

JANUARY 2020

Agribiz, crop update meeting

On Thursday, Feb. 13, the Rock Island and Mercer County Farm Bureaus will team up with Country Financial to offer an Agribusiness and Crop Insurance Update seminar. The program will be held at the Camden Centre, 2701 1st St. E, Milan, IL 61264.

9:30 a.m. — Registration
10 a.m. — Program
11:30 a.m. — Meal

Doug Yoder, Country Financial Crop Agency manager will cover crop insurance updates you need to know for the 2020 growing season and answer your questions.

Contact your Country Financial representative by Feb. 10 to reserve your seat.



Rock Island County Farm Bureau President Martin McManus accepts a recognition certificate awarded to the county for its 2019 achievements. The award was presented during the Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and calls attention to the comprehensive nature of county Farm Bureau programs.

Rock Island FB gets recognition

CHICAGO — The Rock Island County Farm Bureau was recognized for its achievements during the 105th Annual Meeting. Rock Island County Farm Bureau received the following program awards:

Gold: Multi-County

Bronze: Ag Literacy, Commodities & Marketing, Local Affairs, Communication & Promotion, Member Relations, Young Leaders, and Foundation.

Most Outstanding Project: Ag Literacy for STEM Night for Teachers.

Rock Island County Farm Bureau is a Group IV County. Group IV County

Farm Bureaus are those with 3,001 to 5,800 members.

As part of its Annual Meeting, Illinois Farm Bureau presents program and committee awards in recognition of outstanding county Farm Bureau volunteer efforts throughout the year.

The Illinois Farm Bureau is a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation, a national organization of farmers and ranchers. Founded in 1916, IFB is a non-profit, membership organization controlled by farmers who join through their county Farm Bureau. IFB represents two out of three Illinois farmers.

Bernick heads conference

The Women in Agriculture Conference committee is pleased to announce that Jeanne Bernick will headline the 9th annual Women in Agriculture Conference in Rock Island on Friday, March 27. Bernick is the co-author of a women's ag leadership book "Ceres Rising: How Women are Leading Farm Business." Her presentation will focus on how women across the world and at home are impacting their communities and what we can learn from their inspirational stories.

The keynote will be followed by a variety of breakout sessions as well as a buffet lunch.

Closing out the conference is Dr. Kim Kidwell, dean and Robert A. Easter chair in the College of Agricultural Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at the University of Illinois. She will speak on "Women Changing Agriculture" and highlight how women have served as the heartbeat of agriculture since civilization.

Pre-registration for the event begins Jan. 6. More details can be found at womeninagricultureconference.com. This conference is sponsored by the Farm Bureau Women in Agriculture Conference Committee.

Calendar of Events

JANUARY

7	When Stress is More Than a Season, program on farm stress and mental health — WIU QC Riverfront Hall
17-22	AFBF Convention — Austin, TX
19-21	QC Farm Show - QCCA Expo Center
20	RICFB Board of Directors Meeting
Jan. 31-Feb. 1	Young Leader Conference — East Peoria, IL

FEBRUARY

13	Country Winter Crop Meeting — Camden Center, Milan
17	RICFB Board of Directors Meeting
18	Governmental Affairs Leadership Conference — Springfield, IL
25	IFB/Country Farm Legacy Seminar — Rochelle, IL

2020: Farmers less optimistic

The annual Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting member survey reflected three overwhelming themes: Farmers have less optimism for 2020; there is a profound need to regain lost export demand; and building new global markets is vital for the future.

"In 2019, farmers were challenged with historic flooding, delayed planting and harvesting, ongoing trade wars and demand destruction to the biofuels market, all of which were key factors in contributing to a sluggish farm economy and continued uncertainty for our Illinois farmers," said Illinois Farm Bureau President Richard Guebert Jr.

Additional key priorities for members included pushing for USMCA ratification, expanding investment in modern waterway infrastructure on the Illinois and Mississippi rivers and defending the integrity of the Renewable Fuel Standard.

Uncertainty and lack of optimism in 2020 were reflected in the following members comments:

► Holding off on the purchases of new and improved equipment, upgrades and replacements;

► Uncertainty regarding how long producers can manage at or below break-even income levels;

► Restructuring debt and not being as concerned with growth and development as 'trying to make it to next year';

► Less income, more instability and more risk;

► Expenses high, whereas income has not kept up.

