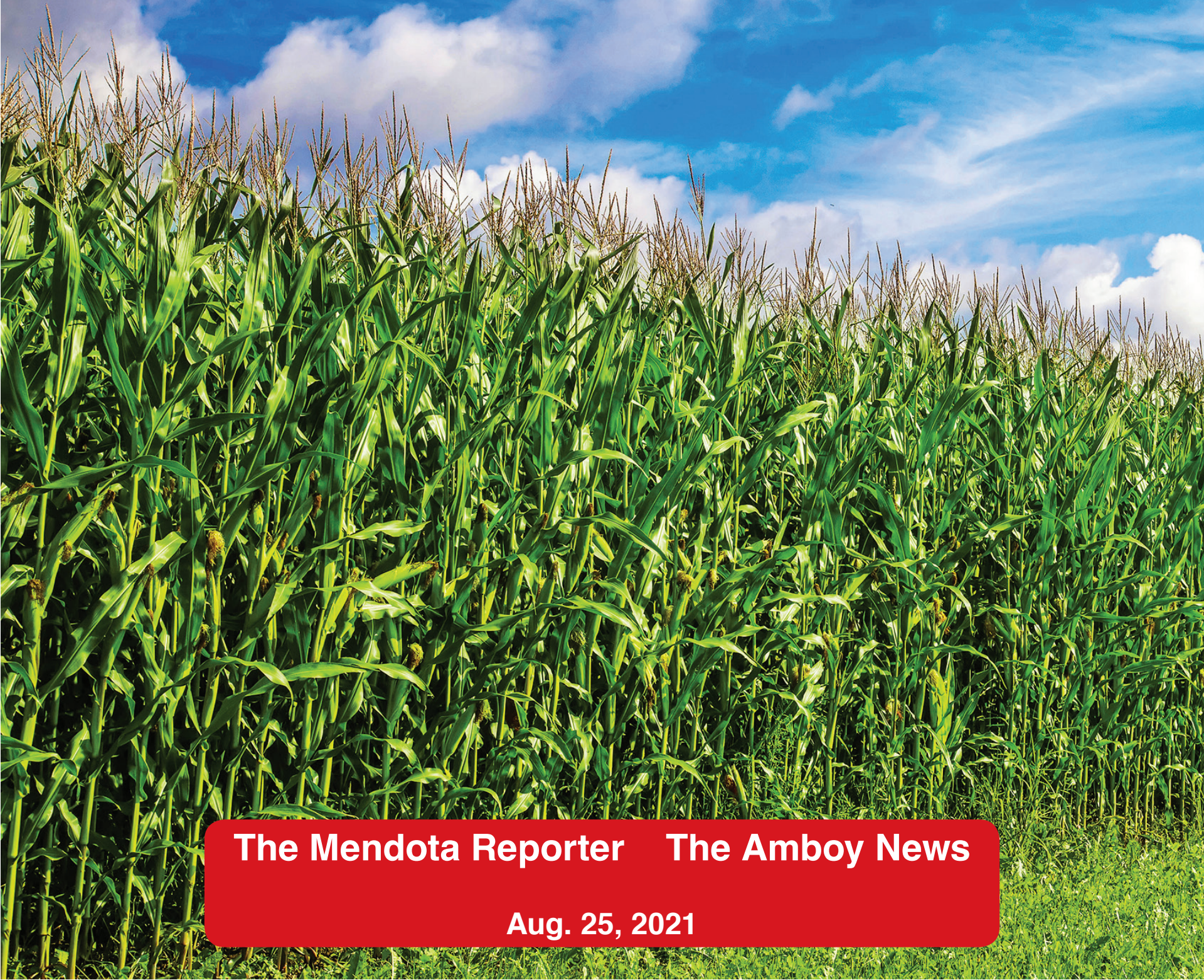


# ***THE FARMER'S REPORT***



**The Mendota Reporter    The Amboy News**

**Aug. 25, 2021**

## Lawmakers celebrate Illinois' role in distribution of penicillin

BY JERRY NOWICKI

Capitol News Illinois

**SPRINGFIELD** – Lawmakers gathered recently at the University of Illinois Springfield to designate a new state microbe and add agriculture sciences to the list of courses that fulfill admissions requirements at state universities.

