the beautiful lake and dam where the IAA picnic will be held on Aug. 11. Preparations are underway to entertain a crowd of over 50,000 people."

Farm Bureau improved rural life by bringing people together from around the state through social events such as the statewide Farm Bureau picnic, the Farm Bureau tent at State fair and the IFB sports festival, known as the world's largest rural sports pageant. Farm Bureau even had its own baseball league with county teams that competed nationally.

The monthly IAA Record was published until 1974, when FarmWeek, a weekly publication for farmers, was launched. The quarterly magazine, PARTNERS, delivers farm news and information to non-farmer members.

Illinois Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau Federation

As County Farm bureaus in various states throughout the nation began to form state Farm Bureaus, the need for a national federation was considered. The American Farm Bureau Federation AFB was formed in Chicago in 1919 and soon thereafter Illinois Farm Bureau provided leadership and guidance.

Since AFBF's beginning, IFB has had three of its presidents selected to serve as AFBF president and one as AFBF Vice-President. Samuel "Our Sam" Thompson of Adams County served as AFBF President from 1926 to 1930. Charles B. Shuman of Moultrie County served as AFBF President from 1955-1970. William Kufus of Taswell County served as AFBF President from 1971-1975. Earl C. Smith of Pike County served as AFBF Vice President from 1936-1945.

The state association at work

Illinois Farm Bureau hit its stride in the 1920s and 1930s and throughout the remainder of the century was the political and social force in rural Illinois.

Throughout the decades visionary farmers from around Illinois provided powerful ideas and drive to make the IAA the definitive voice of Illinois farmers, and the premier farm organization that helped improve the business of farming and the quality of rural life.

Active in politics to ensure farmers got a fair return on their investment and that rural communities received necessary services, IFB helped bring improved roads to an undeveloped rural Illinois. Farm Bureau and its university and government partners helped stamp out the dreaded hog cholera in the late 1960s that constantly threatened the hog industry throughout the decades. This partnership also helped end the fly plague of the 1940s and 1950s and Farm Bureau has always championed finding new uses for farm products to help improve farm income; products from soybeans such a soy paint, and corn byproducts such as ethanol, known as hi-ball gas in the 1930s.

The home office of Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliates moved to Bloomington in 1959 and opened the new building at 1701 Towanda in 1961. Prior to relocating to Bloomington, from 1947 to 1959, IFB and its affiliates were headquartered in a twelve story building just north of the loop at 43 East Ohio St. in Chicago. That address is now the location of the ESPN sports bar. Prior to the Ohio street address, the home office since 1921 was located on the 12th floor of 608 South Dearborn St. in Chicago. The very first office was at 72 W. Adams in Chicago in the Edison building.



At the dedication of the IAA office building in Bloomington in 1961, county farm bureau presidents brought soil from their counties to be blended in a planting area in the courtyard to symbolize the intermixing of ideas, influences and efforts of Farm Bureaus. There are currently county farm bureau offices in 95 of Illinois 102 counties, with some sharing duties for multiple counties. Membership in any county farm bureau also makes you an Illinois Farm Bureau member.

Illinois Farm Bureau Board of Directors

Farmers have always governed the business of Illinois Farm Bureau and its family of companies. Members of the IFB Board are elected by fellow farmers from their areas to represent various districts around the state. IFB board members serve two-year terms and are elected at the Illinois Farm Bureau

annual meeting held each December. Terms are staggered so that only half the board members are up for election each year. Farmer delegates to the annual meeting also elected a president and vice president who serve two-year terms as well.

Not only does the IFB Board govern activities of IFB, they serve as the board of directors that oversee the business of COUNTRY Financial. Additionally, some members of the IFB board serve as interlocking board members to other IFB affiliated companies such as GrowMark and Prairie Farms dairy.

Building a strong legacy...

The past 50 years has seen Illinois Farm Bureau IFB continue to work for Illinois farmers to help them improve their incomes and the quality of their lives. Expanding foreign markets for Illinois agricultural products became a top priority beginning in the 60s and continuing into the 21st-century. IFB has led trade missions to Europe, China, South America and every part of the globe. IFB has been vigilant at protecting farmers' foreign markets and warning governments of the dangers of embargoes and protectionism.

Technology has advanced agriculture far beyond imaginations of the early founders. However, just like in 1916, IFB works with farmers to help them better understand technology and how to use it to improve their profitability.

Beginning in the 1970s, communicating to consumers about food and agricultural issues became an important activity for farmers and the organization. Consumers sought reassurance that advances in agricultural technology did not jeopardize food safety or the environment. IFB's consumer directed education campaigns have been recognized as outstanding and contribute to better public understanding of agriculture.

Throughout the decades, tax issues were always being analyzed and debated by Farm Bureau leaders. IFB won some hard-fought battles in the 70s achieving much needed tax relief for farmers through the farmland assessment law, along with sales tax exemptions on farm machinery and parts, chemicals and seed.

During the past decades, IFB has fought hard to keep agriculture a top industry for the state. IFB worked with government regulators and others to create an environment where agriculture in Illinois can expand and grow to meet the nation's and the world's demand for abundant and affordable food.



Indicative of the spirit of Farm Bureau efforts, the inscription on the stone at the IAA office in Bloomington reads:
"To Plow a Furrow, You Must Look Ahead."

Affiliates – COUNTRY Financial

Reprinted from January 2013

Kane County Farmer

KCFB and COUNTRY Financial, growing together

Contributed by COUNTRY Financial

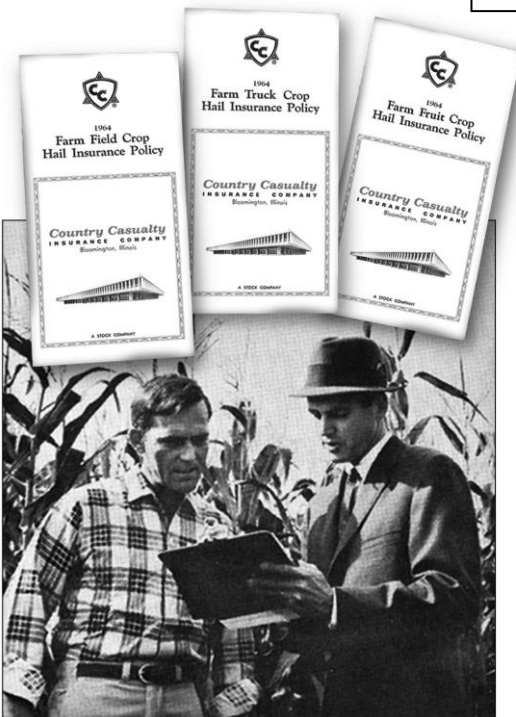
When farmers founded COUNTRY Financial in 1925, about half the population lived in rural America. It took four hours of labor on one acre to produce 20 bushels of wheat, and land was worked by horse-drawn plows.

The world has changed drastically since then. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates it would take 61 million horses to replace the power of today's farm equipment. Crop production from approximately half of the 357 million available acres of cropland in the United States would be needed to feed all the horses.

Although many things have changed throughout the years, one thing has remained constant: the strong relationship between COUNTRY Financial and the Kane County Farm Bureau.



The 1925 IAA board of Directors, pictured above, formed an insurance company to meet the needs of its members. Today we know that company as COUNTRY Financial.



A COUNTRY agent assists a farmer with his insurance needs in this photo from the 1960s. One of the first Farm Bureau affiliates, COUNTRY Financial has a long history of strong commitment to the agricultural community.

One of the most pressing needs of America's farmers in the early 20th century was insurance protection. Agribusiness included many hazards and risks that were not covered by commercial insurance companies. COUNTRY Financial began as Farmer's Mutual Reinsurance Company in 1925, developed by a group of Illinois Agricultural Association (Illinois Farm Bureau) members to address farmer's unmet insurance needs. Farmer's Mutual Reinsurance Company first offered fire and lightning insurance, and added crop hail and farm equipment insurance the next year. Two years later, the Illinois Agricultural Mutual Insurance Company was established to provide automobile and life insurance coverage.