Over half of farmer respondents indicated that it was likely that their farm would continue to be farmed by the next generation of their family after their retirement.

"This is the ninth consecutive year we've surveyed members to gauge their feelings on key farming issues and concerns," Guebert said. "It helps us as leaders ensure we're tackling the issues and needs of our members and prioritizing our resources to the best of our abilities."

The annual Illinois Farm Bureau Annual Meeting member survey results provided insight into their suggested organizational priorities. The survey, sent to all members who provided their email address to the organization, received over 2,700 responses.

Farm Legacy Seminars planned

BLOOMINGTON — Seventy percent of U.S. farmland will likely change hands during the next two decades. With estimates as high as half of American farmers operating without an estate plan, Illinois Farm Bureau and Country Financial are set to provide Farm Legacy Seminars to aid them as plans are made for the next generation.

The two organizations will host three farm legacy information meetings in February 2020. The seminars will provide current and prospective IFB members and Country Financial clients with tools, protection and ongoing support essential to legacy planning, in order to allow them to keep their farm in the family amid today's financial challenges.

"Illinois farm families face a series of issues, including rising costs in agriculture and surviving financial stress year to year, that may pull their focus away from planning for the future of the farm," said IFB President Richard

Guebert Jr. "This meeting series will realign that focus in sharing the resources and knowledge they need to have those conversations and preserve their farm legacy."

Each meeting will include a keynote presentation by Dr. Ron Hanson, Harlan agribusiness professor emeritus at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and professional speaker on farm legacy planning.

"It is never too early for farm family members to begin a legacy planning process for their farm," said Hanson. "It's important to develop and implement a business succession plan now to continue a family farming legacy for future generations."

Following Hanson's talk, farm legacy planning support will be explained and offered by Country Financial Specialists and Planning Support Manager Joe Buhrmann.

"Legal documents and adequate pro-

tection are a solid start to the conversation," said Buhrmann. "Equally important, though, is having the entire family take part in the conversation. Having a plan will ensure that what you want to have happen will happen."

Meetings are set to take place in northern, central and southern Illinois. The two-hour seminars will each begin at 5 p.m. with dinner. Dates and locations are as follows:

► Feb. 25 — Hickory Grove Banquet and Conference Center, Rochelle

► Feb. 26 — I-Hotel and Conference Center, Champaign

► Feb. 27 — Kokopelli Golf Club, Marion

Registration for the events will open to current and prospective IFB members and Country Financial clients in early 2020. To express interest or receive additional information on this topic, visit www.ilfb.org/farmplanning.

2020 GOVERNMENTAL Affairs
LEADERSHIP Conference

LEADERSHIP
Our Legacy

February 18, 2020

**The President Abraham Lincoln
A DoubleTree Hotel
Springfield, IL**

**Contact your local county
Farm Bureau to register.**

#IFBengages
ilfb.org/GALC

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IAA Foundation offers scholarships

BLOOMINGTON — Agriculture students and Illinois Farm Bureau members and their children are encouraged to apply for 76 college scholarships offered by the IAA Foundation, Illinois Farm Bureau's charitable arm.

The scholarships, ranging from \$1,000 to \$7,500, will be awarded in total of \$118,000 for the 2020-2021 school year.

Students may apply for a variety of scholarships, including three IAA

Foundation Top Scholarships, where winners will each receive \$5,000 awards. Another \$7,500 award goes to the Illinois Farm Bureau Legacy of Leadership scholarship winner. In addition to family scholarships often established to honor the memory of a loved one, the IAA Foundation offers scholarships on behalf of organizations such as Prairie Farms Dairy.

All applicants must be high school seniors accepted for enrollment, or

students already enrolled at an accredited college, university or community college.

A full listing of available scholarships and eligibility guidelines is available on the Foundation website, www.iaafoundation.org. The application must be completed online by Feb. 1, 2020.

For more information, contact your county Farm Bureau, the IAA Foundation at 309-557-2232, or email Jennifer Smith at jsmith@ilfb.org.