Penicillium rubens NRRL 1951, which yields the antibiotic penicillin, was designated as the official state microbe in House Bill 1879, which Gov. JB Pritzker signed.

While the first mold spore that produces penicillin was discovered in Europe in 1928, the National Center for Agriculture Utilization in Peoria, known as the Ag Lab, was the site of the penicillium rubens discovery in the 1940s which allowed for speedier production of the antibiotic used

to treat several infections.

Peoria Democrat Sen. Dave Koehler, who sponsored the bill in the Senate, noted penicillin's contribution to halting bacterial infections such as gangrene in soldiers wounded in World War II.

"There was no way to treat it," Koehler said while holding up a specimen of the mold discovered in Peoria. "Penicillin stopped that."

"Not only did the mass production of penicillin in Peoria change the world by helping us win World War II and saving countless lives across the globe, but it also provided an important recipe that I think we should follow here in Illinois today," House sponsor Rep. Ryan Spain, R-Peoria, said at the news conference. "Currently, as many investments in our country for research and development have migrated to the East and West Coast, this recognition today in this bill signing is a reminder that there is a place for discovery and implementation here in Illinois."

Spain announced stakeholders from his hometown in Peoria are launching a "comprehensive effort to return bio manufacturing and pharmaceutical mass production to central Illinois," known as Peoria Bio-Made.

"We are collaborating with leading biotech entrepreneurs in San Diego and Boston to bring discoveries from the coast back to Peoria for last-mile testing and full scale production," he said.

Pritzker also took time to recognize Mary Hunt, known as "Moldy Mary," who was a researcher at the lab who

collected and tested mold samples, including the moldy cantaloupe that led to the discovery of the more easily cultured penicillium strain.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers also celebrated the governor's signature on House Bill 3218 and Senate Bill 1624, two measures that add "agriculture education" to the list of acceptable electives that qualify a student for admission to state universities, and "agricultural sciences" to the list of acceptable science courses for admission.

"These young people who are taking agricultural science, it allows them to meet the science requirements in high school, so as they move through college, they've got that background," Sen. Elgie Sims, D-Chicago, who sponsored the bill, said at the news conference. "So it allows them to expand their horizons; again, it opens up all those pathways to success."

"This expansion of agricultural education options was made possible by students, teachers, FFA clubs and lawmakers coming together to ensure that high school students in Illinois can access the tools they need to continue our proud Illinois agriculture tradition," he said.

The three bills signed last week take effect in January.

(Capitol News Illinois is a nonprofit, nonpartisan news service covering state government and distributed to more than 400 newspapers statewide. It is funded primarily by the Illinois Press Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.)



Riley Klein

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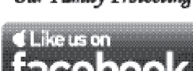
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## Summer Farm Show attendance expected to rival pre-pandemic numbers

**ST. CHARLES** – As the agriculture industry continues to prepare for a return to live events and farm shows this summer, Farm Progress - the 180-year-old agriculture publisher and farming information powerhouse - says that all signs point to a strong rural economy and even stronger interest from ag business leaders, as well as farmers, in getting back together at in-person events.

"The ag community has not come together in person since early 2020," said Don Tourte, senior vice president of sales and events with Farm Progress. "Our surveys show that up to 85 percent of farmers who have visited Farm Progress Show or Husker Harvest Days in the past four years intend to visit in person again this year." Farm Progress Show will be held in Decatur, Aug. 31 – Sept. 2, 2021, with Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island, Neb., Sept. 14-16, 2021.

Tourte says that several variables, including strong grain prices, record-low interest rates and growing exports, are contributing toward a positive outlook this summer for both farmers and ag businesses alike. "Ag commodities are significantly over breakeven, meaning that farmers have a higher net income in 2021," said Tourte. "This is good news for farmers and the industry that supports them," he said. "This year's summer farm shows offer an excellent opportunity to engage potentially ready-to-buy farmer-customers and provide further exposure to, and consideration for, new

products, technologies and brands that are launching for the 2022 crop year."