In 1946, these two companies created by Illinois farmers were united under one name: COUNTRY. Today, the COUNTRY product line includes financial planning services, such as estate planning and investment management. These comprehensive services help customers protect what they have and build for the future.

Farm Bureau and COUNTRY have worked together from the beginning with a focus on serving farmers and keeping their interests at the core of all agricultural decisions. Through combined efforts, these organizations to respond to

crises and develop policies that will benefit Kane County farmers. The relationship is further strengthened by proximity. Kane County Farm Bureau and COUNTRY have shared an office building for more than 70 years.

In the early 1930's, COUNTRY began conducting informational programs across Illinois to promote farm safety. Today, COUNTRY offers county Farm Bureau safety grants and provides sponsorship for agriculture safety days conducted by county Farm Bureaus. Every September during National Farm Safety and Health Week, COUNTRY distributes farm safety information to county Farm Bureaus. Sixty COUNTRY financial representatives located in Kane County can provide programs for bike, fire and young driver safety.

While there is no way of knowing the precise direction of farming and agribusiness, the future is bright, and one thing remains certain: COUNTRY Financial knows agriculture and stands committed to farmers every step of the way.



KCFB and COUNTRY Financial Representatives continue to work together, show mutual appreciation, and recognize shared accomplishments. In this KCFB file photo from October 2010, COUNTRY Financial Representatives Rick Novotny, Todd Wilcox, Luke Fawkes, Orazio Difruscolo, and Josh Austin are shown at a gathering to celebrate the growth of KCFB membership.



COUNTRY Financial was formed in 1925 as Farmer's Mutual Reinsurance Company. It provided coverage for hazards and risks on the farm not covered by other commercial insurance companies of the day, such as fire and lightning, crop hail and farm equipment insurance.

Affiliates – FS / GROWMARK

Reprinted from February 2013

Kane County Farmer

FS, Growmark, giving farmers consistency and quality for decades

by Karen Jones, *GROWMARK Publications and News Specialist*

Imagine it's the late 1920s. You've just purchased a shiny new John Deere GP tractor for your Kane County farm. As you admire the glossy green paint and marvel at the speed (four miles per hour!), you realize that you can no longer produce your own fuel as you did growing oats to feed your horses. Now you're dependent on petroleum-based fuels – but how to ensure a reliable supply?

This was the dilemma faced by countless farmers of the era. As the use of farm tractors slowly replaced horses, the need for fuel became a real issue. Some suppliers simply refused to service farm customers, while others charged higher prices for the convenience of on-farm delivery. The need for a consistent supply of reasonably priced, good quality fuel was the catalyst that brought Illinois Farm Bureau members together to form the first agricultural supply cooperatives in the state.

The Capper-Volstead Act of 1922 allowed these first cooperatives to form, and still allows for the cooperative model of business in America today. It provided limited antitrust exemption to associations of producers, thereby legally permitting reduction of competition among farmers when they join together and act in the marketplace as a single farmer. By combining the needs of many farmers acting as one, a greater supply could be secured, consistent quality could be expected, and prices would remain lower.

By 1926, 10 county Farm Bureaus had formed cooperatives, and the IAA aided in their efforts by holding informational meetings, creating a model set of articles of incorporation which met Illinois legal requirements, studying existing cooperative ventures in other states, offering to provide complete service and advice to counties interested in forming cooperatives, and deciding to set up a wholesale business to supply the county cooperatives already in operation.



The need for a supply of reasonably priced, good quality fuel was the catalyst that brought Illinois Farm Bureau members together to form the first agricultural supply cooperatives in the state.



Formed in 1927, Illinois Farm Supply provided consistent on-farm delivery and was known for its superior service. Today, the Growmark System continues that tradition of excellence and has a presence in 31 states and the province of Ontario.

On March 7, 1927, the Illinois Farm Supply Company was chartered under the State of Illinois Cooperative Marketing Act of 1923. Nine county farm supply cooperatives were the original investors: Coles County Supply Company, the DeKalb County Agricultural Association, Edgar County Farm Supply Company, Ford County Service Company, Knox County Oil Company, Marshall-Putnam Oil Company, McLean County Service Company, Menard County Farmers Supply Company, and Montgomery County Farmers Oil Company. And with that, the GROWMARK System of today had begun.



Illinois Farm Supply Company emerged strong and ready for great growth during the economic boom following WWII. In 1955 the need for a unified brand in the marketplace was realized, when the FS brand was introduced.

As the nation and the world struggled through the Great Depression and the rebuilding years to follow, Illinois Farm Supply Company continued to grow and add additional product lines to meet the needs of its farmer-owners. Not only were additional petroleum products introduced, farmers could now purchase fly spray, stock dip, sulfurized mangle oil, wood preserver, cod liver oil, alcohol, glycerin, chemical weed killers, and automobile and truck tires from their cooperative.

During World War II, like many businesses, Illinois Farm Supply Co. worked to maintain its position in a difficult economy amid product shortages, rationing, and an abundance of workers heading off to fight for our country.

Feeding the country reigned supreme, and the cooperative emerged strong and ready for great growth during the post-war economic boom. It was during this time that a need for a unified brand in the marketplace was realized, and the FS brand as we know it today was introduced in 1955. Illinois Farm Supply Co. built fertilizer terminals, feed mills, and petroleum storage facilities, as well as invested in Central Farmers Fertilizer Company (now CF Industries) and a petroleum refinery in Pana, Ill. This allowed for more control over the supply and quality of products.

Illinois wasn't the only state whose Farm Bureau supported the formation of farmer cooperatives. Both Iowa and Wisconsin had also developed strong networks to supply the needs of their farm populations. In 1962, Illinois Farm Supply Co. merged with the Farm Bureau Service Company of Iowa, and brought with it a new name for the organization: FS Services, Inc. Three years later, FS Services expanded north by merging with Wisconsin Farmco Service Cooperative, making Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin the core geography of the future GROWMARK System. That same year, a merger with

"My dad always said the Service Company was the only place to buy gas. Standards for gas distribution weren't as tight as they are today. But with the Service Company, if you paid for 100 gallons of gas, you could be sure that's exactly what you were getting."

- Dexter Norton Jr. of St. Charles, KCFB Member & Former Kane County Service Company Director, commenting on the predecessor of Northern FS and Conserv FS, both cooperatives in the GrowMark system. He and his father knew KCSC as a stalwart company that could always be relied upon.

Producers Seed Company put the cooperative into the hybrid seed corn business and expanded its offerings in field seed and seed grain.

Grain handling and marketing has always been an important aspect of farming, and FS Services solidified their commitment to serving farmers by entering into a combination of efforts agreement with Illinois Grain Corporation in 1969. This partnership would continue until 1980 when the two entities consolidated



In 1965 Wisconsin Farmco Service Cooperative and Producers Seed Co. merged with FS Services, Inc.

to form GROWMARK, Inc. – a name that reflected the cooperative’s role of helping farmers GROW agricultural products and MARKET the output.

In 1994, Growmark reached beyond the borders of the United States and acquired the assets of United Cooperatives of Ontario, adding more than 30 cooperatives to the GROWMARK System and reaching toward the vision of being the best agricultural cooperative system in North America.

Today, the GrowMark System has a presence in 31 states and the province of Ontario. Its major product lines include agronomy, energy, seed, and grain. The past 10 years have seen significant sales growth while continuing to provide the personal service customers

have come to trust over its 85-year history.



For decades farmers have benefitted from sound agronomic advice from FS and GrowMark.

GrowMark has long been a leader in bringing new developments to the farm market. It was among the first to provide retail availability of E-85 blended gasoline, and it pioneered variable rate technology, allowing farmers to apply only the necessary amounts of crop inputs exactly when and where they are needed. Sales people are continuously trained on the latest safety and regulatory procedures, and have the opportunity to become certified in a variety of disciplines, signifying an additional commitment to education and professionalism.

The company also supports the development of future agricultural leaders. A summer internship program places students with FS member cooperatives or GrowMark divisions for an intensive 12-week learning experience. It partners with 4-H, FFA, Co-operative Young Leaders, and the Junior Farmers’ Association of Ontario to enhance members’ leadership skills, as well as working closely with the Farm Bureau through Young Leaders programs and Agriculture in the Classroom.

