

# MACOUPIN COUNTY FARMER'S GUIDE

Supplement to *FarmWeek* for Macoupin County Farm Bureau Members



## ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU AWARDS \$120,000 IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS TO LOCAL PROJECTS

In an effort to elevate rural communities, Illinois Farm Bureau partnered with county Farm Bureaus (CFBs) to award 30 Rural Development Grants totaling \$120,000 to support local efforts across the state, including projects in Macoupin County.

Of the grants awarded, nine are addressing rural emergency services' needs, and 21 are projects focused on supporting community and economic development or enhancing quality of life.

The Rural Development Grant Program provides resources and support to help local communities and counties successfully implement projects and overcome challenges inherent in rural development projects, such as lack of funding and volunteers or complicated

grant applications. In selecting grants, IFB searches for projects that will meet a need in a community, county or rural area, get residents excited about what is happening in their community and benefit farm families.

For the 2026 grant program, IFB and COUNTRY Financial invested \$100,000 and \$20,000, respectively.

The recipient from Macoupin County is: Macoupin County Fair and Agricultural Association received a grant to support renovations and expansion to the Bates Building, enabling it to be used as a year-round facility. The building will be used to offer educational opportunities, such as rural health, family farms, small garden production, food preservation, safety and more.

## FOOD, AG GENERATE ONE-FIFTH OF ECONOMIC OUTPUT

The 2026 Feeding the Economy report estimates \$10.4 trillion in economic output is tied to food and agriculture, accounting for roughly one-fifth of all U.S. economic activity.

The data also show a system that supports nearly one in three jobs and contributes more than \$1.3 trillion in total tax revenue. But those benefits are not guaranteed to remain, according to a recent American Farm Bureau Federation Market Intel.

"As production faces sustained economic pressure, we risk shifting more of that value, from jobs and wages to processing and supply chains, beyond U.S. borders," wrote AFBF economist Daniel Munch.

That dynamic is already visible in certain sectors. U.S. vegetable production has declined by roughly 39% and fruit production by 24% since 2000, reflecting some of the most exposed industries where labor costs, regulatory burdens and global competition intersect.

"At its core, this is not just about food. It is about whether the economic engine tied to feeding, fueling and clothing a nation remains rooted at home or gradually shifts beyond U.S. borders," Munch wrote.

The economic contribution of food and agriculture, and critically its domestic presence within the United States, is essential to food security and economic stability.

The economic role of food and agriculture varies widely across states, reflecting differences in production, population and the structure of local economies. In total dollars, the largest food and agriculture economies tend to be states with a combination of strong production and large consumer bases. California leads the nation with more than \$1.2 trillion in food and agriculture output, followed by Texas at \$964 billion, Florida at \$560 billion and New York at \$494 billion. Illinois' food and ag output is set at \$486 billion, according to the report.

A different picture emerges when food and agriculture are measured as a share of total state economic output. In states such as Iowa and Nebraska, the sector accounts for roughly 44% of all economic activity, while in Illinois, the percentage is 24%.

The economic reach of food and agriculture is especially evident in the jobs and income it supports across the broader economy. The 2026 Feeding the Economy report estimates the sector supports nearly 49 million jobs, accounting for roughly 30% of total U.S. employment, or about one in every three jobs nationwide.

That scale stands in contrast to the size of the farm workforce. Direct agricultural employment totaled about 2.5 million jobs, or less than 2% of U.S. employment. But when food manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing are included, direct