AgriMarketing magazine reported on June 22 that their Agri-Marketer Poll showed that a majority of respondents are planning to attend in-person events this summer. When asked, "Would you attend an in-person event in the next three months," 56 percent of 118 respondents answered yes.

Matt Jungmann, Farm Progress events director, says he is more and more optimistic about how visitors will experience this year's shows. "There's lots of excitement, support and anticipation from exhibitors. Farmers in the host states of Illinois and Nebraska are telling me that they're looking forward to summer farm shows a little differently this year."

About Farm Progress

As part of Informa Markets, Farm Progress is the largest, most diversified agriculture information business in North America. Through a robust network of live events, digital products, data, marketing services, broadcasting and local and national publications, Farm Progress enables the nation's most economically significant farmers, growers and ranchers to connect and do business. It serves 80 percent of the 2 million farms and ranches in the U.S., and an estimated 85 percent of the nation's annual agricultural gross domestic product. Visit our website at <https://Marketing.FarmProgress.com>.

## “Unlimited potential” with U.S., U.K. trade agreement

BY TAMMIE SLOUP

FarmWeek

Illinois Farm Bureau is looking forward to more trade opportunities with the United Kingdom – a trade partner already “integral” to the state’s ag community. “We see great opportunity and are motivated to help get these talks on the front burner,” said IFB President Richard Guebert Jr. “Trade has always been important to farmers across not only Illinois, but across the Midwest.”

Free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations have stalled under the Biden administration, but U.K. officials indicated to a group of Illinois agriculture leaders recently the nation is “ready to go.”

“And of course, agriculture is a huge, huge part of any FTA,” Alan Gogbashian, consul general, British Consulate Chicago, said during an agriculture roundtable. “And sitting here in the Midwest, where agriculture plays such a significant part of the economy, it’s important for us that agricultural voices in the Midwest are heard, and your questions, your concerns or interests are fed in and they help shape the negotiation.”

The virtual meeting, organized by U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis, R-Taylorville, included state leaders from IFB, Illinois Department of Agriculture, agribusiness and county Farm Bureaus, as well as officials from the British Consulate and Embassy. Topics ranged from the status of the trade negotiations to new market potential and domestic ag issues in the U.K.

“It’s an interesting time in the U.K. with Brexit being finalized not too long ago, and what implications that could

have positively and possibly negatively with the EU and U.S. trade agreements,” Davis said.

IDOA Director Jerry Costello touted the state’s transportation options, as well as the state’s ag stats: No. 1 producer of soybeans, No. 2 for corn and No. 4 for pork production. Illinois also leads the country in processed food production.

One in four jobs in the state are in some way ag related, and the economic impact of the industry to the state totals about \$19 billion.

“So, there are so many things that we have to offer. But having great trade partners like the U.K. is so integral to everything that we do in agriculture,” Costello said. “We’re strong advocates for free trade. ... We’re always trying to find ways to help our farmers and our manufacturers, but that also means helping and working with our trading partners.”

In 2020, about \$73 million worth of food and agriculture was exported to the U.K. And the U.K. is Illinois’ 17th largest food and agriculture market.

“There’s unlimited potential as far as what we can all do working together,” Costello said.

Trade negotiations between the two nations began in May 2020, extending to the presidential election, at which time talks stalled.

“We are keen to get back to the negotiating table and not abandon the really good progress that we’ve made,” said Jennifer Groover, senior policy adviser for trade and agriculture for the U.K.

Since leaving the European Union, Groover said the number of trade agreements negotiated by the U.K. has been “very robust,” noting the most recent agreement with

Australia marked its 64th.

When the U.K. left the European Union, the nation also left the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Roughly one-third of the EU budget goes to CAP and much of that is in support of direct payments.

“Many U.K. producers have become reliant on those payments, and about nearly half of all U.K. farms would not survive if they did not have that payment system,” Groover said. “But of course, now the U.K. is establishing its own agricultural policies and it’s mind blowing in a sense. ... You’re not working from a farm bill from cycle to cycle, but instead actually standing up new policies that will work best for U.K. producers and consumers.”

Opportunity was a running theme throughout the discussion.