Local FS member company history

- 1929 A Kane County Farm Bureau Committee of I.R. Judd, E.D. Spencer & Fred Wilson are appointed to investigate advisability of forming the Kane County Farm Bureau Supply Company.
- Mar. 16 1929 Kane County Farm Service Company (later FS) organized, with Farm Bureau Executive Committee to be governing body.
- 1969 Kane County Service Company is merged with Kishwaukee Service Company to form Northern F.S. Inc. Service territory includes Kane, DeKalb, McHenry, Boone and Winnebago counties in Illinois and Walworth County, Wisconsin.
- 2004 Northern FS is merged with Conserv FS to form a farm supply and service company that serves farmers in 10 northeastern Illinois counties and 3 southeastern Wisconsin.

GROWMARK History

- 1920's Farm Bureau members organize local cooperatives in the United States.
- 1927 Nine local Farm Bureau cooperatives organize to form Illinois Farm Supply Company.
- 1955 Illinois Farm Supply Company adopts the FS trademark.
- 1961 The corporate office of Illinois Farm Supply Company moves from Chicago to Bloomington, Ill.
- 1962 FS Services, Inc. organizes through the merger of Illinois Farm Supply Company and Farm Bureau Service Company of Iowa.
- 1965 Wisconsin Farmco Service Cooperative merges with FS Services, Inc. Producers Seed Company merges with FS Services, Inc.
- 1969 FS Services Inc. and Illinois Grain Corporation enter into a "Combination of Efforts" agreement
- 1980 Consolidation of FS Services, Inc. & Illinois Grain Corporation establishes GROWMARK, Inc.
- 1985 The integration of Midwest grain terminals and merchandising operations between GROWMARK and Archer Daniels Midland Company creates ADM/GROWMARK.
- 1994 GROWMARK reaches beyond the borders of the United States and acquires assets of United Cooperatives of Ontario, becoming an international cooperative.
- 2000 GROWMARK begins marketing products directly to additional cooperative customers throughout the Midwest and in eight western states
- 2007 The market and advisory services of AgriVisor®, LLC are incorporated into GROWMARK as a joint venture with Illinois Farm Bureau.

Affiliates – Prairie Farms Dairy

Reprinted from March 2013

Kane County Farmer

Prairie Farms Dairy A History of Cooperative Dairy Marketing

The importance of cooperatives in the history of the Farm Bureau cannot be overstated. Farm Bureau affiliate Prairie Farms Dairy remains a strong partner and has its origins in the kind of grassroots effort to improve the lives of farmers that is indicative of all Farm Bureau endeavors.

Starting in 1932, the Illinois Agriculture Association (aka Illinois Farm Bureau) encouraged local formation of county cooperative creameries which would cooperate in a statewide association for more efficient and effective marketing of cream in Illinois. The name of the statewide association was the Illinois Producers Creameries and county affiliates. It existed at Bloomington, Champaign, Carbondale, Galesburg, Olney, Mt. Sterling, Carlinville, Mt. Carroll, Henry and Carlyle.

During the 1940s these cooperatives changed their names to Prairie Farms Creameries. By the late 40's the co-op at

Carbondale had installed equipment to process cottage cheese, while the co-ops at Mount Sterling, Olney and Carlinville purchased equipment to process and package fluid milk in disposable paper cartons. This marked the entrance of Prairie Farms Creameries into marketing fluid milk.



A delivery truck stands ready to load at Prairie Farms Dairy in Carlinville, one of the cities where its predecessor, Illinois Producers Creameries, existed in the 1930s.

During the early 1950's, with the exceptions of Carbondale, Carlinville, Mt. Sterling and Olney, eight of their original twelve co-ops were manufacturing only butter. The rapidly changing dairy industry brought serious trouble for the single product co-ops. One of these was that they could not bid for the large



In 1962, Prairie Farms of Southern Illinois, Prairie Farms of Western Illinois and Danville Producers Dairy merged to form Prairie Farms Dairy incorporated.

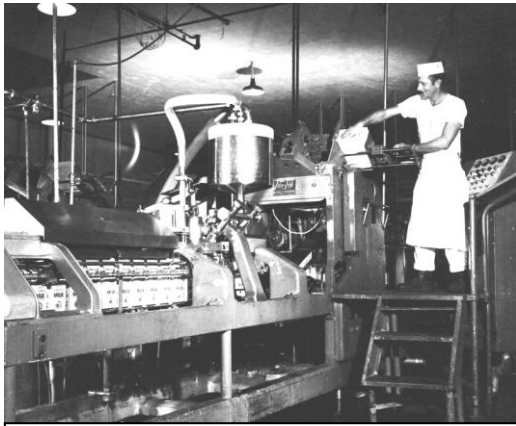
volume producers against Grade A milk outlets, and as a result, several of the twelve plants were either sold or consolidated with other dairy organizations. The first merger of Prairie Farms predecessors was between Jacksonville Producers Dairy and Prairie Farms Creamery of Mt. Sterling in 1948. Quincy Producers Dairy merged with this group in 1950, and the surviving co-op was named Prairie Farms of Western Illinois.

During 1954, the Carlinville co-op purchase Community Dairy of Alton and Prairie Farms of Carlyle, Illinois. In 1956, Carlinville then merged with Prairie Farms of Carbondale and a new cooperative called "Prairie Farms of Southern Illinois" was formed.

Danville Producers Dairy was the surviving cooperative in Eastern Illinois and was a combination of Prairie Farms

Creamery of Champaign and Danville Producers Dairy with a bottling plant at Danville. Further combinations were essential, and on February 1, 1962, the three surviving co-ops, Prairie Farms of Southern Illinois, Prairie Farms of Western Illinois and Danville Producers Dairy merged to form Prairie Farms dairy incorporated, with F.A. Gourley as General Manager. By March 1988, fifty years after its official beginning as a cooperative creamery, Prairie Farms Dairy Inc., under the leadership F.A. Gourley, had become the product of nine mergers, thirty-eight acquisitions and four joint ventures with total assets of approximately \$130 million.

In addition to mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures, the company also created a non-cooperative firm which markets non-dairy products to fast food outlets. This corporation P.F.D. Supply Corporation, supplies McDonald's, Wendy's, Burger King, Dairy Queen and others with almost all the food products



A worker monitors a machine at a Prairie Farms facility. By the late 40's co-ops at Mount Sterling, Olney and Carlinville had equipment to process and package fluid milk in disposable paper cartons.

and paper supplies these establishments use in parts of Illinois and Missouri. These operations and those of the bottling operations of Prairie Farms led to the company designation as one of the 500 largest industries in America during 1989. In 2008, the company reported that its producers produced more than 1.3 billion pounds of milk, averaging 1,873,000 pounds per farm.

At the end of March 1989, F.A. Gourley elected to step down from the number one management seat at Prairie Farms after 50 years of continuous service as a general manager, first of the Carlinville operations and then all of Prairie Farms.

Leonard Southwell, long-time Vice President of Prairie Farms, accepted the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer and immediately named Mr. Gourley to the number two position as Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

Today, Prairie Farms Dairy is headquartered in Carlinville. Over 700 farms strong, it is recognized throughout the Midwest for its array of superior dairy products and exceptional service.

Prairie Farms and its subsidiaries manufacturers and markets a full line of dairy food products out of its twenty plants and 13 joint venture plants throughout the Midwest and Mid-South. It was once the main supplier for the Great Value brand sold in Wal Mart stores, which remains the cooperatives largest customer. Prairie Farms' line includes a wide variety of fluid milk products; juices and drinks; cultured dairy products including dips, sour cream, cottage cheese and yogurt; and ice cream.

Prairie Farms produces a wide range of products, and sells them through multiple branded partners:

- Southern Belle Dairy Company, LLC
- Luvel Dairy Products, Inc.
- Ice Cream Specialties, Inc.
- Hiland Dairy Foods Company
- Roberts Dairy Company
- Coleman Dairy
- Muller-Pinehurst Dairy, Inc.
- Turner Dairy Holdings, LLC
- Hiland-Roberts Ice Cream Company
- Madison Farms Butter Company

Affiliates – IAA Credit Union

Reprinted from April 2013

Kane County Farmer

**Safety, reliability and service
– IAA Credit Union**

IAACU was organized to serve the IAA Family of Companies in August of 1951, holding its first Board meeting on October 9, 1951 in Chicago. At that time membership in the organization was limited to employees of the Illinois Agricultural Association and certain of its affiliated companies including Illinois Farm Supply Company, Agricultural Business Service Company, Illinois Agricultural Auditing Association, Country Mutual Insurance Company and others.

