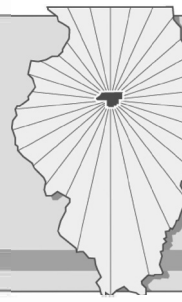


WOODFORD FARM BUREAU REVIEW



Autum Jones
Farm Bureau Manager

MEET THE BOARD RALPH NOE



My name is Ralph Noe, and farming has been a lifelong commitment for both me and my family. My wife, Janet, and I have been married since 1986, and together we've raised four children—three of whom are still actively involved in agriculture today.

We own and operate Noe Family Farms, a sesquicentennial farm that has been in our family for 150 years. On our farm, we raise corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay, along with hogs. In addition, we grow melons and flowers, which allow us to connect directly with the local community. You can find us at the Metamora Farmers Market, the Metro Centre, or at our farm stand in Spring Bay.

I've had the privilege of serving on the Board of Directors since 1989, when Walt Schaer asked me to join. What started as a simple ask turned into decades of involvement that I truly value.

One of my favorite parts of serving on the board is the opportunity to educate others about agriculture. Whether it's talking with driver's education students about slow-moving vehicles and sharing the road safely with farm equipment, or helping our adopted legislator, Representative Hernandez from Aurora, better understand farming, those conversations matter. They help bridge the gap between farmers and the broader community.

Being a Farm Bureau member has also allowed me to stay informed on policies and issues that impact agriculture. That knowledge is critical, not just for my own operation, but for the future of farming as a whole.

My advice to fellow members is simple: get involved. We're a grassroots organization, but it takes everyone to be a part of the grass.

LOOKING AHEAD WORKSHOPS

- April 1 Farm Bureau Park Opens for Season
- April 7 MR Farmer Breakfast 8:30am
- April 16 Cottage Food Workshop
- April 23 Women's Outreach: Floral Flag Painting
- May 5 MR Farmer Breakfast 8:30am

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

QUARTER AUCTION SUCCESS

The Woodford County Farm Bureau Foundation would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who supported our recent Quarter Auction fundraiser. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised \$3,000 to support student scholarships.

We are especially grateful to our monetary sponsors, which included Country Financial, Daryl Hodel, Compeer Financial, and Grainland Farmers, for their contributions, as well as the many businesses and organizations who donated baskets and items that made the event a success.

Your support helps invest in the future of agriculture and our local students, and we truly appreciate everyone who participated, donated, and attended.

Basket Sponsors (Alphabetical):

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Agape Beauty Spa | Heartland Bank |
| AH Ranch Designs | Hello Beautiful Boutique |
| Bee's Knees on Main | Heller Ford |
| Benson Farm Family Foods, LLC | IL Corn |
| Blunier Implement | Martin Equipment |
| Box.ed Charcuterie | Nana's Tallow Skincare |
| Braker's Market | Pioneer Seeds |
| Caleri's (Roanoke) | Sweeny Bro's Pizza & Treehouse BBQ |
| Chicago Bears | The Sweet Shop |
| Cornerstone Family Restaurant | Tres Rojas Winery |
| Eureka Locker | U of I Extention |
| Faire Coffee | Wendy Puff Pizza |
| FBFM | |

MINUTE WITH THE MANAGER



As spring arrives, it's been a busy and rewarding time for Woodford County Farm Bureau. In March, we once again hosted our Rules of the Rural

Road program for student drivers, helping them better understand how to safely share the road with farm equipment. Programs like this continue to be an important way we connect agriculture with our community and promote safety during the busy planting season.

I also had the opportunity to serve as one of county managers to help

host the Women in Agriculture Conference in Rock Island. The event was a tremendous success, bringing together women from across Illinois and Iowa to learn, network, and celebrate their roles in agriculture.

Behind the scenes, we continue working closely with our local municipalities and elected officials to advocate for agriculture in our rural communities. And with warmer weather on the horizon, we're looking forward to opening the Farm Bureau Park for the season and welcoming everyone back outdoors. If you're interested in renting the park for a future gathering, please call our office for more information!

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE RECAP

On March 27th, over 200 women attended the Women in Agriculture Conference held in Rock Island, IL, sponsored in part by the WCFB. This event is organized by 13 County Farm Bureau Managers from central, western, and northern Illinois.

Attendees heard from two keynote speakers throughout the day. Tara Barrett-Duzan opened the morning session, sharing her powerful story of resilience. A documentary highlighted her journey and the decision she made, in the face of tragedy, to step away from a career in broadcasting and continue her family's agricultural legacy.

The afternoon session featured Emily Reuschel, who delivered an inspiring message titled "Rooted & Rising: Permission to Evolve. Courage to Thrive." She encouraged attendees to embrace growth while staying grounded in their values.

Both speakers shared meaningful stories centered on empowering women in agriculture. The conference also offered breakout sessions on topics such as financial management, legal planning, pursuing personal and professional goals, and the role rural communities play in shaping future generations.

