



THE FARM POST

The Official Publication of the Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus

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Caution: Slow Down, Share the Road Rural Safe Driving Campaign



Pictured here are Blake Roderick, Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus; Ty Rylander and Adam Church, Pittsfield FFA; Mick Webel, Rick Rodhouse, Bob Hyde, and Jon Fesler, COUNTRY Financial; John Pennock and Matt Frazier, Pike County Sheriff's Department; Don Henning, Two Rivers FS; David Gay, President Pike County Farm Bureau; and Trooper Mike Kindhart; Safety Officer with the Illinois State Police.

Since 2008, roadway collisions have been the second leading cause of Illinois farm-related deaths. To combat this problem, the Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois

State Police are sponsoring Caution: Slow Down, Share the Road, a rural roadway safety awareness program.

"We're undertaking this effort to increase awareness about rural

roadway safety. We believe this program will save lives," said David Gay, Pike County Farm Bureau President. "This initiative exemplifies our strength as a grassroots

organization striving to serve the interests of our members."

As a part of Caution: Slow Down, Share the Road, banners will appear along rural roadways throughout the state to remind rural motorists and farmers to look out for each other. Increasing efforts for education and awareness will decrease the number of accidents that occur and make rural roadways safer for everyone.

"We will work with local FFA chapters in both counties to help place the signs," said Jeff Schone, Scott County Farm Bureau President. "For their help, we'll be giving them an grant to broaden ag safety awareness."

Twenty-nine Illinois residents have died in roadway collisions with farm machinery during the last five years. "One driving fatality is one too many. We need to educate the public about safely navigating rural roadways," said Illinois State Police Education Officer Mike Kindhart. "With drivers being distracted more and more with electronic devices, the need for such a campaign is even more important."

Rural motorists accounted for all deaths except three, who were farmers. Through the efforts of the Caution: Slow Down, Share the Road campaign, project partners aim to reduce rural roadway deaths to zero.

Smithsonian Documents Ag Innovation

By Erin Anthony

With a nod to farmers and ranchers and all they've contributed to our nation's history and will in the future, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History recently unveiled a new website where the public can upload stories about technologies and innovation that have changed their work lives in agriculture.

Stories are sought on precision farming, foodborne illness tracking, environmental concerns, government practices, crop irrigation, biotechnology and hybrid seeds.

Through the Agricultural Innovation and Heritage Archive, the Smithsonian, in partnership with the American Farm Bureau Federation, is reaching out to farmers, ranchers and American agri-businesses to preserve America's agricultural heritage and build a collection that reflects modern agricultural practices. Curators are seeking stories, photographs and ephemera to record and preserve the innovations and

experiences of farming and ranching.

This new collection of stories, photos and objects will play a role in the "American Enterprise" exhibition, an 8,000-square-foot multimedia experience that will immerse visitors in the dramatic arc of the nation's story, focusing on the role of business and innovation in the United States from the mid-1700s to the present. The exhibition is scheduled to open in May 2015.

The first donation was announced in January and came from Tennessee farmer Pat Campbell, of Cleburne Jersey Farm, a multigenerational dairy farm founded in the 1870s in Spring Hill, Tenn.

Campbell is providing a selection of photographs and a computer cow tag and reader unit to show the change in dairying from a hand-labor intensive process to a modern computer-run operation. The donation also includes his personal recollections about how changing

technology has altered his work life and has led to greater efficiency and safety.

In the early 1940s, Campbell's grandfather milked his cows in a wood tie-stall barn with vacuum pumps and vacuum-operated pulsation powered by gasoline because there was no electricity on the farm. Fast-forward 50 years and the Cleburne Jersey Farm would have likely impressed Steve Jobs.

