

Bulletin

Promote the understanding of agriculture in our community to improve the profitability of farmers and enrich the quality of life in Knox County.



VOL. CIII

USPS 297-360

DECEMBER 2025

NUMBER 12



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Notice!
Knox County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of the voting members of the Knox County Farm Bureau will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. to elect directors and if approved confirm the reports of the officers for the year ending November 30, 2025; and for the transactions of such business as may properly come before the meeting.

Dated at Galesburg, Illinois on January 1, 2026.



Life on the farm can get a little... Crunchy.

So let's Taco 'Bout it!

Wednesday, January 14, 2026
6:00PM at the Knox Agri Center

Come hungry and leave with stress-busting tips to avoid a full-blown burrito of chaos. Led by our own, Adrienne DeSutter, M.S. Ed, Ag Mental Health Specialist, of Sow How Grow Hope

Join us for laughs, sanity-saving stories, and a taco bar that won't judge your toppings!

No cost to attend but please RSVP by January 8 by calling 309-342-2036 or visit our website at www.knoxfb.org



Members are always welcome at Knox County Farm Bureau's Board of Director meetings. They are held the third Thursday of each month. Please call for times.



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Office Hours
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8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We reserve the right to reject any or all news material or advertisements offered to this paper.

PLEASE REPORT ANY CHANGES IN YOUR ADDRESS TO OUR OFFICE

Thank You
KNOX COUNTY FARM BUREAU



Farm Provides a Gathering Ground

My Spiritual Gifts Quiz from church put hospitality at the top of my list. Mom didn't take the quiz, but I'll bet the Lievens 40 shed score the same. So, with a strong service mindset and the shop space to match, we host. In the last 10 years, our farm has hosted two weddings, FFA and 4-H meetings, farmer events, a bridal shower, my daughter's graduation party, and last summer, the first-ever all-class reunion for our local high school.

By now, our employees know "other duties as assigned" in their job descriptions gets some mileage. And they know with Christmas coming, the shop clear-out and clean-up is imminent. In prepa-

ration for our four-generation Christmas party, we pause machinery maintenance, remove the farm equipment and scrub the concrete floor. Christmas carols replace country tunes on the shop speakers. When the big event arrives, the cousins make memories in a farm shop turned makeshift gymnasium for kicking balls, shooting hoops and riding pedal tractors. The adults play cards in the conference room, and potluck food lines tables down the office hallway for mealtime and grazing.

The farm naturally brings together family, tradition and community at the intersection of work and home, hospitality and hard work, generosity and gravel. Yes, rocks. We farm with 21st-century equipment and still live on a 20th-century road - a nuisance for guests arriving in heavy rain (mud and washouts), a dry spell (fog-level dust) or the early spring thaw when your car wrestles with the gravel road. It's all part of the experience.

Mom ensures hospitable elements carry farm flair. From wood salvaged off an old barn, a local carpenter transformed an old chest freezer into a rustic drink and ice cream station and fashioned a rolling bar to match. A "dessert wagon" sports steel wheels from an old loading chute and the door from a barn mow hides some of the welding corner. Among my favorites: Two tractors on the farm span exactly 70 years apart to make a conversation piece as much as a party backdrop.

The FFA mom in me roots for a winter "drive-in movie" with teen vehicles parked in the shop to watch a film on the drywall projector screen. But if not, we'll have a farm conference in March and a graduation party in May. Fingers crossed, the weather allows planting in April.

About the author: Joanie Stiers farms with her parents and brother in Knox County, where they grow corn, soybeans and hay, raise beef cattle and operate side businesses related to the family operation.

Getting To Know Farm Bureau Policy

6. AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

We support an effort to enhance the image of agriculture and promote the positive activities of farmers and agribusiness. This effort enables students and teachers in the classroom to understand the importance and contribution of American agriculture to the U.S. economy and all its citizens. We recommend that a higher priority be placed on increasing resources for Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom programs. Instruction should be directed to all students of all grade levels about environmental, nutritional, agronomic, and animal agriculture issues, and will correlate materials to the standards as prescribed by the Illinois State Board of Education.