“Between the U.S. and U.K., from agricultural colleges and land grant institutions ... to companies who are doing amazing, innovative work, there’s room here for innovation, particularly in the agritech space,” Groover said. “You don’t necessarily think of the U.K. as an agricultural powerhouse, but when it comes to agritech, and when it comes to leading in some of these really innovative things, the U.K. very much is in that space.”

The U.K. also recently announced it will expand ethanol blends in the country from E5 to E10 starting later this year.

(This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association.)

## USDA Announces \$10 Million in Grant Funding Available for the Specialty Crop Multi-State Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that \$10 million is available for competitive grant funding in the 2021 Specialty Crop Multi-State Program (SCMP).

“This program is an important resource to strengthen the competitiveness of our nation’s specialty crop industry,” said Bruce Summers, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, which manages SCMP. “By working across state lines, grant recipients can share resources and collaboratively address challenges for specific crops.”

Grants are awarded to state departments of agriculture to fund collaborative, multi-state projects that address food safety, plant pests and disease, research, crop-specific common issues, and marketing and promotion for specialty crops including fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, and horticulture and nursery crops, including floriculture.

State departments must partner with organizations located in at least two different states to qualify. Partner organizations include specialty crop producer associations and groups, state agencies, Tribal governments, universities, nonprofits,

and other stakeholder groups and organizations.

Funding will be available for use in the Spring of 2022 with awarded projects with a period of performance of 36 months. Matching funds are not required.

In addition to screening proposals and submitting applications to AMS, participating state departments of agriculture will:

Assume administrative responsibility for any application they submit that is selected for funding.

Establish sub-grants and/or contracts with the multi-state partners to complete the project.

Applications must be received before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time December 6, 2021. For more information, visit the SCMP webpage or contact Martin Rosier at martin.rosier@usda.gov.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe,

healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

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## Iowa farmers develop Farmmee, an App that helps farmers

**DES MOINES, Iowa** – Every farmer knows what it's like to see a storm on the horizon with acres of crop to harvest before it hits. They also know the time-robbing impacts of breakdowns. Finding help quickly can be hard.

Not anymore. Farmmee (<https://www.farmmee.com>), solves dilemmas like this and more by quickly connecting farmers with farmers to solve immediate challenges. The app provides a robust collaboration network that lets farmers seek services by other farmers and also lets farmers offer their services to other farmers.

Becky McCrea, Waukee, Iowa; Cindy Rockwell, Carlisle, Iowa; and Molly Woodruff, Indianola, Iowa, are tech industry veterans and farmers who developed Farmmee.

"There are gaps in farming communities when it comes to connecting farmers to farmers," Woodruff, CEO and farmer, says. "Farmers consistently tell us their biggest need, or gap, is when their equipment breaks down or when they need extra equipment quickly. It is inefficient and hard to find help, especially because they're working with tight timelines.

"The need for quick connections to farmers, or providers with expertise, became our mission – connecting farmers to farmers," she adds. "We created Farmmee and began developing the app in March 2020. It helps farmers and providers work more efficiently with the time and resources they have by dynamically connecting them and their expertise to each other."

### Easy to use

The app, available in Android and iOS versions, is easy to use. There are two user categories: farmer and provider. Users can

be both, if desired. Using a menu, farmers can list jobs they want help with, such as planting corn, harvesting wheat, hauling cattle, baling hay and others.

Service providers can list the services they offer, such as spreading manure, hauling hay, agronomy and other types of services.

Once a farmer selects a service desired, Farmmee finds providers using ZIP codes and counties as GIS locators so providers will know where specific jobs are located. Farmers mark their fields so providers can validate the location for their ability to deliver services to them before offering a quote.

### Farmers and providers set their own rates, own timelines

Farmmee does not take a cut, or percentage, of the fees providers charge farmers. They are free to negotiate their own terms, conditions and form of payment. This leaves farmers fully in charge of the job and schedule.

Farmers can rate providers and provide reviews when jobs are completed, so there is incentive for providers to perform well.

Farmers can also be providers. For example, they can offer their expertise and their equipment to plow fields, plant, harvest, haul grain and get paid and extend their equipment investments.

Farmers listing jobs can use the app at no charge. Service providers can list all the services they want for as low as \$19.99 a month.