In 1966, the organization converted to a Federal Credit Union and became the IAA Federal Credit Union. The original employee group (IAA and various named affiliates) was served along with certain employees of newly formed affiliates of IAA.

From their origins, credit unions have been unique institutions operating as financial cooperatives, not for profit, but to serve member needs. Appropriate to the IAACU's agricultural roots the first credit unions were created in Europe for farmers who, because of the high risk associated with farming, could not get credit from banks.



The IAA Credit Union, an Illinois Farm Bureau affiliate, was formed in 1951 to meet the needs of employees of the Illinois Farm Bureau and affiliates. Today, membership in the Credit Union is open to all Farm Bureau members in Illinois, as well as employees of all Farm Bureau affiliated companies.

In 1951, only employees of the IAA Family of Companies were eligible to become members of IAACU, but in 1986 the IAA Board asked IAACU to open its field of membership to include all Illinois Farm Bureau members. Washington, Lake, Cook, Sangamon and McLean Farm Bureau members were the first to be given the opportunity to become members of IAACU in 1986. In 1987, 25 additional Counties were allowed and in 1999 IAACU's charter was changed from a Federal Charter to a State Charter with the sole intention of expanding Credit Union services to all members of County Farm Bureaus in Illinois.

Today, IAA Credit Union (IAACU) is headquartered in Bloomington, Illinois, chartered and regulated under the authority of the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) of the U.S. federal government, and has approximately 14,400 members. Members of all Illinois County Farm Bureaus, Employees of the Illinois Agricultural Association and Affiliated Companies (COUNTRY, IFB, GROWMARK) and Customers and Financial Representatives of COUNTRY Financial are eligible to become Members.

IAACU, like all credit unions, is an institution owned by its "members" or customers. Contrast this with banks where the customers are just customers. Banks and Credit Unions are alike in that they both want to serve their owners – we just have different owners; bank owners are stockholders and credit union owners are everyone who uses them.

IAACU offers the typical suite of account services offered by most financial institutions, including savings accounts, checking accounts, IRA accounts, and certificates. The savings product is named "Share Savings" to reflect the fact that a member's initial savings deposit (\$5.00) literally represents their share of ownership in the credit union. IAACU also offers members consumer loans, credit cards, mortgages and home equity lines of credit, as well as some Health Savings Accounts (HSAs).

Members can make ATM transactions through the 35,000 Network locations at other credit unions around the world without any surcharge fees. But more and more online banking is the method of choice, according to Brian McGill Supervisor of Marketing and Member Development at IAACU.

“And with our mobile apps, available free from the Apple and Google stores members can do things like take a photo of their paycheck and deposit it right from their phone.” McGill also pointed out mobile features that could save you the next time you find yourself owing a friend for half a lunch bill. “If you find yourself without any cash, you can send funds through a text, whether that person is a credit union member or not,” McGill said.



IAA Credit Union, like all IAA Affiliates, is a strong supporter of farming and agricultural education. With every purchase made with the Illinois Farm Bureau VISA card from the IAA Credit Union, a portion goes to the IAA Foundation. That helps provide college scholarships and funding for Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom, promoting agriculture awareness for youth and teachers in Illinois, such as Kane County Farm Bureau's Summer Ag Institutes for teachers.

Credit cards are also part of the value of membership. The credit union offers four low cost Visa cards is the exclusive issuer of the Illinois Farm Bureau Visa. The IFB Visa Card benefits the IAA Foundation and Illinois Ag in the Classroom. Every time this card is used, a portion of the income generated is donated to promote agriculture awareness for youth in Illinois.

IAACU remains committed to the origins of the credit union philosophy, existing to serve members and advance their financial well-being. For more information and to join, call 800-676-2541 or visit www.iaacu.

Affiliates - IAAA

Reprinted from May 2013

Kane County Farmer

Illinois Agricultural Auditing Association, IFB's oldest affiliate

By Virginia Lowery, IAAA

Illinois Farm Bureau got its financial feet on the ground early in 1920 and shortly afterwards realized there were many unfulfilled needs in rural Illinois way beyond teaching farmers to use science to improve soil productivity.

Soon afterwards the Illinois Agricultural Association established its first and now oldest affiliate to help farmers and the county Farm Bureaus with their accounting and tax needs. *The Illinois Agricultural Co-Operatives Association* as it was originally named, was established in 1924. IAAA was reorganized July 13, 1931 as the *Illinois Agricultural Auditing Association*. Today, the IAAA is one of a kind. It is the only CPA firm in existence formed as a cooperative and specializing in agribusiness.

There were compelling reasons for the IAA to set up an auditing service. Laws under which cooperatives operate are rather complex, and auditors working only with cooperatives quickly develop into specialists in handling this type of accounting. Today, the Auditing Association is recognized nationwide for its agribusiness expertise.

Louis L. Emmerson was the Illinois Secretary of State when the certificate to certify that Illinois Agricultural Co-Operatives Association was declared a legally organized Corporation under the laws of the State of Illinois on May 31, 1924. Beginning with a Board of Directors of five, the following were selected to serve the Association for the first year of its corporate existence:

President Henry McGough, Maple Park; Vice President L.P. McMillen, Rock Falls; O.B. Goble, Charleston; George L. Potter, Pontiac & H.J. Shafer, Illiopolis, Executive Committee

The Illinois Agricultural Association recommended Mr. George A. Fox for Recording Secretary and Mr. R.A. Cowles for Treasurer. The IAA Service Company continues today with the oversight of the Association.

The first task of the new Board in 1924 was to employ a manager. Mr. George Wicker was employed as the first manager. The first two permanent employees were Mr. Ringer and Mr. King. Mr. Ringer served the Northern tier while Mr. King served clients in the Springfield area. The starting salary for a field auditor at that time was in the \$3-\$4,000 per year range plus travel expenses. By 1925, the need to establish branch offices throughout the State was considered. The advantage in economy of having examiners placed at convenient points throughout the State was endorsed and the next field office was located in Galesburg, Illinois. Over the next 85 years, district offices were set up to reduce travel for the auditors as well as minimize travel expense. Today, technology has replaced most of those district offices. The field staff is able to do much of the audit electronically and reduce the number of days traveling to the client's office. This saves time and



The IAAA office was originally located on the 12th floor of 608 South Dearborn Street in the City of Chicago. From there it moved to 43 East Ohio Street in Chicago, now the location of the ESPN Sports Bar. In 1959, IFB and its affiliates moved to Bloomington.



In August 2005, the IAAA moved their office from the IAA Building to the current location at 318 Susan Drive, Normal, Illinois

money. It has also helped in the retention of field staff. The heavy amount of travel required has always been a huge issue with employee retention.

The office was originally located on the 12th floor of 608 South Dearborn Street in the City of Chicago. From 1947 to 1959, Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliates were headquartered in a 12-story building just north of the Loop at 43 East Ohio Street in Chicago. That address is now the location of the ESPN Sports Bar.

In 1959, Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliates moved to Bloomington and then opened the new building at 1701 Towanda in 1961 to much local fanfare. Our temporary headquarters while the Towanda Avenue building was being completed was on the Illinois Wesleyan University Campus in the old Fred Young Fieldhouse, which was built and financed by Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliated companies.

The Auditing Association called the lower level of the IAA Building “home” for the next 45 years. In August 2005, the Association moved their office from the IAA Building to the current location at 318 Susan Drive, Normal, Illinois.

This new location on Susan Drive provided easier accessibility to clients visiting the office, especially during tax season when there is a higher volume of clients visiting the building.