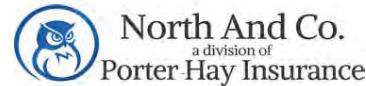
We encourage all county Farm Bureaus to participate in Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom and in all agricultural education activities.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
The Knox County Farm Bureau would like to welcome the following to our organization

Andrew M. Shreeves
Kaskaskia River Gun Club LLC



Thanks to our sponsors for the November 2025 Steve Johnson Seminar titled: "Controlling the Crop Controllables: Changes to the Farm Safety Net & Crop Insurance"



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1 Available on the purchase or lease of an eligible new 2024/2025/2026 model year Ford Maverick®, Ranger®, F-150 Super Duty® or F-150 Lightning®. Not available on any other Ford or Lincoln vehicles, or F-150 Raptor®, F-150 Raptor R™, Ranger Raptor or F-150™ and F-750™ Super Duty. Vehicle eligibility may change at any time. Available to U.S. residents only. Place a new retail order or take new retail delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by 10/26/26. Limit of five purchases or leases per household during the program offer (PSM# 25254). Offer subject to dealer participation. May not be used/combined with most other Ford private offers. See an authorized Ford Dealer or go to <http://www.FordRecognizesU.com> for complete details and eligibility (PSM# 25254). Due to high demand and global supply chain constraints, some models, trim, and features may not be available or may be subject to change. Check with your local dealer for current information. Offer subject to confirmation of eligibility.

2 Available on the purchase of an eligible 2020-2026 Ford Blue Advantage Gold, F-150 Lightning (not Blue Certified, Ford Maverick, Ranger, F-150, Super Duty or F-150 Lightning with under 80,000 miles). Not available on any other Ford or Lincoln vehicles, or F-150 Raptor, F-150 Raptor R, Ranger Raptor or F-150 and F-750 Super Duty. Vehicle eligibility may change at any time. Available to U.S. residents only. Take delivery from an authorized Ford Dealer's stock by 10/26/26. Limit of five purchases per household during the program offer (PSM# 25253). Offer subject to dealer participation. May not be used/combined with most other private Ford offers. See an authorized Ford Dealer, or go to <http://www.FordRecognizesU.com> for complete details and eligibility (PSM# 25253). Due to high demand and global supply chain constraints, some models, trim, and features may not be available or may be subject to change. Check with your local Ford Dealer for current information. Offer subject to confirmation of eligibility.

KCFB Board Attendance 2025

	September	October	November
Beard, Jennifer	C	P	P
Bollivar, Jason	C	P	A
Courson, Dustin	C	A	A
DeSutter, Drew	C	P	P
Eagle, Tim	C	P	A
Emken, Kurt	C	A	P
Emmons, Rob	C	A	A
Engel, Lori	C	P	P
Erickson, Dan	C	P	P
Erickson, Michelle	C	P	A
Goedeke, Phil	C	P	P
Grady, Jeff	C	A	P
Hall, Brandon	C	P	P
Link, Aaron	C	A	A
Link, Cory	C	A	P
Main, Jason	C	A	P
McCormick, Joel	C	P	P
Nelson, Brian	C	P	P
Underwood, Kyle	C	P	P

(P) Present

(A) Absent

(C) Cancelled

(V) Virtual

Meet Knox County Farm Bureau Board Member Jeff Grady!

Meet Knox County Farm Bureau Board Member, Jeff Grady! Jeff has been on the Board of Directors since 2022. Learn more about Jeff here:

Tell us a little bit about you and your family. My name is Jeff Grady. I farm in Knoxville, IL raising corn, soybeans, cattle and hay. My wife, Kathrin and I have been married for 8 years and we have 4 little boys, Owen, Ethan, Weston, and Merritt.

Where are you from? Knoxville, IL

What do you love most about agriculture? I enjoy that agriculture is an endeavor of optimism and continuous improvement. I enjoy proactively making adjustments, trying new practices, and being willing to try a new approach to improve upon last year's results.

Why did you join the Knox County Farm Bureau? When I transitioned from a career in the corporate environment back to the farm, I was hoping to meet new people in the ag community and advocate for agriculture. I wanted to be involved with an organization that helped the general consumer learn more about farming.

Favorite part of being on the Board of Directors? I enjoy that when agriculture business opportunities come to our area, community leaders reach out for



Jeff Grady (and kids)

our recommendations. Likewise, when there are issues with agriculture locally, we get to be involved with coming up with solutions.

What are your hobbies and interests? I enjoy golfing, hunting, and cheering for the Cubs. I'm a regular card player too.

What is something people might not know about you? I used to play Ping Pong competitively.