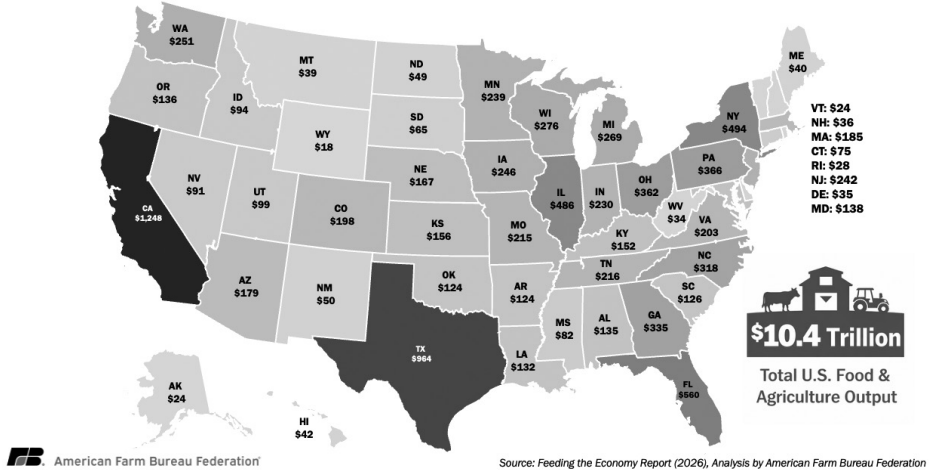
employment rises to more than 24 million jobs, or about 15% of the workforce.

With total U.S. wages at approximately \$11.7 trillion, this means food and agriculture account for more than one-quarter of all earnings nationwide.

"While farmers and ranchers are the foundation, most jobs and income tied to agriculture are generated beyond the farm gate, reinforcing how production supports a much larger economic system," Munch wrote.

### The Economic Impact of Food & Agriculture in Each State

Food and agriculture output in \$ billions, including induced effects



WELCOME
...TO THE NEW FARM BUREAU MEMBERS

VOTING
Doris Kahle Sievers Family LLP
Laura Ross



WOMEN IN FARMING:
NEW TO THE NARRATIVE,
NOT THE WORK

Grandma never questioned butchering two chickens for lunch before church. She cleaned, cut, breaded and partially fried the ultra-fresh poultry, which finished baking in the oven while the family of six attended worship. Holy chicken. It's almost Mother's Day. I love Sunday dinner out. And the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the first time ever named 2026 the International Year of the Woman Farmer. In reality, female farmers aren't a new phenomenon. The industry is just finally talking about it out loud. On both sides, my family tree is rooted in farming, and I'm blessed that both my grandmas – a fresh 88 and almost 89 – still can coherently share about their careers on the farm. Today, my mom farms, I farm, and more exciting yet, the fourth generation (the oldest now 20 studying agriculture in college) has grown to know two generations

of grandmas and their quiet impact on agriculture as partners with the men in their family businesses. The narrative used to frame a women's farm labor as "just helping." Yet, their husbands will attest these ladies would disk fields, sort and load hogs, locate field tiles, unload racks of hay, fetch parts, market crops, manage the farm financials, sign into debt, pay the taxes and elevate ear corn into the wire crib. They managed massive gardens that fed the family on summer evenings and year-round through preservation. Meanwhile, they raised farm kids inspired to enter the same business. With children in tow for farm duties, my mom and grandmas packed lunches for the entire family, feeding hearts and minds with life lessons as much as bellies with nutrition during a hard day's work. I don't see us returning to the era of buying 100 straight-run chicks, butchering half for meat and raising

half for selling eggs. But our farm's ownership by gender is a 50/50 split – Mom, Dad, my 40-something brother and I – all working full-time, pulling the occasional 90-hour weeks and collectively operating, managing, decision-making, succession planning, turning wrenches and respecting the talents each brings to the table, both in the conference room and at family dinners. The team mindset and collaborative approach support farm continuity, community, harmony and the motive to live values, not just list them. Communally, we create a culture that has the next generation – both males and females – welcome and wanting to belong. That kind of narrative endures. About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her brother and parents in West-Central Illinois, where they grow corn, soybeans and hay, raise beef cattle and operate side businesses related to the family operation.