According to the original by-laws the IAAA’s purpose was stated as: *“Section 1. The Illinois Agricultural Cooperative Association is formed to be a non-profit cooperative agricultural association without capital stock, the members of which shall be composed of cooperative associations, farm bureaus, and other agricultural associations. Its purpose shall be to promote the general welfare of its members, to furnish an auditing and accounting service together with a general business advisory service, to cooperate with other organization for the furtherance of mutual interest, to have and exercise all the powers necessary and proper to carry into effect the purpose as above stated.”*

Stock was later issued to all stockholders.

The first annual meeting of the Association was held at the Students Union Building, State University, Urbana, Illinois on January 14, 1925. By the end of 1925 there were 162 members utilizing the services of the Association.

In addition to providing professional accounting and auditing services to our stockholders, IAAA has always been recognized as a leader in cooperative taxation. The Association continues to work with the IRS to prepare returns and to secure deductions and immunities to which cooperatives are entitled under the law. The Auditing Association continues to work to protect the exempt status of the County Farm Bureaus.

The Auditing Association was directly affected by the war issues of the early 40’s. Three of our permanent field auditors were called into service, while a great many that were on a temporary basis,



Henry McGough of Maple Park, Kane County Farm Bureau President in 1920, became the first President of the Illinois Agricultural Co-Operatives Association in 1924, now IAAA.

A plaque honoring McGough’s service will soon accompany a white oak to be planted in the parkway near the KCFB office. A tree will be planted for each of the six past and present IAA Directors from Kane County.

training for a permanent position likewise answered the call to colors. Two of our senior auditors also left the organization to accept positions connected more directly with the war effort. This together with the shortage of men, particularly experienced men, who were willing to travel, placed a severe burden upon the men that were available to us as field auditors.

The same situation applied with almost equal force to office employees, particularly experienced statistical typists. At the out-break of the war the Auditing Association was amply equipped with typewriters designed for statistical use. One-third of those machines were sold to the government which necessitated our operation with 1/3 less typewriters and consequently about half as many typists. In previous years we were able to rent typewriters for a few months during the peak season and consequently employed from eight to ten statistical typists. At that time, no machines were available for rent and as a result we had four statistical typists compared with eight or ten in previous years.

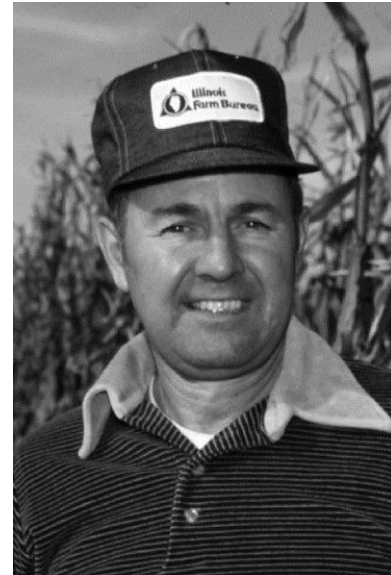
Today, we continue to remain fully staffed with quality professional field staff. We encourage all professional staff to obtain their CPA designation and we provide ample continuing education credits to prepare our staff for the challenges of the ever changing rules and regulations facing our industry. Our goal is to continue to provide all stockholders with the necessary reports and returns on a timely basis to meet their expectations and requirements.

The Auditing Association has deep roots in Kane County. The Kane County Farm Bureau holds two shares of Preferred and one share of Common stock in the Auditing Association. Certificate #9 was issued to Kane County in 1936. They have been a valuable and loyal customer for many years.

Kane County played an important role in the history of the Auditing Association. A Kane County farmer by the name of John White Jr. served on our Board of Directors for many years. Mr. White served as Secretary of the Auditing Association from 1969 to 1974, he was elected Vice President of IFB® in 1973 and later became the 11th President of IFB® from 1983-1993. Today, Mr. White remains a friend and loyal supporter of the Auditing Association.

Over the years, the Association has been lead by many great men. There have been 18 Presidents and 11 General Managers serve the Association. The current General Manager, Brian S. Brown, CPA, was named General Manager in February 2004.

Today, the Auditing Association employs approximately 40 staff, including 20 CPAs, to serve the Association's stockholders with their annual audits, tax returns and accounting services.



Kane County played an important role in the history of the Auditing Association. KCFB Past-President John White Jr. served on the IAAA Board of Directors for many years. White served as Secretary of the Auditing Association from 1969 to 1974.

AITC
Reprinted from June 2013
Kane County Farmer

Education - Brown cows don't make chocolate milk **A brief history of Kane County Ag-in-the-Classroom**

Each year, Kane County Farm Bureau's Agricultural education efforts reach thousands of students and teachers. Volunteers and KCFB staff visit classrooms, teachers visit farms, and consumers are provided with information at events and through Farm Bureau communication efforts. In addition, thousands of dollars in funding are provided to area students who will one day lead the agricultural industry.

How it all began

Throughout much of the history of the United States, agriculture and education have been closely related. During the decades when most Americans lived on farms or in small towns, students often did farm chores before and after school. Indeed, the school year was determined by planting, cultivating, and harvesting schedules.

In the 1920s, '30s and '40s, the farm population began to shrink and agricultural emphasis decreased in school books and educational materials. Educators focused on agriculture as an occupational specialty, rather than an integral part of every student's life.

During this period, a small nucleus of educators and others persistently pushed for more agriculture in education. They recognized the interlocking role of farming, food, and fiber production with environmental quality topics like maintaining a clean water supply and preserving and improving forests and wildlife habitat.

During the 1960s and '70s, educators began to realize the need for quality materials. Many excellent films, books, and classroom aids were financed and produced by businesses, foundations, nonprofit groups, and associations, as well as state and federal agencies. There was, however, little coordination of effort or exchange of ideas among the groups and no central point for national coordination.

In 1981 the USDA invited representatives of agricultural groups and educators to a meeting in Washington, D.C. to discuss agricultural literacy. Ag in the Classroom was born.

USDA oversees the program, but each state organization addresses Ag education differently. In some cases, volunteers are responsible for teacher education and materials distribution. States have formed educational nonprofit organizations, and in others, leadership is provided through government agencies, agriculture organizations, commodity groups or universities.

There is an AITC presence in every state and territory. Some state organizations employ full and/or part-time people to support Agriculture in the Classroom. A few states have reassigned government agency personnel to lead the AITC efforts. Regardless of the structure, Agriculture in the Classroom has advanced because of a cooperative spirit among the participants.



Ag in the Classroom in Kane County started with the idea that teachers could benefit from accurate information about agriculture. Today, Kane County Farm Bureau workshops, tours and free resources allow hundreds of teachers in Kane County to teach thousands of kids an appreciation of where their food comes from.

Illinois AITC

The Illinois Ag-in-the-Classroom program is carried out through the Illinois Farm Bureau. The effort began in the 1970's when farm men and women began to take educational presentations about agriculture to local classrooms. Those early efforts have expanded to include development and distribution of classroom materials, teacher training, and resources to assist county volunteers throughout the state.

A growing number of counties, including Kane, have hired a full or part-time Ag literacy staff to work with local educators. Funding for the expansion of Illinois AITC program is received through the IAA Foundation. Many materials are available free of charge because of the efforts of the IAA foundation.

AITC in Kane County

Mary Nagel of Sugar Grove, who helped create the Kane County AITC program, said several experiences prompted her and other volunteers to step up their teacher training efforts. One had to do with the misconception that chocolate milk comes from brown cows. Another surfaced during a Farm Bureau field trip to a local orchard.

“One teacher had an empty bag with her, and when I asked what it was for she said she hoped to be able to bring some apples home. Well, this was in the spring, so we knew some education was needed about when fruit, and other crops, are harvested. That way they could teach their students too.”

Nagel asked Bernice M. Thomas of Big Rock to be the very first volunteer teacher to go into local classrooms to present a lesson about agriculture. Bernice passed away in 2010 at the age of 89. She was a long-time KCFB Women's Committee member, and was very active in the organization. Bernice's 38 years of experience as an early elementary school teacher, were crucial to the foundation of KCFB's Agriculture in the Classroom program to inform area teachers about agriculture so they could educate students about where their food comes from.