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New Adopted State Legislator Visits Knox County

On October 27, State Representative Rick Ryan from the 36th District visited Knox County through the Illinois Farm Bureau Adopt-a-Legislator program. We are very thankful Representative Ryan wanted to be part of this program and for Representative Norine Hammond who recommended our pairing!

Seven Board Directors, Representative Ryan and friend Jim Opaka, Representative Hammond, IFB Executive Director of Field Services Ryan Ford, IFB Northeast Legislative Coordinator Christina Nourie and FarmWeekNow Legislative and Environmental Affairs Editor Hannah Spangler started at the office with lunch and conversation.

Board Director Jeff Grady then started the tour explaining how a combine works and how farmers work through a field from combine to grain cart to truck to elevator. Representative Ryan

and Jim even got the chance to drive the combine! Each took a mason jar of corn they harvested home as a keepsake from the visit.

Past Board Director Tom Hoben and Young Farmer Justin Hoben then hosted the group to explain their cattle and farming operation. Tom and Justin showed different types of cattle feed and discussed how the cattle markets work.

To wrap up the tour, the group traveled to Leider Greenhouses to visit with David Hennenfent and Matt Thompson about the connection to the Chicago area with the main location in Buffalo Grove. The group toured greenhouse after greenhouse full of poinsettias.

This visit was so successful thanks to everyone that took the time to participate in the visit. We look forward to visiting the Representative's District soon!



2026 AGRI-FINANCE LOAN PROGRAMS

0% Seed

- 0% to August 31, 2026
- Effective September 1, 2026, rate changes to 5.00% fixed until December 31, 2026
- Effective January 1, 2027 rate changes to the FS Index Rate + 1.00% until maturity
- March 15, 2027 loan maturity date
- Invoices will be billed deferred and drawn on loan before June 30, 2026
- Final sales must be equal to or greater than prior year's sales

0% Crop Protection

- 0% to August 31, 2026
- Effective September 1, 2026 rate changes to 5.00% fixed until December 31, 2026
- Effective January 1, 2027 rate changes to the FS index Rate x+ 1.00% until maturity
- March 15, 2027 loan maturity date
- Invoices will be billed deferred and drawn on loan before August 31, 2026
- Final seed sales must be equal to or greater than prior year's sales

0% BASF

- 0% to November 30, 2026 if purchased by March 15, 2026
- Effective December 1, 2026 rate changes to FS Index Rate until maturity
- March 15, 2027 loan maturity date
- \$10,000 minimum initial purchase
- 4.99% APR on purchases between March 16, 2026 - September 30, 2026
- All participating brands and fungicide application

Input Loans

- All prepay and in-season crop input purchases
- Full term variable rate
- March 15, 2027 loan maturity date



Health on the Farm

By the Knox County Health Department



Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

The holidays are right around the corner, and our WIC office at the Knox County Health Department is here to offer you support through this busy season.

The WIC program offers nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and access to healthy foods for pregnant and postpartum women, as well as children up to the age of 5. Our staff work closely with families to assess their nutritional needs, connect them with resources, and ensure they receive the support necessary for healthy growth and development. "If times have changed for you and you could use a little extra help, then please stop at the WIC office to verify your eligibility to see if we can help you or your family. We are here to help lessen the struggle," states Stacy Bainter, the Director of Family Health at the Knox County Health Department.

The WIC food packages provide supplemental foods designed to address the specific nutritional needs of participants. Whether you are pregnant, breastfeeding, or postpartum, WIC has a food package tailored for you. Packages also differ between infants and children aged 1 to 5 years old,

to offer the best nutrition for their stage of growth. To make grocery shopping easier, WIC has launched the Illinois Interactive Food Guide. This online tool can help you quickly identify which foods and brands are WIC-approved, so there is no guesswork at the grocery store. The guide can be accessed at IllinoisWICFoods.org.

Along with the normal benefits, WIC participants are issued Farmer's Market coupons every summer. These coupons can be used to buy fresh fruits and vegetables from farmers markets or roadside stands starting in July until the end of October.

If you need breastfeeding guidance, look no further. Michelle Rickard, our Certified Lactation Counselor (CLC), is here to provide support for you and your baby to achieve your breastfeeding goals. She can assist you in prenatal breastfeeding education, positioning and latching, breastmilk storage, and handling, and how to overcome common breastfeeding challenges.

To learn more about WIC, check your eligibility, or ask any questions, call the Knox County Health Department at (309) 344-0319.