### Iowa born. Iowa operated

Farmmee was born in Iowa and maintains operations there. Woodruff and her husband operate a diversified farm. In addition to her work with Farmmee, she works with organizations to build individual and team strength

and to develop cultures of communication and understanding.

Cindy Rockwell is Farmmee director of business development. She grew up on a corn and soybean farm in southern Iowa where she learned to drive a truck feeding cattle when she was 5 years old and was driving a tractor at age 9. She's worked with technology for more than 25 years, including John Deere, Pioneer Hi-Bred and Farmers Mutual. She bought a corn and soybean farm five years ago and for the past two years, has been exploring ways to make farming better with technology.

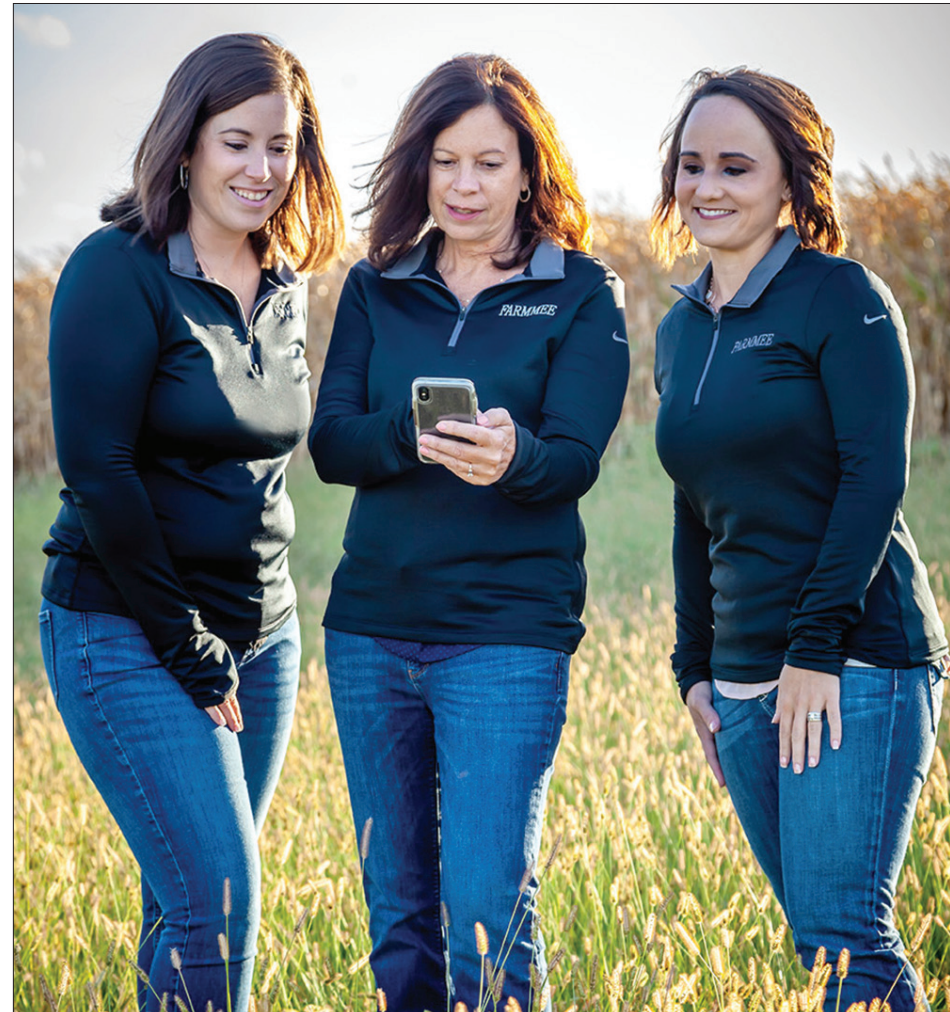
Becky McCrea, Ohio native and now an Iowa resident, is Farmmee chief technology officer. She has developed innovative technology solutions for more than 15 years as an engineer, full-stack developer and Salesforce lightning developer. Her career has focused

on bridging the gap between IT stakeholders by identifying ways to improve company operations. She has worked with various companies in agriculture including, Farmers Mutual Hail, Growers Edge and others.

