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Soil management meeting helps take confusion out of sampling

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — Soil sampling, testing and interpretation can be confusing. To help navigate this complex issue soil sampling was one of the topics of a recent soil management meeting held at the Illinois Soybean Association (ISA) office.

According to John Jones, Assistant Professor of Agronomy and Soil Fertility Extension Specialist at the University of Illinois, recent research in collaboration with Precision Planting and CropSmith, Inc. will serve to update the Illinois Agronomy Handbook in regards to crop soil testing recommendations. Jones, who spoke to farmers during the ISA's "Talk Dirt to Me" seminar on Thursday, December 11, said on-farm and clinical research funded by the Illinois Nutrient Research and Education Council (NREC) using improved technology is reshaping current recommendations for agricultural soil testing.

"The exciting thing to think about is which new technologies and sciences we can apply to get to a more accurate and precise prediction of fertilizer response," said Jones. U of I's ongoing NREC-funded research, which is serving to update soil test phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) interpretations, specifically, is the largest and most expansive P and K calibration effort in the U.S., Jones added.

"We're (testing) corn and soybean every year, conventional, strip till and no till comparison, a lot of rate and timing comparisons and with the amount of research sites we have across the state (around two dozen) I think we can represent the state soil regions very well," he said.

Jones advised farmers to avoid wet chemical methods of soil testing, which, he said, should be field-calibrated by an independent source if utilized. He also eschews recommending soil testing for micronutrients when testing soil nitrate levels. This should only be done when there is reason to suspect a soil deficiency.

"The biggest consensus is that soil testing for micronutrients has generally failed us in terms of predictability," said Jones, who grew up on a farm in south-central Wisconsin located on Saybrook and Plano soils. "I would say soil testing for zinc has been most consistent in having a relationship with response to yield, but boron, manganese, iron...we just haven't had that clear relationship between soil test levels and yield response."

Corey Lacey, environmental policy manager for the ISA, was in attendance at the meeting. As President of Agricultural Laboratory Testing Association, Lacey knows that farmers' decisions improve with help from soil data provided by high-functioning soil-testing laboratories.

"Soil testing represents one of the most cost-effective investments on a farm, typically amounting to only \$1 to \$2 per acre in a standard testing cycle," Lacey said in an ISA news release. "Despite its low cost, it yields one of the highest returns on investment. This is because it enables farmers to use precision agriculture technology (grid sampling, variable rate technology maps, etc.) to make informed fertilizer and lime applications, which can amount to hundreds of dollars per acre in input costs."

The University of Illinois Extension offers recommendations for soil testing methods. Their most recent recommendations, co-authored by Jones, include the following guidelines:

A soil probe is the best implement for obtaining soil samples, although an auger or a spade may be used if care is taken to collect an exact depth with a consistent slice thickness.

Soil samples should be a composite of 10 to 15 cores (whether grid or zone sampling) from the intended management area within a field, depending on field characteristics such as soil types, land or fertilizer uses, and terrain. Collecting 15-20 cores per area can improve representation.

(See Soil on page 4)



Above: We wish all of our readers and advertisers a very happy holiday season. May Santa bring you a wagon full of holiday cheer. Photo by Leondia Walchle

ICGA VP Tyler Everett participates in President Trump's roundtable

INDIANAPOLIS – Hoosier corn farmers were represented in the White House on Dec. 8 by Lebanon, Ind., farmer Tyler Everett, who was among the farmers in a roundtable discussion with President Donald Trump as the USDA's Farmer Bridge Assistance program was unveiled.

Everett is vice president of the Indiana Corn Growers Association (ICGA). He recently hosted USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins on his farm. Everett represented thousands of Indiana corn farmers and thousands more from across America at the roundtable discussion. Seven other U.S. farmers who produce a variety of crops also attended the roundtable.

Trump said the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program is intended to support farmers who have endured low crop prices and the impact of the president's tariff policies. The program offers \$11 billion in one-time payments to farmers who produce corn, soybeans, wheat, beef, potatoes, rice, sorghum and cotton. The remaining \$1 billion is set aside to help farmers

who produce crops not listed in the program.

Trump said the program is being funded from revenue gained through tariffs on foreign products. Rollins announced that farmers would receive payments by Feb. 28, and many farmers would find out how much assistance they will receive within the next few weeks. She added that this should allow U.S. farmers to plan for the spring planting season.

USDA said the bridge payments are intended in part to aid farmers until historic investments from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), including reference prices which are set to increase 10-21 percent for major covered commodities such as soybeans, corn, and wheat and will reach eligible farmers on Oct. 1, 2026.

The \$12 billion in farmer bridge payments, including those provided through the FBA Program, are authorized under the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Charter Act and will be administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), USDA said.


