



Efforts persist to fix reimbursement delays

The RICFB Board of Directors met with the regional director for the Illinois Farm Service Agency at their Feb. 16 board meeting to discuss continued problems with delayed reimbursements for conservation cost share reimbursements, as well as CRP payments.

The RICFB expressed continued concerns about the lack of participation in those type of programs because of the hassle of trying to get reimbursed for projects they have taken on. Per guidelines, reimbursement should be completed within 60 days.

The RICFB has documented meetings since August of 2001 when then-RICFB Governmental Affairs Chairman and Farm Bureau Board member Chris Hohenboken and the RICFB manager met with current Rock Island County FSA County Executive Director Jerry Sierra. The point of the meeting was to try to resolve the issue of farmer/members experiencing on average 18 to 24 months turn-around on cost share reimbursements. Then, in August 2004, a RICFB survey revealed at least 24 farmers who experienced continued

delays in receiving timely reimbursements for cost share conservation projects and also noted hesitation in participating in more projects due to the hassle and lack of customer service.

Between 2004 and 2013, Farm Bureau has worked with county committee members, spoke with past and current CEDs and inquired with NRCS staff about how to improve the process. The lack of action has been frustrating, to the say the least. The inaction and poor responsiveness to action continued. The March 2013 Rock Island County Farm Bureau news featured the Feb. 28, 2013, meeting held with county leadership and FSA staff to discuss the status of the Milan office.

At that time, staff indicated a commitment to continue to address the backlog of reimbursements.

If you are currently behind on reimbursements from FSA please work diligently to get this resolved and completed. We must keep the momentum to resolve these inefficiencies. Thanks to the USDA staff that have tried to help us move the needle.

Scholarship application deadline approaching

The Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation is proud to announce the 2018 Foundation Scholarship Program. Applications for the scholarships are due to the Farm Bureau office in Moline by 4 p.m. March 29, 2018.

Applications are available at www.ricofarmbureau.org. We are fortunate to offer several scholarships this year.

The RICFB Foundation scholarships are available only to high school seniors.

These scholarships have been established by the Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation and are supported through generous contributions from local families. Applicant must be a member or dependent of a member in good standing of the Rock Island County Farm Bureau since January 2017. Applicant can be majoring in any field; major does not have to be ag-related.

The Wilbert and Carol Keppy Scholarship is open to graduating high school seniors as well as college students. Scholarship applications will be judged separately, however, applicant can only win one scholarship from the RICFB Foundation per year. NOTE: An applicant can only win one Keppy scholarship per year and previous Keppy Scholarship winners are ineligible from receiving future Keppy Scholarship funds. Criteria for selection will be achievements in agriculture activities, including an essay, leadership in school and the community, scholastic achievement, and financial need.

The Bernice E. Fowler Scholarship is open to a Rockridge High School graduating senior or graduate who is pursuing a degree of study in the education field. Bernice E. Fowler taught for 11 years in an Illinois City one-room schoolhouse. She continued teaching second grade at Grant School in Moline, where she retired with a 25-year teaching career. This scholarship has been established by her son and will yield a \$1,000 scholarship each year, beginning in May 2013. This scholarship was established late in 2012 and the application can be downloaded at www.ricofarmbureau.org. Preferred candidates will be pursuing a degree in education.

What are past scholarship winners up to?

The RICFB and RICFB Foundation have been awarding scholarships since 1988. We are interested in compiling a comprehensive report of where these scholarship winners are and what they are up to. The goal is to share these results with our foundation donors. If your son or daughter has received a Farm Bureau scholarship please email to accounts@ricofarmbureau.org their name, email address and a one- or two-sentence description about their education completion and their current job.

NEW in 2018 is the recent announcement of the George and Irene Stulz Family Scholarship. This scholarship is designed for students who will be entering their junior or senior year of a four-year university. Current RICFB members who have dependents pursuing a degree in an agriculture-related field are encouraged to apply. The family wishes to assist and support a student who demonstrates financial need, strong involvement in the farm and/or agriculture field, while also fulfilling a full academic course load. All applications available for download on our website.

For more questions, please contact the RICFB office at 309-736-7432 or email dbloomberg@ricofarmbureau.org.



Cubs vs. Cardinals

bus trip to Wrigley Field

VS.

Friday, Sept. 28, 2018
Game time – 1:20 p.m.

Cost is \$100 per member
(Payment secures your seat)

Offered and sponsored
by the RICFB and Mercer CFB



\$19,000 donated to food bank

Quad City, Illinois, farmers are helping local families with a donation to the River Bend Foodbank through the Bushels for Hunger program for the seventh straight year!

After the seventh year, total contributions by the Bushels for Hunger program will exceed \$202,665.71 with this year's \$19,243.71 contribution. Mercer County farmer and Illinois Farm Bureau District 3 Director Jeff Kirwan presented the donation to Mike Miller of the River Bend Foodbank in Davenport.

"Thanks to the generous donations of thousands of bushels of grain to the Bushels for Hunger campaign, local farmers worked together to fight hunger in the Quad City community with these funds," Kirwan said.

Alongside Kirwan, fellow farmer and Grain Merchandiser for Gold Star FS, Mike Secymore added, "Local neighbors and farmers in the five-county area of Illinois were anxious to pitch in and help fight hunger in their community. This money will help provide countless meals in the River Bend Foodbank area."

The Bushels for Hunger program is a joint program coordinated by the following five Illinois County Farm Bureaus: Rock Island, Henry, Mercer, Whiteside and Stark, in conjunction with the following area grain elevators and ethanol plants: ADM, Atkinson Grain, Big River Resources, Cargill, CHS, Gold Star FS, Hillsdale Elevator, Michlig Grain, River Gulf Grain, River Valley Cooperative and Rumbold & Kuhn.

Calendar of Events

MARCH

- March 8 Dr. S. Elwynn Taylor at Market Outlook at Lavender Crest
- March 11 Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m.
- March 14-15 IFB Governmental Affairs Conference, Springfield
- March 16 Women in Agriculture Conference with Farm Babe, Michelle Miller and Kim Bremmer
- March 19 FB Board meeting
- March 20 March primary Election Day
- March 29 Scholarship applications due to Farm Bureau office
- March 30 RICFB office closed for Good Friday

APRIL

- April 1 Happy Easter

REMEMBER:
No One
Can Take
Your Place

AG SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAM WEEK
MARCH 4 - 10, 2018