“She was really very good at it, because her parents farmed and because she was a teacher and knew how to relate to the students,” said Nagel. Bernice would sometimes even bring along a rooster or a rabbit to help the students remember the lesson. “Bernice then trained other Ag in the Classroom volunteers and helped make the program a success,” added Nagel.

This led to the creation of Summer Ag Institutes, KCFB's second longest running Ag education program. For more than a decade, dozens of teachers have taken tours of Kane County farms and agricultural businesses through SAI's to learn how farmers use the latest technology to grow the world's food. In-class instruction is also provided to provide more information on ag-related careers and valuable resources for their classrooms, as well as provide a forum to share ideas for practical application of what they've learned. Teachers can earn graduate credit for completing the courses.

Since 2010, a second Institute, SAI II has been offered. With tours outside of Kane County to focus on themes such as how to feed our growing world population and renewable energy sources, SAI II is popular with local teachers because of the unique perspective and useful information it provides.



Educational events like Ag Days, KCFB's longest running program at nearly three decades, teach simple lessons to elementary school students and expose them to careers in the Ag industry.

The longest running AITC program in Kane County, Ag Days, will celebrate its 30th anniversary next year. Volunteer efforts by the KCFB Women’s Committee led to the creation of Ag Days, which invites farmers and Ag businesses to set up displays and give short presentations to kids who often know very little about agriculture. Volunteers had held similar events prior to that, including “Farm Animals on the Mall” at Randhurst Mall in 1975.

The first Ag Days was held at Spring Hill Mall in 1984 with machinery and farm animals on display for the public. The event was held for a time at the Kane County Fairgrounds. For years now, the event has been held at the Fieldhouse at Mooseheart. It gives up to 2,000 third graders an in-depth look at farming.

Today, AITC reaches around 15,000 students and 800 teachers annually through in-class visits, events and workshops in Kane County. An estimated 26,000 people learn about agriculture through public events.

Suzi Myers of St. Charles was hired as Ag Literacy Coordinator in 2005. As a teacher, Suzi had been a strong proponent of agricultural education in Kane County. She incorporated AITC materials into her classroom lessons to teach the importance of agriculture to her students.

In 2006, Myers and KCFB Manager Steve Arnold had an idea that parking some farm machinery on the front lawn would be a good way to “bring a little bit of the farm to the city”. Touch-A-Tractor was born. The concept is simple; use the highly visible front lawn facing Randall Road to display modern farm equipment and antique tractors and welcome the public to learn about farming.

The event also provides an opportunity to raise funds for the Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation, formed in 1989. The Winner’s Choice Raffle, the Foundation’s biggest fundraiser is featured at Touch-A-Tractor. In addition to providing funding for many AITC programs, the not-for-profit foundation awards thousands of dollars in scholarships and internships for college bound students and grants for local FFA Chapters.

“Touch-A-Tractor and the annual raffle have helped our Foundation build funds and friends for our college scholarships and ag literacy programs” said Arnold, who also serves as Executive Director of the Foundation. “As a result, our Foundation has been able to increase Ag Literacy funding, nearly double the number of annual scholarships and provide support to local FFA Chapters.”

Touch-A-Tractor and the Winner’s Choice raffle were recognized by the American Farm Bureau Federation as a County Activity of Excellence (CAE) award in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

Reading is a key part of KCFB Ag education efforts. A collection of titles at the KCFB office in St. Charles provides access to accurate and interesting books about farming. According to KCFB Manager Steve Arnold, former KCFB Director Bob Konen of Sugar Grove deserves credit for the establishment of the Agricultural Literacy Library. Konen, who passed away in 2009, loved reading and was a strong advocate for agricultural literacy.



As with many things in life, how we learn is as important as what we learn. How about Tootsie Roll markers for an in-class game of farm-bingo. Those chocolaty treats are made here in Illinois from home-grown products – like corn, soybeans and milk.

“Bob and his friend Dean Dunn approached the Farm Bureau about providing books that portray a positive, professional image of farmers to local libraries,” says Arnold. “We took Bob’s idea and developed our own library for members, students and teachers.”

A memorial was established by Konen’s family to fund another KCFB original program in 2008, the Spring Program of Reading Outreach to Urban Teachers & Students (SPROUTS). Volunteers read a book about agriculture to nearly 1,500 third grade students in area classrooms each year. AFBF once again recognized KCFB’s Ag Literacy efforts in 2012, with a CAE award for SPROUTS.

While new programs and workshops have been developed over the years, one thing has not changed – volunteer efforts of Farm Bureau members are key to educating the public about agriculture. Several local farmers have been recognized with the AITC Volunteer of the Year Award from the Illinois Farm Bureau, including Nancy Meyer, Randy and Judy Klein, Eldon and Sandy Gould, Chris and Dana Gould, Warren and Marian Nesler, and Jeff and Laurie Nesler.

IFB has also recognized the outstanding efforts of Kane County teachers who have attended Summer Ag Institutes and Tours. Several have received IFB grants to increase their students’ understanding of agriculture, Laura Rapach, a teacher in St. Charles and Kathy Britts-Axen, a teacher at Burlington Central, were named AITC Teacher of the Year finalists in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

There is not room here to list all of the volunteers that have led and lent a hand to Kane County AITC programs over the years. Each year hundreds of individuals give their time and talents to ensure a bright future for farming. Thanks to their commitment to agricultural education we can be sure that both children and their parents will improve their understanding of the job farmers do – and how it affects them.



Mary Nagel of Sugar Grove is a strong advocate for agricultural education. She started the Ag in the Classroom program in Kane County and headed the Ag Tech Foundation formed to oversee renovation of the historic Teeple Barn in Elgin into a destination agricultural learning experience.

Community Service

Reprinted from July 2013

Kane County Farmer

The heart of an association

Kane County Farm Bureau's history of community service

Any association, or business, regardless of the purpose for which it was organized, is part of a community. And the value of the organization is often measured by the good it does for the members of the community at large.

Like a farmer helping to harvest a sick neighbor's crops or put a roof on a storm damaged barn, Kane County Farm Bureau has always been quick to come to the aid of others. From the early days of the association, its members have been active in making their community a better place to live, farm and raise a family.

In 1921, despite a sharp post-war recession and the collapse of agricultural prices, Farm Bureau members donated truckloads of corn, 1500 bushels in all, to help feed the starving people of Europe and Asia. Association records show that the same year a committee was appointed to buy a carload of apples for members, presumably to improve healthy eating and help stretch grocery dollars at the same time.

In the 1960s Farm Bureau members continued their community outreach by helping to feed the hungry in Chile, Hong Kong and twenty-five countries around the world through the CROP program. Kane County farmers joined others across the state to fill thousands of trucks with corn for the program.

In 1989, KCFB leaders founded the Kane County Farm Bureau Foundation. The Foundation is a not-for-profit charitable organization that supports education, leadership development, research and charitable activities for the benefit of agriculture and farm families. It has awarded tens of thousands of dollars in scholarships and paid internships for college students in agriculture fields of study.



KCFB Manager Steve Arnold, CAE (center) accepted a 2011 Summit Award from ASAE at an Awards Ceremony at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C. KCFB was one of just six Summit Award winners selected in 2011 for developing outstanding programs that enrich peoples' lives and impact the community, the country and the world.



Harvest for ALL was created to step up KCFB's already strong involvement in hunger relief efforts. Field signs help get more people involved in this community service effort.

Cooperation with youth groups and helping them to enter the Ag industry has been a focus. Since 2008, the KCFB Foundation has offered grants to local FFA Chapters in recognition of their volunteer efforts at events, like Touch-A-Tractor, Ag Days and the KCFB activities at the Kane County Fair. These grants also reward chapters for carrying out community service projects in their communities.

Charitable donations to the Foundation fund Ag literacy outreach in Kane County to teach kids about where their food comes from. Members have also created memorials

to fund college scholarships, reading programs, a lending library full of books about agriculture, and much more.



The KCFB Women's Committee has long been committed to serving members and non-members alike. They've held many blood drives in conjunction with Heartland Blood Center.

KCFB's largest public community service event is Touch-A-Tractor, held each April on the Farm Bureau lawn in St. Charles – which is right on Randall Rd – making it a highly visible and easily accessible event. The event brings a little bit of the farm to the city and features dozens of tractors, antique and modern, and the machinery used to prepare for, plant, care for, and harvest the food that feeds the world.