"Obviously this assistance helps, and the timing of it is good as we prepare for planning our spring planting," Everett said. "We thank President Trump and Secretary Rollins for listening to us. With this year's harvest, we completed a very challenging financial year. I believe most of us who produce crops would prefer to have free and fair markets around the world to export what we grow. I believe the administration is working toward that goal."

Along with his father, Everett owns and operates Everett Farms and Seed near Lebanon, Ind. He produces corn



Above: Tyler Everett poses with USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins.


(See Trump on page 2)

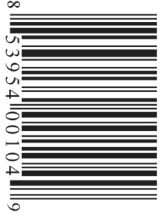


Tikkun Farm in Ohio teaches how to live off the land
Page 1B

In this Farm World:

Bellmore, Ind., fire department practices grain bin rescues
Page 3B





Trump

FROM PAGE 1

and soybeans on his multigenerational farm. Rollins visited Everett's farm in late October to announce that China had agreed to purchase 12 million metric tons of soybeans in 2025, then 25 million metric tons each during 2026 and 2027. But increased soybean exports aren't the only crisis facing farmers. Everett said making E15, a blend of 15 percent ethanol and 85 percent gasoline, would also benefit farmers

without government assistance.

"The policies that come from Washington do affect my farm, my family and my daughter's future," Everett explained. "Ethanol is a lifeline to that future. In Indiana, nearly half of our corn goes to ethanol. E15 cannot be sold year-round in many states. It is a safe and proven fuel. All U.S. vehicles can run cleanly and efficiently on E15. Making E15 sales available year-round is a common-sense step that will keep family farms afloat and strengthen our homegrown fuel supply. Let's make year-round E15 a reality."



Above: Indiana farmer Tyler Everett (end of table on right) was part of a roundtable discussion with President Donald Trump regarding the Farmer Bridge Assistance Program.

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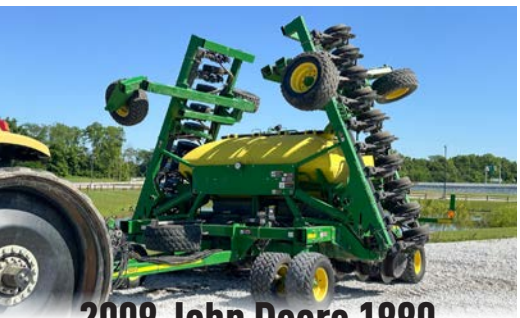
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Soil

FROM PAGE 1

Soil sample bags can be obtained from soil testing labs or input dealers and should be filled to the indicated line, around 1 quart.

The fertilizer recommendation system in Illinois is based on crop response to fertility levels in the top 7 inches of the soil, which is the proper sampling depth for pH, phosphorus, and potassium.

Samples that are too shallow will overestimate actual soil fertility, leading to the underapplication of lime or fertilizers. Samples taken too deep or where part of the top portion falls off during sampling will underestimate current soil fertility, causing over-application of lime or fertilizer.

Soil samples should be collected to the depth and at the same time which the soil test methods were calibrated. In order to provide a true measurement of fertility, soil samples should be collected from a depth of 7 inches, the same points of the field each time, and at the proper time as well as collected with the appropriate sampling distribution.

Soil testing is strongly suggested every 2-4 years if soils are at an optimum level of fertility, based on producers' goals, and base applications have been calculated. Samples should be collected at the same time of year.

Sampling should be avoided within a few months after a lime or fertilizer treatment due to higher nutrient values. After harvest in the fall is an ideal season to sample because soil moisture conditions are generally more stable, which can affect measured values of soil pH and potassium. Sampling in the spring is a viable option if soil sampling conditions are favorable, however, many times these results are not timely enough to guide P, K, or lime application until the following fall.

Sample locations can be identified



Above: Tim Smith of Cropsmith, Inc., led a conversation about modern soil testing methods that use advanced lab techniques to glean data from high-tech methods of data collection. Smith, a soils expert from Gibson City, Illinois, made his remarks during the Illinois Soybean Association's recent "Talk Dirt to Me: Soil Test Interpretation for Profitable Management" seminar. (T. Alexander photo)

using a global positioning system (GPS) unit or by accurately measuring the sample points with a device such as a measuring wheel.

Depending on the farm goals, the recommended tests include pH, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and sulfur.

Agricultural producers should contact an Extension office or fertilizer dealer to find a recommended soil lab near their operation. More information on U of I Extension crop soil sampling recommendations is available at: <https://extension.illinois.edu/crops/soil-sampling>. The Illinois Agronomy Handbook can be accessed at <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/agronomy-handbook>.