"In 1990, a computerized feed system was added which utilized the individualized cow identification tags that are now on display," Campbell says, explaining his tag donation. "These tags are passive radio transmitters which are activated when the cow passes within a certain distance of the reader antenna. The processor now controlling the I.D. system also controls the feeder outputs, records milk weights, and keeps records of other pertinent information. This information provides data that makes it possible to monitor each cow, and provide maximum efficiency for grain and forage production in order to increase profit margins."

Farmers and ranchers themselves might learn a thing or two. For example, how much do you know about Hawaiian cowboys?

To share your story of agriculture's innovation and heritage or to check out what others have submitted, go to <http://americanhistory.si.edu/agheritage/>.

Erin Anthony is the editor of FBNews.

United effort feeds Scott County flood volunteers

By Kay Shipman, FarmWeek

An army of flood-fighting volunteers needs food and sandbags.

In Scott County, volunteers working on the Big Swan Drainage District levee munched on hearty meals grilled and served at the levee, which is located five miles from Winchester.

The grill master is Mike Lonergan, who has served as a Country Financial representative in the county for 22 years.

On his way to "find" 250 hamburgers for an evening meal last week (week of April 22), Lonergan laughed when he momentarily forgot what day it was. Since Monday noon (April 22), he'd coordinated and cooked some of the food donated by the Scott County Farm Bureau for volunteers.

"It's a community effort. Everyone chips in. That's what small towns do," he said of the work to feed farmers, students, teachers, and other volunteers.

After a day of Red-Cross-served meals, Lonergan manned his grill for lunch and dinner on Wednesday and planned to return to those duties on Thursday.

He wasn't sure about Friday, but added he and his grill would be busy "as long as they need it."

(Editors Note: Mike also cooked for those working on the Hillview, Big Swan, Scott County, and Mauvaisterre Drainage Districts as well as volunteers including IDOC inmates filling sandbags for all or parts of five days during the April Illinois River flood.)



Country Financial representative Mike Lonergan, in green shirt, checks the pork chops, while Country Financial agency manager Rick Pettit, far right, handles the seasoning. Looking on are flood volunteers Denny Taylor, far left, and Alan Merriman. Lonergan and Pettit cooked and served lunch for volunteers working on the levees and filling sandbags in Scott County.

THE PIKE AND SCOTT COUNTY FARM BUREAUS

OUR MISSION is to lead our members in their pursuit of prosperity. We will advance programs and public policies that promote a strong agricultural economy and benefit our members and their communities.

HOWDY!

by Blake E. Roderick

THE PROGRESSION OF DAYS

This morning started like every morning; the sun came up. This evening will end like every evening; the sun will set. Sun rise, sun set: thus the progression of days.

This morning the sun was hidden by clouds. Off in the distance, the low growl of thunder threatens rain.

Last year, we couldn't buy a rain. This year, we can't seem to miss one.

This morning's rain adds to the anxiety faced in farm country on the prospects for this year's crop. This time last year, most of the farming was complete; crops were up with some corn only two-weeks away from tasselling.

As the month of April unfolded, we saw another battle with our rivers. Flooding on our rivers is nothing new. Threats of 'floods of record' seem to be frighteningly more frequent.

I wasn't here during the 1973 (Mississippi) and 1979 (Illinois) floods but often hear them mentioned by those who fought those floods. While there were several 'top ten' floods in the 1980's, our greatest flood memories were formed during the spring and summer of 1993—'The Great Flood'.

This year is not 1993 even though the wet weather and flooding may lead one to a comparison. A couple of big differences centered on snow and dams. This past winter did not have the massive snow depths and melt that plagued the rivers in 1993. Coming off of the drought of 2012, the many water control dams in the upper basin had plenty of holding capacity. As heavy rains fell through Iowa, the reservoirs stored runoff.

Living on the borders of two rivers, we had a double whammy in 1993 as waters flowing downstream flooded Mississippi River communities. The Illinois River flood was like a sewer back-up. As the Mississippi River flood merged with the Missouri River flood, the basin south of the LaGrange Lock and Dam (Meredosia) filled up pressuring levees from Alton to Naples.