The giving spirit of Farm Bureau leaders led to the creation of a new way to help needy neighbors in 2002 – the Food Check-Out Challenge Shopping Spree. Local legislators dash through the aisles of the Batavia Jewel store to gather food items for the food pantry of their choice. The event has resulted in over \$22,000 in food donations to area food pantries.

In 2009 Kane County Farm Bureau leaders looked for a way to show support for local residents left in the wake of the 2009 economic recession. With thousands of people in Northern Illinois finding themselves food insecure, without the means to supply three square meals a day, stepping up hunger relief efforts seemed like a natural response.

In addition to restocking the shelves of local food pantries, KCFB leaders wanted a program that would remind consumers where their food comes from and create goodwill for the Ag industry. They created Harvest for ALL, a simple way for all KCFB members to donate to the food pantry of their choice. The farm-food connection was made through farmers pledging proceeds from their fall harvest, and advertising their donation at field locations.

“Farmers mean food,” said Frances Phelan, Coordinator at Holy Angels Food Pantry in Aurora.

“Farmers’ response to the community, through their hard labors and their contributions through the Kane County Farm Bureau, is overwhelmingly important.” Holy Angels is one of twenty food pantries which have benefited from Harvest for ALL donations.

“I think it’s wonderful to have farmers involved because that means we’re getting food from the source,” said Marilyn Weisner, Executive Director at Aurora Interfaith Food Pantry. “I think it’s important for us all to know that our food *comes* from someplace, from a farm.”

Ron Alms, Senior Agronomist at Elburn Coop in Maple Park, stressed the importance of Harvest for ALL in educating the public about where their food comes from, in addition to helping feed the hungry.

“It helps tell people about the food on their table, where it comes from, how it’s grown, and what exactly goes into producing that item they’re picking up in the grocery store. It just doesn’t just come off the shelf,” said Alms.

In 2013, KCFB leaders issued a *Million Meal Challenge*. The goal is to reach the equivalent of one million meals provided in cumulative hunger relief to local food pantries by the end of the association's centennial year, Dec. 31, 2013.

KCFB committees have sponsored many classes on everything from baby-sitting to defensive driving. The Young Farmers Committee has hosted farm safety workshops for youngsters, with topics like firearm safety, first aid, lawn mowers and small engines, fire, chemicals, and more.

The benefits to society from these types of classes and services that focus on prevention are often measured best by asking the question, 'what incidents or accidents could have happened had they not been held?' We'll never know, but to be sure, the community is better for it.

For decades, the KCFB Women's Committee has served their neighbors by hosting blood drives, collecting recyclable and hard to dispose of items, dissemination safety reminders in cleverly labeled treats offered at Ag businesses during harvest season, and dozens of other services and programs.

Charitable work through KCFB and the KCFB Foundation includes an annual donation to the University of Illinois Extension – Kane County to help fund 4H, youth education, food and nutrition programs. Farm Bureau and Extension have always been closely tied and continue to share resources. Similar donations are made to charities and not-for-profit programs that coincide with the goals of KCFB and its members.

“Aside from the dedication of our volunteers, nothing has been as important to the continued success of Farm Bureau community outreach as our partnerships with local businesses and organizations,” said KCFB President Joe White. “We are very fortunate to have a network of for-profit and not-for-profit businesses and agencies in Kane County that understand the connections between farms, food and our communities.”

That network regularly provides donations of time, funds, and in-kind offerings that allow the Farm Bureau to stretch its resources. The involvement of community partners has also created dozens of mutually beneficial relationships.

“There is really no substitute for being a good neighbor and sharing what you have,” said White. “After 100 years there are so many good relationships that have been made through Farm Bureau programs, and we're always looking for ways to lend a hand, and make those connections.”

Whether it's a basic human need or an educational opportunity, Kane County Farm Bureau and its members will continue to look for opportunities to help neighbors. At the heart of the association there is a desire to reflect the giving, cooperative attitude of the leaders who founded the association a century ago.



Touch-A-Tractor allows youngsters to climb aboard modern machinery and ask farmers how the big machines run. It's a free, family event open to the entire community each April.

Public Policy

Reprinted from August 2013

Kane County Farmer

Grassroots efforts hallmark of Farm Bureau success

Editor's Note: This is the last installment in a 20 part of a series on the history of the Kane County Farm Bureau, Illinois Farm Bureau, and its affiliates. KCFB, (originally known as the Kane County Farm Improvement Association), filed Articles of Incorporation which were approved by the State of Illinois on December 31, 1912

Throughout its history, Kane County Farm Bureau has placed high importance on developing positive relationships with legislators and influencing public policy, at the local, state and national level.

KCFB records show many examples of farmer leaders shaping the issues of the time. In 1919, KCFB directors approved a resolution requesting six months' pay from the Federal Government to discharged soldiers. The following year support of French – Copper Truth in Fabric Bill was at the forefront. It was designed to compel manufactures to stamp cloth with its content of virgin wool and of wool substitute. In 1921 the KCFB board sent a letter sent to members of Congress opposing a tax on butter made from neutralized cream. In 1922 a resolution was proposed endorsing a state program of reduced corn acreage and increased legume acreage.

The process of deciding what policies get voiced to legislators begins with the association's grassroots resolution process. Illinois Farm Bureau's stance on any issue is reflected in its policy resolutions, developed each year through a grassroots process of gathering input from every corner of the state. That process allows farmer members to propose policy statements about issues important to them. After being passed through the directors at the county level, these statements are considered each year at the IFB annual meeting.



In this KCFB file photo Congressman Bill Foster attended a "toolshed" meeting at the Gould Family Farm in Maple Park to discuss issues of importance to Farm Bureau leaders.

Grassroots advocacy has long been the hallmark of Farm Bureau's success in any public policy arena. Having informed and engaged members willing to contact lawmakers at the local, state and national level on issues of importance to farm families.

"People talk about grassroots, this is grassroots," said KCFB Past President and current Secretary/Treasurer Mike Kenyon of South Elgin. "It starts right here in Kane County and it moves up to the state level."

Kenyon commented on the way KCFB leaders have been able to build relationships over the years. "We get along with policy makers and others. The sherrif, clerk, coroner, county board, people respect us and that doesn't happen overnight. Kane County Farm Bureau earned the respect of the political leaders."

Kane County leaders have excelled in the arena of making the concerns of Farm Bureau members known though face to face interaction.

In 1996 Kane County Farm Bureau began an annual "Legislators' Roundtable" Breakfast Discussion. Objectives for this program included presenting legislators information on legislative priorities for current

session of the General Assembly and to get their perspectives on the most pressing issues facing Illinois, and agriculture.



Farm visits and discussion with Farm Bureau leaders often come at times of critical importance to farm legislation. Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schaefer visited the Elgin farm of Bob and Beth Gehrke (left) in 2008 while the creation of a new farm bill was being considered. IFB President Philip Nelson (right) attended the meeting along with Farm Bureau leaders and local media.

Meetings like these continue to take place, but not always at the KCFB office. Oftentimes, these meetings take place in farm shops. Legislators get a chance to visit a farm, maybe take a brief tour, and then sit down for a cup of coffee with a group of leaders, often from two or three county farm bureaus. These “tool shed” meetings help give a personal feel to the issues farmers discuss with lawmakers and lets them see how their votes in the General Assembly affect Kane County farmers.

KCFB Past President and current IAA District 1 Director Bob Gehrke said a visit by Secretary of Agriculture Ed Schaeffer to the Gehrke Family Farm in Elgin was one of the highlights of his time as a Farm Bureau leader. Schaefer talked about developments in the creation of a Farm Bill with a group of farmers, Ag business leaders, 4H and FFA members, and local media.

“To have someone at that level come out to talk to us and being able show him around our farm was very important to me,” said Gehrke.

This marked the first visit by a USDA Secretary to the area since a moderate drought reduced crop yields in 2005 and came at a time when, as Illinois Farm Bureau President Phil Nelson put it that day, “Illinois is at a crossroads in regards to farm policy as we are trying to put a farm bill together.”