"Our Iowa and agricultural backgrounds ensure we'll continue to improve Farmmee, adding innovations as is prudent and providing solid customer service for our farmers and providers," Woodruff says."

### About Farmmee

Farmmee is a female farmer-owned, Iowa-based company that connects farmers to farmers in their most critical times of need. We create real-time connections between farmers who want to capitalize on their equipment and service investments while helping other farmers. We also help farmers find the services they need when they need them.



Left to right, Molly Woodruff, CEO, Indianola, Iowa; Cindy Rockwell, director of business development, Carlisle, Iowa; and Becky McCrea, chief technology officer, Des Moines, are entrepreneurs who created Farmmee, a new app that connects farmers to farmers when they need it most. The app is available in Android and Apple platforms. More information is at <https://www.farmmee.com>

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## USDA invests \$5 million in Wetland Mitigation Banks

CHAMPAIGN – The USDA is investing up to \$5 million in the Wetland Mitigation Banking Program (WMBP), a grant program that supports the development of mitigation banks for use by agricultural producers seeking to maintain eligibility for USDA programs. Funds are available to government entities, nonprofits, and other organizations.

“Our goal is to ensure agricultural producers have the tools they need to successfully farm and conserve natural resources,” said Ivan Dozier, State Conservationist in Illinois. “Wetlands are critical to our efforts to respond to the climate crisis, and wetland mitigation banks allow the restoration or creation of wetlands for the purpose of compensating for unavoidable impacts to wetlands at another location.

The Wetland Mitigation Banking Program helps states, local governments, and other qualified partners restore, create, and enhance wetland ecosystems.”

In 2020, Illinois NRCS worked with Magnolia Bank Partners to restore and create a wetland mitigation bank site in Central Illinois. This year, they are creating another banking site in southern Illinois. Many producers have already inquired about purchasing credits. To participate in most USDA programs, agricultural producers agree to comply with wetland conservation provisions, which means producers will not farm converted wetlands or convert wetlands to enable agricultural production. In situations where avoidance or on-site mitigation is challenging, the Farm Bill

allows for off-site mitigation through the purchase of mitigation banking credits.

### About the Wetland Mitigation Banking Program

NRCS awarded the first WBMP grants in 2016 and so far, has supported the creation or expansion of wetland mitigation banks in 11 states. So far, 21 wetland bank sites have been established through the program, totaling 313 acres. Several more sites have been secured and are in various stages of the restoration process. The 2018 Farm Bill provided an opportunity for funding for this program through fiscal 2023.

NRCS is prioritizing funds in states with large amounts of wetlands as well as large amounts of producers with wetland determination requests. This



Wetland Mitigation Banking Program



includes Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin. Awardees may use WMBP funding to support mitigation bank site identification, development

of a mitigation banking instrument, site restoration, land surveys, permitting and title searches, and market research. WMBP funding cannot be used to purchase land or a conservation easement.

### Submitting Proposals

NRCS is accepting proposals through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. ET on August 16, 2021. To learn more, visit the WMBP webpage.

## Country music star Lee Brice to debut new song during Farm Progress Show concert

DECATUR – Farm Progress Show 2021 will feature a new voice in support of agriculture and American farmers – that of country music star Lee Brice. On Sept. 1, Brice will hold a concert presented by Case IH and co-sponsored by Farm Progress, during which Brice will debut his new song “Farmer” to Farm Progress Show attendees, exhibitors and sponsors.

“Our team is proud to come alongside Case IH and Lee Brice,” said Don Tourte, senior vice president of sales and events with Farm Progress. “It’s a main tenet of our company’s deep-rooted history in agriculture that we find – and create – opportunities to empower and encourage U.S. farmers and ranchers. We’re delighted to co-sponsor this concert experience and help share it with farming families at this year’s Farm Progress Show.”

“Farmer” is all about elevating the farming profession by painting a picture of the hardworking individuals and whole families – even generations of families – who dedicate so much of their time, resources, energy and lives providing for us

all,” Brice said. “The song is a celebration of the tireless and often unacknowledged work that goes into keeping families across America fed.”