MARCH BOARD
OF DIRECTORS
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Membership as of March 17: 1,072 Voting; 940 Associate; 2,012 Total
- Connie Niemann updated the Board on the Ag Literacy program.
- The Estate planning Seminar was held March 9 in Carlinville, 58 attended.
- An ag industry tour to Arkansas with Madison CFB is being advertised.
- A spring plant coupon program with county FFA chapters is being developed.
- Ag accurate books will be distributed to all county 3rd grade classrooms.
- A delegation will be attending Ag Legislative Day in Springfield.
- County Fair activities were discussed.
- A request for grain bin rescue training funding was reviewed.
- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:00 pm at the Farm Bureau Building.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ATTENDANCE RECORD

|                   | SEP      | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR      | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG |
|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| David Heusing     | CANCELED | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | CANCELED |     |     |     |     |
| Bryan Thomson     |          | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Tucker Launer     |          |     | X   | X   | X   |     | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Jay Fairfull      |          | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Dalton Sanson     |          | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Sarah Boente      |          | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Jason Boente      |          |     | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Tyler Brown       |          | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   | X   |          |     |     |     |     |
| Molly Rosentreter |          | X   |     | X   | X   | X   |     |          |     |     |     |     |

MACOUPIN COUNTY FARM BUREAU

220 North Road, P.O. Box 77
Carlinville, IL 62626
PH:217/854-2571
8 a.m.–12:30 p.m. - Monday–Thursday
Afternoon by appointment or by chance

Farm Bureau Staff:

Mark Dugger ..... Manager
Amy Hauschild ..... Administrative Assistant

Officers:

David Heusing ..... President
Bryan Thomson ..... Vice President
Sarah Boente ..... Secretary
Molly Rosentreter ..... Treasurer

Directors:

Dalton Sanson, Tucker Launer, Sarah Boente,
Randy Darr, Tyler Brown, & Jay Fairfull

Farm Bureau Building Telephone Directory:

Macoupin County Farm Bureau .....217-854-2571
Country Financial ..... 217-854-2043
Central Macoupin County
Rural Water District .....217-854-6154

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Bryan Fairfull - Agronomy Marketing Manager
Lisa Furlow - Credit Manager
Tony Haberer - Energy Marketing Manager
Dwayne Krager - Agronomy/Grain Operations Mgr.
Kevin Moore - Grain Division Manager
Russ Waldhoff - CFO/Controller
130 N Chiles Street
Carlinville, IL 62626
217-854-4516
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# NATIONWIDE SURVEY: MOST FARMERS CAN'T AFFORD FERTILIZER



Photo credit: Right Eye Digital, Used with Permission

An overwhelming majority of America's farmers who responded to a nationwide survey say they cannot afford to purchase enough fertilizer to get them through the year. The percentage who pre-purchased fertilizer varies significantly by region.

Conducted by the American Farm Bureau Federation April 3-11, the survey shows 70% of respondents say fertilizer is so expensive that they will not be able to buy all the fertilizer they need.

More than 5,700 farmers, both Farm Bureau members and non-members, from every state and Puerto Rico took the survey. Farm Bureau economists analyzed the results in the latest Market Intel.

The analysis reveals that almost 8 in 10 farmers in the southern U.S. say they can't afford all needed supplies this year, followed by the Northeast and West at 69% and 66%, respectively, compared to 48% of the farmers in the Midwest.

Just 19% of farmers in the South prebooked fertilizer purchases in advance of planting season. In the

Northeast, only 30% of farmers prebooked, followed by 31% in the West, and 67% in the Midwest. Even with higher pre-booking rates, almost one in three Midwestern farmers still report entering the season without securing all of their fertilizer needs.

The conflict in the Middle East sent fertilizer and fuel prices soaring. The closure of the Strait of Hormuz is keeping critical fertilizer supplies and crude oil from reaching global markets, putting a squeeze on supplies around the world.