Another important way Farm Bureau members communicate their concerns to local legislators and leaders in Washington is through the FB ACT program. Members volunteer to make their voice heard by voting in local elections and respond to IFB issued action requests to contact legislators by phone or email when important legislation on key agricultural issues is being considered.

This program continues the legacy of KCFB members in the public policy arena. Just one example is when Kane County Farm Bureau members made their voices heard during the year-



An annual Harvest Picnic on a Kane County farm gives local legislators and policymakers the chance to get to know Farm Bureau leaders and talk about issues of importance to the Ag industry. In this KCFB file photo County Board member T.R. Smith and State Rep. Mike Fortner participate in a game of farm bingo at Kuipers Family Farm in Maple Park.

long process to make changes to the state’s constitution, which took effect in 1971. The framers decided that voters would decide every 20 years on whether or not they’d like a new con-con.

Local policy that has long-lasting effects on area farmers was developed through long hours of involvement by KCFB volunteers through the decades. Kane County Farm Bureau helped with passage of a county ordinance which protects farms from nuisance lawsuits, the first ordinance of its kind in the State of Illinois.

Two important items, a storm water ordinance and farmland protection program were developed in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

In a November 2000 article in the *Farmer*, Manager Steve Arnold explained that the a storm water ordinance passed by the county board that year, prompted by historic rainfalls in 1996, was the result of over two years of planning, debate, and meetings with various interest groups. Arnold credited Kane County farmers for avoiding additional regulation and paperwork through an impressive record of environmental stewardship. Kane County’s ordinance was the first to protect farms from the adverse impacts of encroaching development.

The next issue for Farm Bureau leaders to consider was increasing amount of Kane County farmland being turned over for development. In cooperation with the Kane County Board’s development committee, American Farmland Trust provided a study entitled “Planning for Agriculture and Protecting Farmland.” That initial work led to the formation by the county board of the Kane County Farmland Protection Program in 2001.

The ordinance established the Kane County Farmland Protection Commission whose duties include maximizing resources and coordinating efforts to preserve the rural character of the county. The first and only funded farmland protection program in Illinois, it has permanently protected some of Illinois’ most productive farmland.

Good relationships and communication with policy makers put the association in a good place to provide input on legislation such as the establishment of the Kane County Farm Drainage Assistance Program, passed in May of 2003. This began as a discussion between the Kane County Board Chairman and the Farm Bureau’s Board of Directors. Like the Farmland Protection Program, the Farm Drainage Assistance Program was the first in the state – if not the nation.

The program was significant in that it attempted to reestablish drainage districts and drainage district infrastructure in order to retain agricultural land uses in Kane County. The program allows the County to use discretionary funds to remediate drainage problems.



Kane County Farm Bureau members have contributed hundreds of volunteer hours to programs geared to reducing, reusing and recycling to protect the environment. In a decade long partnership with the County of Kane and Kane-DuPage SWCD, tens of thousands of gallons of used motor oil and nearly as many used tires were collected, recycled and kept out of the waste stream.

Local legislators also hear from KCFB leaders during an annual program called Lunches to Legislators. Volunteers visit the local offices of state legislators, Congressmen and the Chicago offices of Illinois' U.S. Senators to discuss farming issues over lunch. An annual Harvest Picnic is held to give lawmakers a look at a local farm and strengthen those relationships. The relaxed nature of these visits fosters relationship-building and is important to creating long-term connections between lawmakers and the association.



Two Kane County farmers have served the industry at the highest levels during the past decade. Eldon Gould (left) of Maple Park was appointed as Administrator of the USDA Risk Management Agency by President George Bush, a post he held from 2005-10. Leland Strom of Elgin was appointed to the Farm Credit Administration Board in 2006 by President George Bush and continues in that post today. Strom served as FCA Chairman from 2008-2012.

In 2002, the Governmental Affairs and Public Relations Committees came up with an event that would foster a closer relationship with legislators and provide much needed hunger relief in the county. Senator Chris Lauzen and Representative Pat Lindner were “challenged” to participate in the first ever Kane County Farm Bureau Food Check-Out Day Shopping Spree.

That same year, Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed a law designed to boost growth in the state's corn and soybean industries by investing in ethanol and other biodiesel fuels. “We worked for 25 years to get acceptance of ethanol, which is good for the environment and has all the right things,” said Mike Kenyon. “That takes persistence and patience.”

Today, KCFB leaders continue to work with local public officials and

to carry members' concerns to the highest level of government. IFB organizes several Leaders to Washington trips every year so that decisions being made in our nation's capital have a connection to what's going on in America's heartland.

Senator Dick Durbin commented on Farm Bureau's ability to get to the heart of the matter when visiting legislators in Washington. “Time is a precious commodity, so you need to know what someone needs and how you can be of assistance to them, and you need to get to that quickly,” Durbin said. “With Farm Bureau, you never have to worry about that,” Durbin added.

While the issues have changed since the association was formed 100 years ago, the purpose of Kane County Farm Bureau public policy efforts have not. The focus continues to be on sound public policy that benefits farmers and Farm Bureau members.

Kane County Farm Bureau

Presidents

Judson P. Mason	1913
William F. Graham	1915
C.S. Lovell	1916
J.F. Reid	1918
E.E. Hughes	1919
Henry McGough	1920
Dan G. Davies	1921
Henry W. Lees	1922
Ira R. Judd	1923
W.C. Mcqueen	1924
E.L. Hoyt	1925
Frank Widmayer	1926
Glenn Warne	1927
W.A. Beith	1928
Conrad Lind	1929
Fred Wilson	1930
Clarence Tanner	1931
Alex Fitchie	1932
Charles Keslinger	1933
W.C. Davis	1934
Henry W. Lees	1935
James E. Foley	1936
Marcus W. Damisch	1937
Arthur Fisher	1938
Earl Hardy	1939
Robert Getzleman	1940
George Dauberman	1941
J.N. Russell	1942 – 1943
Lorin Davis	1944 – 1945
Edgar Allen	1946
Dexter Norton	1947
Arthur Lind	1948
Wayne Wirsing	1949 – 1952
Arthur Peterson	1953 – 1954
John Gunderson	1955 – 1956
A.N. Healy	1956 – 1961
Gerhard Tamms	1961 – 1965
Jack Young	1965 – 1968
John White	1968 – 1973
John Nepermann	1973 – 1975
Eldon Gould	1975 – 1978
James Collins	1978 – 1981
Raymond Grommes	1981 – 1984
James O'Connell	1984 – 1987
Clyde Hagemann	1987 – 1990
Gerard Fabrizio	1990 – 1993
Dan Heinrich	1993 – 1996

Presidents

Michael Kenyon	1996 – 2002
Steve Pitstick	2002 – 2004
Bob Gehrke	2004 – 2010
Joseph White	2010 – present

Farm Advisers

J. E. Readhimer	1913 – 1919
W. B. Richards	1919 – 1924

Assistant & Associate Farm Advisers

W. Lloyd Keepers	1920 – 1923
John E. Watt	1924 – 1927
Harry P. Kelley	1927 – 1936
F. J. Randall	1929
Arthur E. Johnson	1936 – 1953
Don Norris	1940
John Harber	1941
R.B. Howard	1946
Virgil Smith	1949 – 1951
Robert Anderson	1951
Tilden Meyers	1951 – 1952
Lyle D. Kerly	1953 – 1963
Philip Farris	1963
James McCurdy	1953 – 1954
Paul Larons	1954 – 1957
Urban Becker	1957 – 1958
James Neuschwander	1959 – 1962
J. Errol Baxter	1963

County Organization Directors

Dan Davies	1934 – 1940
Clifford Naden	1940
John Harber	1941 – 1943
E.C. Hoffman	1944
Charles Rasmussen	1944
Frank Randall	1946 – 1950

Secretary of Organization

G.W. Blanchard	1951 – 1958
Alden P. Killian	1958 – 1971
Earl Struck	1971 – 1974

Manager

Dale O. Espel, CAE	1974 – 1993
Bob Rohrer, FBCM	1993 – 1999
Steven Arnold, CAE, FBCM	1999 – present