Flooding in 1993 was truly a 'flood of record'. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reported that 40 of 229 federal levees and 1,043 of 1,347 non-federal levees were over-topped or damaged resulting

in flooding of 20 million acres costing \$20 billion dollars (33-billion in today's dollars). Fifty people lost their lives, 75 towns were flooded, and 50,000 homes were damaged or destroyed.

In the years that followed, we've seen many more floods. More than that, we've seen a flood of official concern, promises, and regulations; none of which has resulted in real flood control. Hurricane Katrina in 2005 only accelerated the growth of costly regulations as the Federal government applied 'fixes' to a failed flood control system in New Orleans to rest of the nation.

Rather than applying scarce dollars to flood protection, levee districts in our area have been forced to undergo extensive reviews and studies to stay in compliance with new rules.

Following the 1993 flood, the Corps of Engineers developed a study called the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan. The Comp Plan outlined options to improve flood protection but has not been finalized.

Twenty-years later we still face many of the same problems and the solution remains the same—we need robust levee improvements to provide flood protection.

One problem area in flood protection rests within the State of Illinois' Department of Natural Resources. IDNR interpretation of regulations is a real block to flood protection. This is an old story going back many years when IDNR signed off on a multi-state pact to prohibit flood fighting.

Thankfully, the State of Illinois retracted that position and remains a full partner in our flood fights. Millions of dollars have been spent by the State and Federal (FEMA) governments to fight floods over the last 20-years in Illinois.

It seems pretty simplistic that if the dollars spent by government on flood fighting would be applied to flood protection; all levels would be better off. Unfortunately, flood protection is antithesis to the goals of IDNR regulators whose aim is to eliminate flood protection levees.

We continue to work on efforts leading to real protection from floods and the elimination of the need to fight the floods that occur all too often. We continue to offer help during the flood fight and the subsequent debates with legislators and regulators.

This year's flood started a month ago with record, heavy rains in the Mississippi and Illinois rivers basins. So far, we have been successful in holding back record flooding on the Illinois River. Our rivers are receding at a tortuously slow pace. This flood is not over by any calculus. River levels will remain in flood stage through most of the month of May. Our weather eyes remain open.

We can only hope the sun will come out and the progression of days returns to normal.



the AG AGENDA

Bob Stallman
President, American Farm Bureau

Our Food is Safer than Ever

Summertime is almost upon us. For most Americans, the warmer weather brings picnics in the park, BBQs and grilling out with family and friends. It also brings the increased chance for food borne illness to occur if safe food preparation and handling is not given full attention.

Because food safety is such an important issue to farmers, we've worked hard to ensure that the food that reaches your table is safe. Thanks to voluntary farmer-led initiatives, strict government monitoring and consumer food safety education, food borne illness has dropped drastically in the last 100 years.

Not Just Lip Service

According to a recent Center for Disease Control and Prevention report, our food is safer than ever. The number of food borne disease outbreaks in 2009-2010 declined 32 percent compared with the preceding five years. Some of the credit for this can be attributed to the Food Safety Modernization Act, which was signed into law in 2011. This law aims to cooperatively improve food safety by building on existing systems already in place in the private sector.

Before the FSMA was passed, approximately 72 million Americans fell sick due to a food borne illness every year. Within a week after the FSMA was signed into law, those numbers were adjusted to 48 million. Significantly, food borne illnesses now only touch 9.4 million people yearly.

Farmers take seriously their responsibility of growing safe food and that's not just lip service. Farmers have the same desire as other consumers to have a safe, abundant and affordable food supply. And they also have an important economic interest because the demand for their products is determined by consumer confidence.

Shouting from the Rooftop

Many people don't realize that there are five federal agencies that administer at least 30 laws related to food safety. Through this intense federal oversight, the level of food safety testing has also dramatically increased. And, just as important, consumer education on food safety is on the uptick.

