

## Calendar of Events

### DECEMBER

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 2-5   | IAA Annual Meeting  |
| 7     | Section 3 FFA Leadership Training School – Acquaintance Day |
| 18    | RICFB Board of Directors meeting                            |
| 25-26 | Office closed for Christmas                                 |
| 29    | Office closed for New Year's Eve                            |

### JANUARY

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Office closed for New Year's Day                   |
| 8     | Women in Agriculture Conference registration opens |
| 14-16 | QCCA Farm Show                                     |
| 15    | RICFB Board of Directors meeting                   |
| 31    | Bushels for Hunger campaign ends                   |

## It's dues renewal time!

By now, you have most likely received your dues renewal notice in the mail. You have several easy ways to pay:

- Mail with payment to the remittance address on the back side of the notice for the IFB treasury department in Bloomington.
- Visit myifb.org to make payment

online.

- Call our office to make payment over the phone with a credit or debit card.

- Mail with payment to our office to be processed locally.

Thank you for renewing your membership!

## Conservation funding available

CHAMPAIGN – The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Illinois State Conservationist Tammy Willis announced a new statewide funding opportunity for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The new EQIP-IRA ranking pool will offer five management practices to include conservation crop rotation, cover crop, no-till, reduced tillage and nutrient management. To address a natural resource concern, the management practices may be planned and contracted for up to five years.

The EQIP-IRA ranking for management practices will be administered with the ACT NOW process. Through ACT NOW, NRCS can quickly fund a ranked application when it meets or exceeds a determined minimum ranking score. ACT NOW is a funding process where applications will have a much shorter

turnaround time and contracts developed in a few weeks compared to the traditional process.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis, however for EQIP-IRA ACT NOW, applications will be accepted through Jan. 26, 2024. Illinois NRCS will begin funding eligible applications after Jan. 5, 2024, and make funding decisions every two weeks as funding is available.

Producers who have an application on file with your NRCS field office should contact the office if you are interested in competing for EQIP-IRA funding. More Illinois NRCS application deadlines will be announced in the future, but applicants are encouraged to submit an application as soon as possible.

For information on EQIP or other NRCS programs, contact the local NRCS field office or visit [www.nrcs.usda.gov/il](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/il).

## Looking back on 5 years

Five years. Jan. 14 marks five years since I started in Rock Island County, as unbelievable as that seems. But I think I can blame part of that on COVID ... my sense of time passed has gone right out the window. The past five years have brought a lot of joy and opportunity for me. It's hard to narrow down this list, but here are a few of my favorite programs:

- The time Frank Holland with CNBC called. There I was sitting my desk in October 2019 when the phone rang. "Tara, this is Frank Holland with CNBC. Can you hook us up with some farmers to talk to? We're going to be in the area." It's rare for us to get a call from a national news station, but we did that day. Phil Fuhr agreed and Bill Onken met us at Phil's farm. They interviewed both Phil and Bill, got some footage moving combines and talked about what's important to our family farms. Cool that we got that opportunity.

- YL Winter Clothing Drive to benefit Street Friends of the Quad Cities. Jan of 2020. Our Young Leaders wanted to give back, so they partnered with our local FFA chapters and 4H clubs on a winter clothing drive. We ran the campaign over the winter 2019 holiday season, with final collection in January of 2020. Thanks to the generosity of our members, students and our communities, the group collected an entire truck bed of winter clothes (coats, hats, gloves, socks, warm clothes, etc) that went to the Street Friends of the Quad Cities. I will never forget the gentleman's face when he came to pick it all up.

- Grain Bin Rescue program during COVID. The time we completely rearranged a program to make it happen. Fall of 2020. Rock Island and Mercer County Farm Bureaus had already been planning a Grain Bin Rescue program before COVID for the summer of 2020. We were partnering with Sherrard FFA, as they had previously donated rescue tubes to some of the local fire departments. When COVID hit we were certain we would have to cancel. We worked around social distancing and thought we would have to change location (school rules). But we managed to pull it together. Our wonderful trainer agreed to host two sessions that day, and Sherrard HS let us host at the school so long as we did it outside. We were able to show the movie "SILO" in conjunction with this



## MANAGER'S MINUTE

By Tara Mayhew

extremely important training. I still can't believe we were able to pull it off, but put your mind to something and you can make it happen. And people will support it.

