

WOODFORD FARM BUREAU REVIEW



Autum Jones
Farm Bureau Manager

COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Planting and the weather. Is there really anything else most of you are worried about right now?? Now, I'm not so naive to believe this, but from those not connected to ag, it's easy to have such a simple

view of farmers and the rural community. I'm writing this in mid-April, and I can only pray that by now the weather and planting have gone in our favor.

So many other topics consume us this time of year. The markets, our family needs, seed quality, planting timing, fertilizer, traffic on the roads... How about a W-2 job? About 50% of Illinois farmers engage in an off-farm job. Anyone watching what's happening in Springfield this spring? I can promise you that the Illinois Farm Bureau team is working hard to represent us as chaos will surely

be present until the General Assembly adjourns at the end of May.

I recently was listening to a popular news anchor discuss rising costs from the aftermath of Operation Epic Fury. He mentioned that our food costs were going to skyrocket this fall when farmers harvested their crops and would decide to raise their prices to recoup elevated fuel and fertilizer costs. Wouldn't that be nice if we could have the ability to control the spot market price! It's dangerous to say what farmers will do if you don't understand our industry.

There are so many opportunities to engage and become involved at the Farm Bureau. Reach out to us if we can connect you with a program or event that may fit your needs. I hope you all stay safe on the roads and around the machinery this season.

DID YOU KNOW: Corn transpiration can reach up to 9,000 gallons of water per acre on a hot, dry, and windy day with low humidity.

MINUTE WITH THE MANAGER



As we head into May, it's been a month focused on learning, growth, and staying connected across the Illinois Farm Bureau network. I had the opportunity to attend a

Foundations training, which included conversations around scholarships, fundraising efforts, and grant writing. These tools are essential as we continue to look for ways to support our members, encourage our students and invest in our communities.

I also participated in a new manager training, with a focus on compliance and financial processes. While not always the most exciting part of the job for many people, these areas are critical to keeping our organization running smoothly and responsibly. (And as an economics major in college, I've always secretly enjoyed

this kind of work.)

The beginning of May included attending our manager's outing in Lake Geneva, where it was great to collaborate with peers, share ideas, and learn from one another. We took time to discuss AI (Artificial Intelligence) and the pros and cons of using it in our work.

There are also a few new faces at Illinois Farm Bureau. Rebecca Barnett joined as the new Director of National Legislation, and Jill Frueh just stepped into the Region 1 Manager role later this month. She is replacing Brian Puetz, and we thank him for his leadership not only to me but to our county.

As we move further into spring, I'm looking forward to putting these trainings and connections into action as we continue serving our members and communities across Woodford County.

LOOKING AHEAD WORKSHOPS

June 2 MR Farmer Breakfast 8:30am
June 18 Legislative Roundtable 8:30am
June 25.....Women's Outreach: Herbs & Mocktails
July 20-23 4-H Show

**Register for workshops by calling 309-467-2347 or by email woodfordcfb@gmail.com*

FOLLOW THE FIELD: A NEW CROP YEAR BEGINS



We're kicking off another year of Follow a Field. Last year we followed a corn field, and this season we've switched to a different field that's rotating into soybeans.

This field is set to be planted when conditions allow. It was pattern tiled in the fall of 2025, and after last year's corn crop, the field was deep ripped about 15 inches to help improve soil structure heading into this growing season.

We'll check in throughout the season with monthly updates from planting through harvest. We'll share what's happening in the field,

including conditions, inputs, crop progress, and management decisions along the way.

STAY TUNED, WE'LL BE BACK IN THE FIELD SOON.

THANK YOU AITC VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to our incredible Ag in the Classroom volunteers: Sandy Knack, Bev Woodward, Janet Noe, Eureka FFA, Metamora FFA, and Roanoke FFA. Their time, energy, and passion make a lasting impact on students across our community. Because of them, young learners are gaining a deeper understanding of agriculture, where their food comes from, and the important role it plays in their everyday lives. Whether they're leading activities, reading in classrooms, or supporting events, we are truly grateful for their commitment to ag education and for sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm with students. If you're interested in volunteering with our AITC program, please contact Leslie Beal at the Woodford County Farm Bureau office at 309-467-2347.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT: ROANOKE POCKET PARK



The Village of Roanoke was awarded a \$5,000 IFB Rural Development grant to support the development of a new community "pocket park," located on the southeast corner of Rt 116 and Main St. The project was selected from a highly competitive pool of 139 applicants.

The park will include accessible garden plots, gathering space, and areas for food trucks and vendors. It is also expected to host events such as farmers' markets and art fairs.

Local volunteers have contributed to early progress, donating trucks and time to haul in dirt and spread mulch. Grant funds will primarily be used for Phase 1 of the project, which focuses on establishing a native garden, including plants and boulders.