



## Marketers to Washington

Kyle Winkelmann of Tallula was one of 17 county Farm Bureau leaders, along with IFB staff, who participated in the recent Marketers to Washington tour. The group participated in the Aug. 12 lockup and release of USDA's Aug. 1 crop production report, and met briefly with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. In addition to the crop report, the group also toured USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Research Service Farm in Maryland, and then met with officials with the U.S. Grains Council, AFBF, and Monsanto. Kyle is the second person in line two of this photo.

## Illinois farm deaths decline

Twenty-one farm-related deaths occurred in Illinois during the past 12 months – the lowest number in six years, according to a Country Financial survey. The number is 12 fewer than in 2008-09, when 33 farm-related deaths were reported.

“National Farm Safety and Health Week (Sept. 19-25) is an opportunity to learn from the past and plan for future farm safety,” said Eric Vanasdale, senior loss control representative at Country. “While we are happy to see the number of farm deaths has fallen, Country will continue to educate farmers on farm safety trends and eliminate farm hazards. We care about farmers and their families.”

Six non-farm residents and 15 farmers died in Illinois from July 1, 2009, through June 2010. Tractor rollovers and runovers remained the leading cause of death for the 10th straight year. Tractor-vehicle collisions again ranked as the second leading cause of farm-related deaths, with grain bin incidents ranking third.

- One-third of farm-related deaths (seven) in Illinois were caused by tractor rollovers.

- Roadway collisions caused 29 percent of deaths as compared with 24 percent in 2008-09.

- Deaths involving grain bins increased to 19 percent from 12 percent during the previous year.

Country, the No. 1 insurer of Illinois farms, tracks farm-related deaths through newspaper accounts. Every year, Country reports the findings in conjunction with National Farm Safety and Health Week.

This year's theme is “ATVs: Work Smart. Ride Safe.” The Consumer Product Safety Commission reported 50 residents died from ATV-related incidents from 2006-08.

Of the 204 ATV deaths that occurred between 1990 and 2008, 94 percent occurred off the farm, according to statistics compiled by the University of Illinois Extension.

“Farmers and their families do a great job as responsible ATV drivers,” says Vanasdale. “There are some basic rules to remember when riding ATVs – be aware of your surroundings, wear helmets and don't allow passengers.”

Riders should be properly trained and should only operate age-appropriate ATVs, Vanasdale notes. Users who are not licensed drivers may not operate ATVs on roadways.

Vanasdale adds that utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), like John Deere Gators and Polaris Rangers, also pose a danger on the farm when not operated properly. UTV users should wear seatbelts if they are available within the vehicle and refrain from allowing passengers to ride in the bed of the vehicle.

## Board attendance

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
Terry Entwistle, Pres	X	X	X	C	X	X	X	X
Kyle Winkelmann, VP	X	X	X	A	X	X	X	
Bill Montgomery, Sec			X	N	X	X	X	X
Mark Stewart, Treas.	X	X	X	C	X	X	X	X
David Evers	X	X		E	X	X	X	
Richard Holliday	X	X	X	L	X	X	X	X
Gary Jurgens	X		X	E	X	X		X
Dennis Kunken	X	X	X	D	X	X	X	X
David Leischner	X	X	X		X	X	X	

## Welcome!

The Menard County Farm Bureau would like to welcome the following new members:

- Laci Randle
- Marc Wozniak
- Neil Frank
- Ian Evans
- Alyssa Canady
- Greg Hoke
- Randall Gum
- Rose Sanders
- Windell Milner

Thank you for your support of Menard County agriculture!



## Summer Institute 2

Greenview teacher Julie Rodgers, shown bottle feeding a dairy calf at the Ropp Jersey Cheese Farm, participated in the Summer Institute 2 in July.

## Coalition of farm organizations works to boost farmers' image

### Research finds misunderstandings

SPRINGFIELD — New consumer research by a coalition of farm organizations confirms that Illinois consumers care about who produces their food, but are misinformed about the family farmers who really grow and raise the majority of food produced in Illinois.

Extensive research from April to July showed the Illinois farmer is still held in substantial esteem by the public. But research also showed consumers have reduced trust in modern farming techniques and profound doubts about how their food is produced.

Farm organizations in the coalition, calling themselves “Illinois Farmers,” include the Illinois Beef Association, Illinois Corn Marketing Board, Illinois Farm Bureau, Illinois Pork Producers Association and Illinois Soybean Association. Their cooperative efforts were announced on Ag Day (Aug. 17) at the Illinois State Fair.

Research projects conducted on behalf of the group, supervised by Milwaukee-based agency Morgan & Myers, show a pervasive mistrust of farming practices that stems from consumer concerns about food safety and animal welfare on so-called “factory farms.”

While having trouble clearly defining “factory farms,” consumers uniformly feel that such farms dominate Illinois agriculture. In a statewide poll of more than 1,100 non-farm adults commissioned by the groups and conducted by GfK Roper, Illinois residents believe, on average, that 54 percent of Illinois farm products come from “corporate farms,” versus 46 percent from family farming.

In reality, the most recent USDA statistics show that individual family farms and partnerships dominate farming in the state, representing 94 percent of all farms.

“The American family farm should be the most trusted food-producing enterprise in the world,” said Ron Moore, ISA chairman and soybean farmer from Roseville, Ill. “But our customers think the family farm is passing from the scene. Nothing could be further from the truth. We may have larger farms with less diversity, but we are still farming together as a family, and often on the same land as previous generations.”

“We know that the best people to tell the story of today's agriculture are the people who raise the livestock and farm the ground day in and day out,” said Jeff Beasley, Illinois Beef Association vice president.

“We know of no better place than the Illinois State Fair to announce our intentions to update and reclaim the positive image of our ways of life,” said Beasley. “We look forward to sharing the true story of farming and helping consumers get to know us in a way that they can connect with farmers and those who raise livestock.”

### Makes a difference

Seventy-one percent of consumers in the poll said they felt more positive about farming when told the facts about the percentage of family-operated farms in the state.

“Farmers care deeply about our responsibility of raising safe and healthy food,” said Brent Scholl, a farmer from Polo and current IPPA president. “We must look for every opportunity to engage in a meaningful dialogue with consumers and be a trusted source of information on questions about how our food is grown

and raised.”

“But the current misunderstanding of consumers towards farming is really quite widespread – and creates substantial damage to their trust in farms and farming,” said Scholl.

For example, two-thirds of non-farmers say they are not knowledgeable about farming practices used on Illinois farms. But two-thirds also say they are personally concerned about “lax regulations of corporate farms.” And an equal number are concerned about “the role of big business in farming.”

“We are in an era when “Food, Inc.” and “The Omnivore's Dilemma” are required viewing and reading in our nation's high schools and universities,” said Donna Jeschke, a corn farmer from Mazon, Ill., and immediate past-chair of the ICMB. “Myths about food production are today's urban legends, invading our classrooms and churches. It's high time we in agriculture step back and consider the non-farmer and why they've come to the conclusions they have.”

The research of Illinois farmers has been used by the group to define a new “farmer's look” at the Commodity Pavilion on the Illinois State Fair grounds. Large-scale banners show photo portraits of farm men, women and children. More consumer communication using actual farmers and their families – through social media, conventional advertising and special events – will be designed and conducted by the group in the future.

“We who farm need to change the way we relate to consumers,” said Philip Nelson, a Seneca farmer and IFB president. “We must listen to their concerns even more than in the past, and open the gates and doors of our farms to rebuild trust in the way we really farm today.”