- Haircut for Hunger. The time no one could get a haircut. Fall of 2020. This was hands down my favorite campaign to date. I still remember how this started as a joke among us District 3 managers and one of our Young Leaders, Chad Bell. "Chad, your hair is getting ridiculous. We should turn it into a fundraiser somehow." And the joke just wouldn't die. Then it turned into "We're really going to do this. People are going to donate to Chad getting his hair cut BY HIS OWN CHILDREN." And when we started planning, we thought \$5,000 was a pretty lofty goal. But our members, friends, families, and people we didn't know who had no connection to Farm Bureau came out in full force and donated. We blew that \$5,000 goal out of the water and raised \$7,160 that went to the River Bend Food Bank. During a time when people wanted a little humor and something good to feel about, Haircut for Hunger was it. And not that it's about the awards, but that program brought home every award category we submitted it for at IAA Annual Meeting that year.

- Managers to Washington, D.C., trip. The time I went to Washington, D.C., with 18 other managers. October of 2023. This was such a cool trip. I wrote about this in our November newsletter, so I won't go into much more detail here, but what an incredible experience. If you are even remotely interested in going on any of the Leaders to Washington trips, please consider it. I will be pushing that information as it comes out.

What a wonderful five years it has been. And a sincere THANK YOU to our members, leaders, volunteers, everyone who has been involved in some way, shape or form. We couldn't do any of this without you. Signing off on another year,

~ Tara

## Seminars cover emergency planning

Illinois Farm Bureau and Country Financial are partnering to host four "Emergency Planning on Your Farm" seminars in February 2024 to help farm families and businesses prepare for crisis situations and farm emergencies.

Join IFB, Country Financial and guest host Mike Pearson, long-time farm broadcaster and host of RFD-TV's "This Week in Agribusiness" to hear best practices to navigate crises.

"Every year, farms across the U.S. encounter disasters, including severe weather, life-threatening farm accidents and even social media challenges threatening businesses' reputations," said Kim Knapp, IFB membership operations manager. "While such crises are heartbreaking, they don't spell the end of an operation."

"These seminars are intended to prepare farm families and businesses for

potential crisis situations through hearing about real-life situations and learning common best practices to bring back to their operation."

Each seminar will last approximately 2.5 hours with doors opening 30 minutes before the event. Meetings and locations are:

- Thursday, Feb. 8, at 5 p.m. in Rock Island

- Friday, Feb. 9, at 11 a.m. in Edwardsville

- Monday, Feb. 12, at 10 a.m. in Bloomington

- Monday, Feb. 12, at 5 p.m. in Effingham

Each seminar will provide attendees with information and questions that are essential to being prepared if a farm emergency occurs. Pearson will also share lessons learned from farm operations that had emergency situations

and best practices for farm families and businesses to implement. An IFB leader will also provide information on crisis situations.

Lindsey Rinkenberger, Country director of commercial agribusiness underwriting operations, will also provide a brief overview of how Country farm-certified reps can help farmers protect their farm and crops with proper insurance coverages and plan for their farm's financial future.

A meal is provided during each seminar, so those interested in attending are encouraged to save-the-date at <https://on.ilfb.org/farmplan21>. Those saving the date will receive a notification once registration opens on Dec. 1.

For more information, contact the Rock Island County Farm Bureau or Kim Knapp at 309-557-2601, or by email at [kknapp@ilfb.org](mailto:kknapp@ilfb.org).

### Mike Pearson Presents: THAT WON'T HAPPEN TO ME EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR YOUR FARM

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup>

Bally's Quad Cities | Rock Island, IL

Doors Open 4:30 | Dinner at 5:00

Program begins at 6:00pm

#### Does your farm have an emergency plan of action in place if the need should arise?

Every year, farms across the country encounter disaster in one form or another - severe weather destroying farm infrastructure, a social media blowup threatening reputations, or a farm accident tearing up a family with grief. These crises can be heartbreaking, but they don't have to be the end of an operation.

In this program, Farm Broadcaster Mike Pearson shares the lessons he's learned from farm operations that have been through crisis situations, and he'll identify some common best practices for farm families or farm businesses to prepare.

You'll leave with a rough plan to use on your farm.



## Shop with us!

Do your Christmas shopping with us! We have the following items available for purchase in our office:

- Custom BBQ Seasoning
- Cinemark Movie Tickets
- Plat Books
- "Support Your Local Farmer"

T-shirts

- Calendars (FREE)

And don't forget to check out our Shop Local directory at [www.ricofarm-bureau.org/shop-local.html](http://www.ricofarm-bureau.org/shop-local.html)! Still stuck? Consider giving the gift of membership. This will not only support agriculture, but will give your special someone access to more than 302,000 member benefits! For more information, visit [www.ricofarmbureau.org](http://www.ricofarmbureau.org) and click on our Member Benefits and Shop Local tabs.



We'd like to wish all  
of our members a very

# MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Our office will be closed Dec.  
25-26 for Christmas and Dec.  
29-Jan. 1 for New Year's.

REGISTER HERE



Add your name to the list and we will  
notify you when registration is open.

[on.ilfb.org/farmplan11](http://on.ilfb.org/farmplan11)