Even though contamination of food can occur at any stage in food production, a high level of food borne illness is caused by foods improperly prepared or mishandled at home or in restaurants. To counter this, Farm Bureaus across the country are educating consumers to enhance their food safety knowledge. And it's working!

According to Dr. Richard Raymond, former undersecretary for food safety at the Agriculture Department, the CDC report is cause for celebration. "You should be able to stand on top of the building and say 'hey look, (the agriculture) industry is doing a great job, consumers are doing a great job of listening to the safe handling and proper cooking messages...and restaurants and other people that cook our food are doing a better job.'"

So, go on and enjoy your burgers and chops, deviled eggs and fresh salad this summer knowing that your food is safer than ever. And, maybe even have a steak for me while you're at it.

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Blake E. Roderick, Editor/Publisher
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America, the Land of Plenty (of Ag Infrastructure)

By Kent Hawley, Associate Dean

Agriculture can be a cruel mistress. Last year, farmers had the luxury of early planting weather only to see drought provide a poverty of harvest. This year, rains and flooding are keeping farmers out of the fields and endangering the prospects of a crop. Add to that the common issues of pests and disease and tractor breakdowns and input costs and on and on and on, and it seems amazing that we can feed ourselves at all.

Yet we do. We feed ourselves and produce enough to send all over the world. This productivity is due, in part, to our vast natural resources--vast tracts of fertile farm land, the latest in Ag technology, conservation techniques that make viable land out of marginal ground, and a culture of Agriculture and hard work. Only 3% of our population is involved in the actual production of food, but the infrastructure is in place that allows that small percentage to feed the world.

Part of that infrastructure--and one that gets overlooked far too often--is freedom. While our food producers do suffer their fair share of government taxes and regulation, for the most part, they can run their

operations as they see fit. They can buy their own land and grow the crops of their choosing.

This is not true in other parts of the world. Recently, our area was visited by members of Rotary from the country of Macedonia. Macedonia is a Mediterranean nation that sits just north of Greece. Landwise, it is smaller than Illinois. The people there live very Mediterranean lives--they live in cities and go to small, neighborhood shops. They enjoy fruits and vegetables and other fresh produce at their local markets.

The gentlemen with whom we visited were intelligent and polite and very interested in agriculture because Macedonia does not--cannot considering the infrastructure--feed its own people. In short, Macedonia does not have what we have.

The most common theme our visitors lamented was the lack of economies of scale. They just do not have the ability to farm on a large platform with the efficiencies we have developed. They don't have the equipment or the expertise to grow the crops they need. One of our guests is the manager of a milling company that makes pastries for all of East-

ern Europe. He said they have to import 300,000 tons of wheat in order to fill their orders. The problem is that no port is equipped or allowed to haul that amount of grain.

And while the Macedonians claimed there was plenty of land, that land is "owned" by the national government--a policy holdover from when the country was under Communist rule. If you want to farm, you have to buy a concession from the government to get access to the land. Therefore, the largest private farmer in Macedonia works just 200 acres.

Finally, they do not prepare their youth to farm. The unemployment rate in Macedonia is 30%, yet they are not training people to work the land--something they desperately need.

So in these times of flooding after a drought when it might seem easy to grumble about the lot in life of a farmer, let us keep in mind that we have the resources and the infrastructure to survive the problems that arise in Ag. John Wood Community College is proud to be part of that infrastructure, giving people the knowledge and skills they need to meet the demands of a world that needs to be fed.

Local FFA Chapters Attend FB Conference

More than 500 FFA members, County Farm Bureau Managers, FFA advisors from 76 Illinois counties attended the 2013 Illinois Farm Bureau & Affiliates Youth Conference, April 8-9 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield.