"Spring planting decisions depend heavily on access to fertilizer and diesel fuel, both of which have been impacted by geopolitical risks that have disrupted global markets," the Market Intel states. "Since the escalation of tensions in the Middle East, nitrogen fertilizer prices have risen more than 30%, while combined fuel and fertilizer costs have increased roughly 20% to 40%. Urea prices have increased by 47% since the end of February, marking the largest month-to-month percentage increase in the price of urea. These increases are occurring when

many producers were already facing tight margins for many consecutive years."

Many of the farmers surveyed said they will forego applying fertilizer this spring in hopes that prices will return to an affordable level later in the growing season.

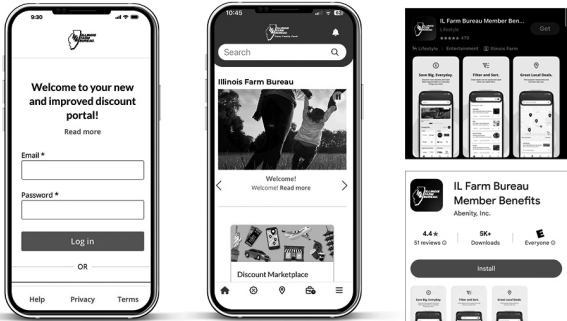
AFBF President Zippy Duvall said, "The skyrocketing cost of fuel and fertilizer is creating more economic hardships for farmers who have already endured years of losses. Without the necessary fertilizers, we'll face lower yields and some farmers will reduce acres altogether, which will impact food and feed supplies. It's too early to know how this will affect food availability and prices in the long run, but it's a warning light that we've shared with leaders in Washington. We look forward to working with them to find solutions so farmers can continue to feed families across America."

According to the survey, 94% of respondents reported their financial situation has worsened or remained the same since last year, while only 6% reported improvement.



ACCESS BENEFITHUB WITH THE

# MOBILE APP



1. Go to Google Play or App Store and search for **Illinois Farm Bureau Member Benefits**.
2. Start by entering your email to log in or register using your membership number.
3. Find the best deals and start saving!



## BENEFITHUB: ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU'S NEW MEMBER BENEFIT PLATFORM

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

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

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

Getting Started:

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

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

Need Help?

For account questions, contact BenefitHub Customer Care at 1 813 675 2210 or [customer care@benefithub.com](mailto:customer care@benefithub.com)

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

## Take advantage of your member discounts now



As a member of the Illinois Farm Bureau you and your family are eligible for exclusive hearing aid discounts through Start Hearing.

**% Discounts up to 60% on today's latest technology,**  
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## HONORING THOSE WHO GAVE EVERYTHING FOR OUR FREEDOM



The Macoupin County Farm Bureau office will be closed  
Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day.

# AG INNOVATION CHALLENGE OPENS: \$100K FOR TOP ENTREPRENEUR



The American Farm Bureau Federation, in partnership with Farm Credit, is accepting online applications from entrepreneurs for the 2027 Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge through June 5. Now in its 13th year, this national business competition showcases U.S. startup companies developing innovative solutions to challenges faced by America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

The overall winner of the competition will receive \$100,000 in startup funds, the runner-up will be awarded \$25,000 and two additional business owners who advance to the final four round will receive \$10,000.

"Encouraging innovation is essential to keeping American agriculture strong," said AFBF President Zippy Duvall. "If you're building a business that can help farmers and rural communities thrive, don't wait, apply today."

Farm Bureau is offering a total of \$145,000 in startup funds throughout the course of the competition. After the application period closes on June 5, 10 semi-finalist teams will be selected and announced on Sept. 2. Next, the 10 semi-finalist teams will pitch virtually to compete for a spot in the final four round of the contest.