The song reinforces the mission of Case IH’s Built by Farmers brand campaign, which highlights the deep ties between Case IH employees and their collective farming backgrounds.

“Our partnership with Lee Brice personifies what we are all about at Case IH – we celebrate the hard-working producers whose perseverance is unmatched like no other,” said Scott Harris, Case IH vice president of North America. “Our work with Lee not only brings the recognition farmers deserve but also showcases the importance of the agriculture industry and its impact on every single person in North America.”

General admission tickets to the Farm Progress Show on Wednesday, Sept. 1, will include entry to the Brice concert. The opening act starts at 5:30 p.m.

The Farm Progress Show will be held Tuesday, Aug. 31, through Thursday, Sept. 2, in Decatur. Farm Progress – the

180-year-old agriculture publisher and farming information powerhouse – is America’s most trusted information and news sources, offering best practices and insights on growing crops, livestock and the family farm.

Visit [farmprogressshow.com](http://farmprogressshow.com) for more information about Farm Progress Show 2021.

For more information about the Case IH Built by Farmers campaign, visit [BuiltByFarmers.com](http://BuiltByFarmers.com).



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## Illinois youth leaders become global changemakers

URBANA – Members of the Illinois 4-H Youth Science Ambassador Team created and presented a youth-led presentation focused on the causes of climate change, the science of the carbon cycle, and the impact which our food choices can have on our environment to an audience of their Brazilian peers from the Federal Institute of Mato Grosso do Sul in late June. The presentation was part of the Ag Innovators Experience National 4-H grant program titled “Curbing Our Carbon Appetite.”

Youth presenters shared complex scientific ideas in an understandable way in order to help promote scientific data and how it can influence solutions to real-world problems. Youth were excited to share their passion for positive global change with a larger audience.

“I have realized the amount of real-world challenges that the agriculture industry is currently experiencing and how we, as humans, have the potential to educate others in the community about them and come up

with solutions,” says Krish Nangia, a DuPage County 4-H youth science ambassador and program presenter.

“To be aware of how your actions and the actions of those around you can impact the environment, and to know what steps we can take to improve our surroundings and reduce the rate of global warming is so important,” says Supriya Anand, a fellow DuPage County 4-H youth science ambassador and program presenter. “I could not miss a chance to help others understand the importance of protecting the current environment and climate.”

Presenters gained experience in sharing a scientific and data-driven message, but also in adapting that messaging to a global audience.

“My program focus was teaching how to make a carbon-friendly lunch with typical, everyday foods. But the food choices offered in the activity were predominantly traditional American foods and we knew that most of the food choices would not create a relatable meal for a Brazilian audience,” says Supriya.

“I am from an immigrant family, so I understood this firsthand. We adjusted the program to also ask the Brazilian students to assess the carbon footprint of their typical foods. It created a comprehensive and interesting discussion!”

Overall, the program helped the youth not only share their message but become stronger presenters no matter the audience as well.

“This experience has given me the continued lesson about the need to adapt when teaching an activity to a group,” says Krish. “This workshop had everything, from an audience who had learned English as a second language to the challenges of facilitating an interactive activity like this in a virtual manner. As a group, we had to adapt and modify our activities such that it is easy to understand and engaging.”

The presenters also gained a perspective of themselves as global citizens with common goals.

“We had a great conversation with

the students about problems that both the United States and Brazil experience due to climate change and the alteration of the environment,” says Supriya. “For example, the extreme wildfires in the Amazon and California last year were a consequence of excessive greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. This experience emphasized how the issues that this program is addressing are truly global.”

The Curbing Our Carbon Appetite program will continue to focus on ways to include a broader audience and may help pave the way for future collaborations.

“I can say with confidence that our youth presenters demonstrated what is best about Illinois 4-H,” says Mark Becker, University of Illinois Extension 4-H youth development specialist. “I’m looking forward to our next opportunity to work together as this was a great way to build a bridge with youth from Brazil who are interested in how they can have a positive impact on climate change.”

## Standards ensure fresh fruits and vegetables are ripe, ready and safe to enjoy

BY KATIE ZELECHOWSKI

Illinois Farm Bureau

Have you ever gotten home with a bag of fresh produce and wondered what to do with it? Do those colorful fruits and veggies go immediately in the fridge, or are you supposed to wash them off first?