"Growing Legacies", the theme of this year's conference, offered FFA members in their junior year of high school, a unique opportunity for career and personal development. This year's attendees got the opportunity to visit with representatives about scholarships, internships, leadership programs, and career opportunities from community colleges, universities, agriculture commodity groups, and the Illinois Farm Bureau and it's the family of companies at a career fair. The conference also provided a series of breakout sessions that outlined opportunities in agriculture and provided information about the Illinois Farm Bureau and its family of companies. Participants brought 2,387 cans of food to the conference for the Harvest For All program.

The annual two-day conference is sponsored by Illinois Farm Bureau and its affiliated companies, which include GROWMARK, COUNTRY Financial, Prairie Farms and the IAA Credit Union. Please visit www.youthed.org or <http://www.facebook.com/ilfbbyea> for more information on the Illinois Farm Bureau & affiliated companies Youth Education program.



Pictured (left to right) are: Front Row – Lori Woods, Western FFA; Tori Woods, Western FFA; Darren Riskedal, President, Illinois Association FFA; Kobie Miller, Western FFA; Cheyenne Griffith, Western FFA
Middle Row – Ali Nation, Pittsfield FFA; Willow Krumwiede, Pittsfield FFA; Marie Rush, Pittsfield FFA; Frazier Curless, Pittsfield FFA; Rebekah Mowen, Pleasant Hill FFA
Back Row – Blake DeCamp, Pleasant Hill FFA; Kyle Mowen, Pleasant Hill FFA; Levi King, Griggsville-Perry FFA; Isaac Whitaker, Griggsville-Perry FFA

CREDIT UNION AVAILABLE TO YOU

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.

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 of IAACU.

IAACU, like all credit unions, is owned by its members. Contrast this with banks where the customers are just customers. The strategic goal of a bank is simply profit and return to shareholders but IAACU's strategy is serving our members.

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).

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

Because their members are located all over the country, the online banking, internet bill pay, and mobile products offered by IAACU are some of the most advanced available at any financial institution in the world. It's easy to manage your accounts from a computer or smart phone. You can pay bills, transfer money to and from any credit union account, or even transfer and deposit from accounts at other banks and credit unions.

In addition, members can make ATM transactions through the 35,000 Network locations at other credit unions around the world without any surcharge fees.

We invite the members of the Pike and Scott County Farm Bureaus to try our brand of "member-owned banking" by joining IAACU. We remain committed to the origins of the credit union philosophy, existing to serve our members and advance their financial well-being.

For more information and to join the credit union please contact us at 800-676-2541 or visit our website www.iaacu.org.



Pictured (left to right) are: Ben Fletcher, Winchester FFA; Emily Lashmett, Winchester FFA; Darren Riskedal, President, Illinois Association FFA; Caleb Burk, Winchester FFA; Megan Ryan, Winchester FFA

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Register today for CTIC's 2013 Conservation In Action Tour

Registration has opened for the Conservation Technology Information Center's 2013 Conservation In Action Tour, which will explore innovative conservation practices in and around the Indian Creek watershed in Livingston County, Ill., on July 9 and 10. Celebrating the theme of Community 4 Conservation, this year's tour will bring together agriculture leaders from all over the country – including farmers, crop advisors, regulators and lawmakers – to learn and share conservation practices.

"This is our sixth tour and we anticipate having our largest audience ever," said Karen A. Scanlon, executive director of the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) in West Lafayette, Ind. "Because our audience is so diverse and brings such a variety of perspectives and experiences, the dialogue that happens throughout the program is always unique and beneficial."

On the tour, participants will meet farmers building productive operations while protecting water quality. They will visit with civic and business leaders from the town of Fairbury, IL., who have been deeply involved in the Indian Creek Watershed Project that has made the county a national leader in conservation farming demonstrations – and a model Community 4 Conservation. They will also see proven, sustainable, profitable conservation technologies that fit local management strategies, and get a chance to network with a nationwide group of conservation leaders.

