

AT THE FARM GATE

Raise a glass -- it's Dairy Month!

By JOANIE STIERS

While the COVID-19 pandemic prompted many Americans to hoard toilet paper, I chose milk. I panic-purchased five gallons in late March for our family of four in case I needed to freeze some. Rather, we made smoothies and milkshakes to consume it before the best-by date.

I couldn't imagine my fridge without milk. I routinely start my day with a big glass of ice-cold 2-percent milk and sometimes end it with a small serving of the chocolate variety. You could say I raise my glass at dawn and dusk for dairy farmers, most fitting with the Dairy Month of June upon us.

Worthy of celebration, dairymen represent some of the most committed farm families in America. Cows need milked two to three times a day regardless of holidays or pandemics. Thankfully, advancements in technology provide labor flexibility on dairy farms where robots milk cows and automated systems deliver feed. Dairy farmers also have upgraded cow comfort, from better bedding for joints to backrubs from barn-mounted brushes. Some even use FitBit-like collars to track individual cow activity.

Meanwhile, my FitBit shows a little less physical activity now that our household advanced to an electric ice cream maker. When I plug it in, I think about Grandpa, who used to hand-crank our family-recipe homemade ice cream for every grandkid's birthday party.

The tradition of National Dairy Month started the month of Grandpa's 6th birthday in 1937. Throughout the nation, groups celebrate with ice cream socials, dinners at dairy farms, and promotions that tell of the nine essential nutrients in dairy products. While the satisfying taste puts milk cheese and yogurt on our regular grocery pickup order, the nutritious punch of calcium and protein justifies that decision.

Our household's consumption alone proves far short of the demand needed to reverse the struggles for today's dairy farmers. Oversupply from COVID-related shutdowns has forced dairymen to dump milk by the tanker full. Milk that supplied restaurants, schools and institutions suddenly had no place to go. Even before the COVID crisis, declining milk consumption and oversupply had led to the demise of some dairy farms and processors.

While Dairy Month provides reason to celebrate, it also should bring pause to take notice and act. Add more dairy to that grocery pickup order. Ask for extra cheese on that take-out pizza. Plan ice cream for dessert, serve milk with dinner, and toast support to this long-time staple of American life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Joanie Stiers' family grows corn, soybeans and hay and raises beef cattle in West-Central Illinois.

Calendar of Events

JUNE – DAIRY MONTH

9	VIRTUAL Farmland Assessment and Flood Debasement program
15	RICFB Board of Directors meeting
27	Grain Bin Safety Awareness Program – postponed

JULY

2	Market Outlook reservations due
7-10	Summer Ag Institute – subject to change
9	Market Outlook Seminar with Al Kluis, Lavender Crest Winery; subject to change
20	RICFB Board of Directors meeting

New Kingdom Trailriders need hay to help others

The New Kingdom Trailriders is a non-profit, faith-based organization. NKT services the greater Quad City area and surrounding communities by empowering children, adults and military veterans facing physical, mental, emotional and social challenges to create active, healthier and more fulfilling lives through equine-assisted activities.

In our 2019, season we gave 1800 equine related lessons with the help of 200 volunteers and 15 horses.

Our oldest rider was 74 and our

youngest was 4 years of age. Visit us at our website nktriders.org or our facility 18929 81st Street in Sherrard, IL.

Check us out on Facebook at New Kingdom Trailriders to see how we are staying connected to our riders and Volunteers during the covid 19 restrictions.

We would greatly appreciate donations of hay – round bales with some alfalfa preferably. Call or text Louise at 563-570-3146 to discuss a donation of hay.

Outlook to feature Kluis

NOTE: Program subject to change due to social distancing orders

Al Kluis, Kluis Commodities, will be the featured speaker on Thursday, July 9, at Lavender Crest Winery, 5401 US Highway 6, Colona. The evening will begin with a buffet dinner at 6:15 p.m., followed by an update from Gold Star FS Grain Merchandiser, Mike Schaver. Reservations must be made by July 2 to guarantee a meal.

Al Kluis, managing director, has been a commodity adviser and broker since 1976. Al, an introducing broker with Wedbush Futures, writes a column, "Your Profit," which appears in every

issue of Successful Farming magazine. Kluis has published two books on commodities trading, and is commonly quoted in major publications, including the Wall Street Journal, and is a featured speaker at commodity conferences nationwide. He is a frequent market analyst for the Linder Farm Radio News Network. Alan, a Minnesota farm boy, was awarded his degree in ag economics from the University of Minnesota in 1974, after which he was executive director of the Minnesota Soybean Association before entering the markets full time. Alan's family still farms in southwest Minnesota and Al enjoys helping with fieldwork when the

markets allow.