The short answer is that you should always wash your fruits and vegetables before eating them.

Even prewashed foods, like leafy greens, should be rinsed, according to Illinois Farm Bureau Associate Director of Food Systems Development Raghela Scavuzzo. She recommends washing produce with a hard, peelable skin ahead of time but waiting to clean off soft fruits, such as strawberries or blueberries, until right before you plan to eat them.

“We’re not talking about extensive washing—just enough to wash the dirt off and make sure it’s clean,” she said.

Farmers also play a vital role in ensuring the food we eat is grown in a safe, affordable and environmentally friendly way. With help from state and national regulatory agencies, families can focus on making memories while cooking fun summer recipes, rather than worrying about the safety of ingredients.

Under the Food Quality Protection Act, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes safe pesticide residue levels for commodities. Once levels are established, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) monitors them and the Food and Drug Administration enforces them.

“When all of these are put together, I think it should give consumers confidence that we are living up to food quality protection (standards),” said Brenda Foos, director for the USDA Agricultural Marketing Services Monitoring Programs Division.

USDA collects food samples from distribution centers near consumers and tests them for pesticide residue levels. Fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, dairy products, nuts, greens, honey and bottled water are examined in the program.

Nine states, including Illinois, participate in the collection process and state agencies help USDA test the samples.

More than 600 samples of 14 different commodities are tested for pesticide residue each year, totaling nearly 10,000 samples of conventionally and organically grown foods.

High-consumption commodities are rotated through the program every five years.

“We just don’t have the resources to monitor all foods every year,” Foos said.

Over the past five years combined, less than 1 percent of tested food samples showed levels that exceeded set

tolerances, while nearly 99 percent remained within acceptable ranges.

“Data continues to show that when pesticide residues are found on foods, they are nearly always at levels below the tolerances for maximum residue levels that are set by the Environmental Protection Agency,” Foos said.

2019 was the first time in 30 years that the rate exceeded 1 percent. Foos said the increase, which reached 1.29 percent, was largely due to a single commodity — basil.

“Basil accounted for nearly 75 percent of the samples that exceeded the tolerance,” she said.

The EPA responded by revising tolerances for herbs and spices, including basil, which Foos said should alleviate any concerns.

Under the federal Food Safety Modernization Act, every farm that sells fruits and vegetables in Illinois must comply with industry standards and sanitation guidelines.

“There’s a whole list of regulations that our farms have to follow to make sure that the product is as safe as possible before it can get into your hands,” said Scavuzzo, who also serves as executive director for the Illinois Specialty Growers Association.

Training includes learning how to deal with wildlife in crop fields and how to apply pesticides safely.

“While all of the things farmers do is important, it’s just as important for consumers to wash their fruits and vegetables,” Scavuzzo said.

“It’s better to wash things off than to regret it later,” she added.

The best way to make sure your produce is safe is to talk with the farmers who grow it.

(This story was distributed through a cooperative project between Illinois Farm Bureau and the Illinois Press Association.)

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## **N.L. Morton Buildings, Ltd.**

Route 251 S. • Mendota • 815-539-9325

## **Bradford Victor-Adams Mutual Insurance Company**

120 W. South St. • Franklin Grove  
815-456-2334

## **Stephenitch Do It Best Hardware**

1204 13th Ave • Mendota  
815-539-9394

## **River Valley Coop**

Manlius • 815-445-2311  
www.rivervalleycoop.com

## **LaSalle County Farm Bureau**

4201 N. Columbus St. • Ottawa • 815-433-0371

## **Sullivan's Foods**

1102 Meriden St • Mendota • 815-539-9341

## **First State Insurance**

715 Washington St. • Mendota • 815-539-5651

## **Financial Plus Credit Union**

1905 13th Ave. • Mendota • 815-539-3444  
Member ESI NCUA

## **Peru Waltham Mutual Insurance**

1724 Peoria St. • Peru • 815-223-4414  
Perumutual.com

## **Schimmer Chevy-Buick**

Route 251 South, Mendota  
815-539-9343  
www.schimmergm.com