The tour will include an up-close look at aerial seeding of cover crops, as well as a chance to delve deep into a soil pit to explore cover crop root systems at Bachtold Farms. One of several speakers, Mike Plumer, a retired University of Illinois researcher and renowned cover crop consultant, will share insight on managing cover crops. Another major focus of research for agriculture in Illinois and many other states is nutrient management.


Tour participants will walk demonstration plots with producers and researchers, comparing an array of nutrient management practices and learning about programs to track plant-available nitrogen. Nearby, producers will also elaborate on their manure management strategies. Participants will also have a chance to kick the tires on a variety of conservation farming equipment, including cutting-edge variable rate fertilizer technology application machinery like the Greenseeker system.

A visit to Trainor Farms will provide a look at on-farm research on drainage water management, nitrogen use efficiency and saturated buffers, which is building insight into strategies that limit off-farm flow of nutrients into rivers and streams. A farmer panel will discuss how conservation practices enhance economic sustainability as well as protect resources in a Q&A session, summing up the Tour's emphasis on real-world solutions to real-world challenges.

Lodging will be at the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Normal and will serve as the tour base. Call reservations at 800-627-7468 before June 16, 2013, and mention the CTIC Tour to receive a special rate. Or click here to make your online reservation.

Register before June 1 to get the early registration discount. Registration includes the July 9 evening social and drinks, snacks, bus transportation, breakfast, lunch and dinner on Tour. Register on line at www.ctic.org.

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Livestock Farmers Feeling the Pressure

By H. Scott Hurd, DVM, Ph.D

There are many pressures on livestock farmers today. Many of these pressures are not the typical economic and resource challenges faced by all businesses, but additional political pressures related to antibiotic use in food production.

Setting aside the politics, all scientific risk assessments published to date have shown a negligible risk to human health from resistant bacteria resulting from food animal antibiotic use.

Those that argue against the use of any antibiotics in livestock raised for food should consider that animals not treated for and exhibiting residual effects of illness are more likely to cause foodborne sickness in humans.

Further, failure to prevent or treat animal illness causes unnecessary animal suffering and death. It's also important to note that infectious diseases occur in both modern animal confinement facilities as well as in outdoor group housing situations.

Every farm with animals is both a maternity hospital and a day care. Animals need medicines at times, just like kids do. This becomes a moral and ethical issue. At what point will we deny treatment? It's not right to withhold veterinary care from animals. Antibiotics for animals are needed because illnesses can move quickly through populations and livestock cannot "stay home" when they are sick.

"Meat without drugs" or "antibiotic free" meat may lead to very negative consequences to animal health. In fact, meat produced without drugs may very well mean "an-

imals without medicine."

A relatively new area of scientific inquiry is the question of whether animal health is quantitatively correlated with public health risk. Slogans promote the concept that "healthy animals make safe food" and it is a concept we all "feel" good about. However, the research is just beginning and much more is needed. One interesting study showed an increase in human illnesses from non-resistant bacteria caused by eating broiler chickens with

residual effects of illness due to denial of antibiotics.

Farmers and veterinarians are committed to maintaining the public's trust by promoting and documenting appropriate use of all medicines used for animals raised for food. Learn more at <http://www.hurd-health.com>.

Scott Hurd is associate professor and director of the Food Risk Modeling and Policy Laboratory at Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine in Ames, Iowa, and former deputy undersecretary for food safety at the Agriculture Department.



Ketchum New Propane Salesman in Pike

We would like to introduce Kevin Ketchum as the new propane salesman. Kevin is a native of Pike County and resides in Pittsfield, Illinois. He has a background as a pressurized gas system inspector and he brings a lot of experience to the department. Kevin is looking forward to serving your propane needs. He can be reached on his cell at 217-430-2621 or call our facility at 217-285-5508.

For over two years Andy Ehlert has been serving as the Pike County propane salesman, he has recently decided to return to the Agronomy Department as a custom applicator. We wish Andy well in his decision and thank him for his service in the propane department.



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