The final four teams will be awarded \$10,000 each and participate in a live pitch competition in front of Farm Bureau members, investors and industry representatives at the AFBF

Convention in January 2027 in Charlotte, North Carolina, to win:

- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Winner, \$90,000 (total of \$100,000)
- Farm Bureau Ag Innovation Challenge Runner-up, \$15,000 (total of \$25,000)

Farm Bureau is proud to recognize these innovative businesses, in partnership with sponsors Farm Credit, Bayer, John Deere, Farm Bureau Bank, Farm Bureau Financial Services, ClearPath and T-Mobile.

Recent winners of the Ag Innovation Challenge include FarmMind (2026), a company that unifies farm workflows from GIS to compliance and agronomic insights, and Gripp (2025), a company that provides an operator focused tool for asset tracking and team communication. Other examples of successful Ag Innovation Challenge participants, as well as detailed eligibility guidelines and the competition timeline, can be found at [fb.org/challenge](https://fb.org/challenge).

Entrepreneurs must be members of a county or parish Farm Bureau within their state of residence to qualify as top 10 semi-finalists. Applicants who are not Farm Bureau members can visit <https://www.fb.org/about/get-involved> to learn about becoming a member.

Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on June 5.

## HOW FARM BUREAU SERVED YOU

APRIL 2026

1

IAA Foundation, the charitable arm of Illinois Farm Bureau, awarded scholarships worth \$303,751 to 127 students pursuing degrees in agriculture-related fields, strengthening agriculture in Illinois through investment in future leaders.

2

More than 750 members responded to an IFB action request to contact legislators and oppose the Wetlands Protection Act, a proposed piece of legislation in Springfield that would have placed costly and overreaching burdens on Illinois farmers and landowners.

3

IFB secured statewide black vulture depredation permits, providing farmers with a tool to protect their livestock.

4

IFB Young Leaders, Collegiate Farm Bureau Chapters and Illinois FFA Chapters raised more than \$ 233,000 in 2025 for hunger relief and community assistance, donated a total of 154,000 pounds of food and tallied nearly 15,000 volunteer hours.

## Macoupin County Fair

June 2-6, 2026

### Advance Gate Admission

**Tickets good for 1 general front gate admission** (includes parking & unlimited rides) **for any day of the fair**

**Regular price \$10.00,**  
**\$5.00 for Farm Bureau members**

*Tickets only available at the Macoupin County Farm Bureau office*

# MEMBERS SAVE ON THE FAMILY

**START SAVING**

FINANCES | HOTELS | TRAVEL | THEME PARKS | MORE

## FARM BROADCASTS

|         |                                       |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 5:30AM  | RFD Illinois-Rita Frazier             |
| 6:05    | WSMI Farm Report                      |
| 7:18    | Auction Time                          |
| 9:30    | Grain & Commodities                   |
| 10:30   | Grain & Commodities                   |
| 11:30   | Grain & Commodities                   |
| 12:08PM | Livestock Markets                     |
| 12:40   | Grain & Commodities                   |
| 12:45   | WSMI Farm Report                      |
| 1:30    | Grain & Commodities                   |
| 6:05    | Cash Grain & Livestock Market Summary |

Radar Weather @ :15 & :45  
[www.wsmiradtio.com](http://www.wsmiradtio.com)

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## COUNTRY Financial

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Ty Unger, Carlinville 217-854-2575  
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Randy Beuttel, Bunker Hill 618-585-3666  
Jeff Thompson, Staunton 618-635-8249  
Jason Ford, Palmyra 217-436-2406  
Joey Boente, Carlinville 217-854-6722  
Steve O'Dell, Virden 217-965-5888

or

AGENCY OFFICE, CARLINVILLE  
PHONE (217) 854-2043

J.R. Earley, Agency Manager

CLAIMS HOTLINE  
800-846-0100

## CLASSIFIEDS

**FREE CLASSIFIED ADS FOR FARM BUREAU MEMBERS**  
**Farm Bureau members may run classified ads free in the Macoupin County Farm Section of FarmWeek**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Ad: \_\_\_\_\_

Macoupin County Farm Bureau  
P.O. Box 77, Carlinville, IL 62626  
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