Cost for the series is \$75 and a single session is \$25 (if not pre-registered cost will be \$30). To make reservations, please call the Henry County Farm Bureau (309-937-2411), Rock Island County Farm Bureau (309-736-7432) or Mercer County Farm Bureau (309-582-5116).

The Market Outlook Series is sponsored by the Henry, Rock Island and Mercer County Farm Bureau Marketing Committees, in conjunction with BankORION, Big River Resources, Blackhawk Bank & Trust, Compeer Financial, Gold Star FS, Steve Sim - Country Financial and Wells Fargo.

\$21,000 in scholarships awarded

The Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2020 scholarships. This award is given to outstanding high school students who have achieved a well-rounded high school career and understand the value of volunteerism. These applicants were selected based upon their academic, school, and community involvement by an independent committee appointed by the Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation Board of Directors.

This year, the Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation awarded four \$1,500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors. The 2020 Foundation Scholarship winners are:

► **Holly Jacobs**, daughter of Jim and Lisa Geiger, a 2020 graduate of Sherrard High School. She will study chemical engineering at Iowa State University this fall.

► **Hunter Johnson**, son of Scott and Jamie Johnson, a 2020 graduate of Rockridge High School. He will attend Northeastern Oklahoma A&M in Miami, Oklahoma, to study animal sciences.

KEPPY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

This year, four Farm Bureau member dependents will receive a \$3,000 scholarship for their continuing education courtesy of the Wilbert and Carol Keppy Charitable Foundation.

The 2020 Keppy scholarship winners are:

► **Cody Bush**, son of Jared Bush and DeAnna Bush, a 2019 graduate of Rockridge High School. He is majoring in mechanical engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

► **Mia Freyermuth**, daughter of Todd and Liane

Freyermuth, a 2020 graduate of Rockridge High School. She will be studying agricultural business and management at Illinois Central College this fall.

► **Madalyn Mueller**, daughter of Jason Mueller, a 2018 graduate of Rockridge High School. She attends Iowa State University and is pursuing a degree in advertising.

► **Steven Pyevich**, son of Steven C. Pyevich, a 2019 graduate of United Township High School. He attends the University of Illinois with a major in agricultural business and management.

GEORGE AND IRENE STULZ FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

This year, two Farm Bureau member dependents will receive a \$1,000 scholarship toward their post-secondary education courtesy of the George and Irene Stulz Family Scholarship. The 2020 Stulz Scholarship winners are:

► **Nathan Parchert**, son of Tom and Carol Parchert, a 2018 graduate of Rockridge High School. Nathan will be a junior this fall at Iowa State University. He is studying agriculture business.

► **John Searl**, son of Mark and Karen Searl, a 2018 graduate of Riverdale High School. John is studying agronomy and crop science at the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign and will be a junior in the fall.

The Stulz Family Scholarship was established in 2018. The scholarship awards money to post-secondary students enrolled as a junior or senior at a four-year university with a career focus in an agricultural field.

BERNICE FOWLER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

This year, one Farm Bureau member dependent will receive a \$1,000 scholarship toward their post-secondary education courtesy of the Bernice Fowler Memorial Scholarship. The 2020 Fowler scholarship winner is:

► **Isabel Buckrop**, daughter of Kent and Becky Buckrop, a 2020 graduate of Rockridge High School. Isabel plans to attend Illinois State University to study elementary education.

The Bernice Fowler Memorial Scholarship was established in 2013 by Mrs. Fowler's son. The scholarship awards money to graduates of Rockridge High School who are pursuing a degree in teaching. 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.

A reminder that scholarship applications are available from the Farm Bureau office around January 1st each year and are open to those Farm Bureau members who have been a current Rock Island County Farm Bureau member for two years or more. For more information regarding the Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation and their scholarships, please contact the FB office at 309-736-7432, or visit www.ricofarmbureau.org/foundation.

NEW! Kenneth Bush Memorial Scholarship

The Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation is honored to announce the addition of the Kenneth Bush Memorial Scholarship to our scholarship program beginning in 2021. Kenny and Marilyn Bush have been long time supporters of the Rock Island County Farm Bureau and its foundation. Inducted into the Rock Island County Farm Bureau Foundation Hall of Fame in 2011, both served on the

foundation board of directors for many years. Both viewed education as a top priority and their constant message was the importance of hard work and education, and the value of family and faith. Kenny also held the offices of Farm Bureau vice president from 1968-1970 and president from 1970-1974. Thank you, Marilyn Bush and family, for your generous donation to our foundation in honor of Kenny!

Farmland assessment program goes virtual

Our Farmland Assessment and Flood Debasement program has been moved to a virtual format! To attend our program at 9 a.m. June 9 via Zoom, please call our office at 309-736-7432 or email tmayhew@ricofarmbureau.org to reserve your spot and receive the meeting link.