Knox County Agriculture in the Classroom Update



As the holidays approach, Mrs. Green has been teaching kindergarten and first grade students about reindeer. Fortunately for Knox County, we have a reindeer farm for students to visit if they want to see a REAL reindeer.

Prairie Moon Farms in Knoxville has helped to educate coordinators about reindeer. This year they were so gracious and allowed AITC to borrow a REAL reindeer antler! Students were amazed at the size of the antler, and they compared it to two different white-tailed deer antlers brought to class. They also compared the size and shape of horns to antlers. While reindeer and white-tailed deer look a lot alike, they also have a connection to cows.

Male reindeer are called bulls

and female reindeer are called cows, making their babies a calf! Students enjoyed the up-close experience of learning about antlers.

Mrs. Hennenfent has been teaching the third, fourth and fifth graders about turkeys for the month of November. Her focus is on turkey production. Female hens lay the eggs which hatch in 28 days. The baby poult are delivered to farmers on heated semi-trucks within 24 hours. The poult start in brooding barns with warmer temperatures and high protein food. After five weeks, they move to finishing buildings.

Female hens and male toms are separated when they hatch and kept in different buildings. Females are processed as whole birds in four months and toms are processed into sliced deli meats, bacon and sausage at five months.

So, your Thanksgiving turkey is a hen and Subway sandwich is from toms! Mrs. Hennenfent also brought in wild turkey tail feathers so the students could see the difference between wild and farm turkey feathers. We learned their other distinguishing characteristics, too. Our goal is always to teach students better understanding and appreciation for the foods they eat!



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Recipe of the Month Andes Mint Cookies

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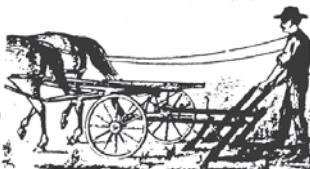
- 1 box chocolate cake mix
- 1 cup Andes mint baking chips
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 20 Andes mint chocolates

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F and line a cookie sheet with parchment paper or silicone baking mat.
2. Combine cake mix, eggs, and oil and mix until dough forms.
3. Stir in Andes mint pieces.
4. Portion out balls of dough that are 1 1/2 inch to 2 inches in size.
5. Place cookie balls on baking sheet, about 2-3" apart.
6. Bake at 350 for 8-10 minutes, until cookies puff up and cracks form in the surface.
7. Remove from oven and immediately place one unwrapped Andes chocolate mint on top of each cookie.
8. Wait a couple minutes so that the hot cookies start to melt the chocolates. Use an offset spatula or butter knife to spread the chocolate on top of the cookies.
9. Allow cookies to cool, so chocolate sets.



Looking Back



December 2000



Knox County Young Farmers Rob Link, Matt Hawkinson, Matt Hennenfent, and Bill Hennenfent unloaded the 69 cases of oranges and grapefruit off the semi-truck in the season's biggest snowstorm. The oranges and grapefruit were part of the items sold by the Young Farmers and Women's Committee for this year's Holiday Food Sale.

PrimeTimers News

PrimeTimers met on November 18 for the Holiday Meal at PZ's Place & Steakhouse. We missed a few this year but still had a great turnout! PrimeTimers will not meet in December. The next meeting is the Program of Work meeting on January 20. Please call the office to be added to the mailing list if you would like to join. Members 55 and older are welcome to join!

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~ CLASSIFIED ADS ~

To place ads in the Bulletin or on the website, you must be a Knox County Farm Bureau member. Call 309-342-2036 or email us at assistant@knoxfb.org by the last Friday of each month to place your ad.

FOR SALE: Three David White Realist transit items: Meridian 8820 level in hard plastic case, with owner's guide. 9031-610 tripod, approx. 5' tall. 7611-902 wood rod, 9 1/2 feet long in 2 sections. Originally purchased from Ken Co., Galesburg in

the late 1970s. All for \$200. Please call and leave a message, 309.368.5162.

FOR SALE: 2005 Chevrolet Colorado Extended Cab Pickup. 4-Door w/ 6' bed. For details please call - 309-351-8937

If you sell your items, please contact the Knox County Farm Bureau office at 309-342-2036 or email assistant@knoxfb.org, so we can provide our readers with up-to-date information.



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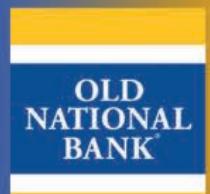
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