Contact Jones with soil sampling questions at jones86@illinois.edu.

Mexican farmers protest water law

MEXICO CITY (AP) – Dozens of farmers drove their tractors in a caravan to Mexico City and blocked an entrance to Mexico's Congress on Dec. 3 to protest a new national water law that imposes stricter controls on water use.

The farmers amassed outside the congressional chamber to protest the General Water Law proposal, which they say will take water away from the countryside and re-allocate it for discretionary use. They say the proposal threatens their livelihoods and chips away at their fundamental right to water.

"If it affects the countryside, it affects the city!" read a banner hanging from two tractors.

"We are protesting against the imposition by the federal government of a new water law, a reform that puts at risk the ownership of our lands," said Jorge Robles, a farmer from the northern state of Chihuahua.

The proposal backed by Mexi-

can President Claudia Sheinbaum is being discussed in the Chamber of Deputies, where the president's Morena Party has a majority. The law aims for the federal government to impose stricter penalties for water-related crimes and regulate water concessions – a sector plagued by high-profile corruption cases.

The farmers brought their demonstrations to the country's capital less than a week after they and groups of truck drivers lifted road and highway blockades in at least seven of the country's 32 states. They were protesting the new water law and insecurity on the country's highways, and demanding increases in corn and wheat prices.

They lifted the blockades after reaching an agreement with the federal government to address their demands, but agricultural leaders warned that they were prepared to escalate their protests if the proposal advances in Congress.

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MARKETS

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| Livestock Weighted Average Report for 12/8/2025 - Final | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| AUCTION | | | |
| | This Week | Last Reported | Last Year |
| | | 12/1/2025 | |
| Total Receipts: | 2,747 | 925 | 2,010 |
| Feeder Cattle: | 2,631(95.8%) | 788(85.2%) | 1,657(82.4%) |
| Slaughter Cattle: | 112(4.1%) | 112(12.1%) | 250(12.4%) |
| Replacement Cattle: | 4(0.1%) | 25(2.7%) | 103(5.1%) |

Special Note: ** Included in todays totals were 722 Head of weaned and pre-conditioned cattle from the Giles County Alliance ***

Compared to last Monday the feeder market was stronger with a good quality offering. Feeder steers and heifers 600 lbs and under were 10.00 to 15.00 higher or greater in spots with a good supply and strong demand for weaned packages and groups. Yearling steers and heifers appeared sharply higher as well, but with limited comparisons from the week before. Buyers were active today and willing to pay premiums for weaned packages and groups and guaranteed open heifers. Slaughter cows were 2.00 to 4.00 higher with a good supply and slaughter bulls were steady to 2.00 lower with good demand. Supply included: 96% Feeder Cattle (54% Steers, 42% Heifers, 5% Bulls); 4% Slaughter Cattle (2% Steers, 86% Cows, 12% Bulls); 0% Replacement Cattle (20% Stock Cows, 60% Bred Cows, 20% Bred Heifers). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 76%.

Groups of 20 Head or More

| STEERS | | | | HEIFERS | | | |
|---------------|---------|--------|--|---------------|---------|--------|--|
| 48 Black/BWF | 607 lbs | 408.50 | | 24 Black/BWF | 376 lbs | 396.00 | |
| 77 Black/BWF | 631 lbs | 409.50 | | 21 Black/BWF | 529 lbs | 366.00 | |
| 96 Black/BWF | 667 lbs | 388.00 | | 27 Black/BWF | 601 lbs | 368.00 | |
| 100 Black/BWF | 737 lbs | 356.75 | | 65 Black/BWF | 654 lbs | 347.00 | |
| 141 Black/BWF | 749 lbs | 368.00 | | 50 70% Black | 694 lbs | 319.50 | |
| 60 70% Black | 794 lbs | 348.25 | | 72 Black/BWF | 695 lbs | 335.50 | |
| 130 75% Black | 833 lbs | 345.25 | | 70 Black/BWF | 720 lbs | 333.25 | |
| 132 Black/BWF | 841 lbs | 333.50 | | 45 Black/BWF | 738 lbs | 330.00 | |
| 54 90% Black | 875 lbs | 329.00 | | 52 XBREDS | 752 lbs | 323.50 | |
| 55 90% Black | 976 lbs | 304.50 | | 24 Black/2RED | 781 lbs | 308.50 | |
| | | | | 62 80% Black | 828 lbs | 301.50 | |
| | | | | 34 Black/BWF | 842 lbs | 283.00 | |

FEEDER CATTLE

| STEERS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|---|----------|--------|---------------|--------------------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 2 | 225 | 225 | 447.50 | 447.50 | |
| 3 | 290 | 290 | 490.00 | 490.00 | |
| 3 | 326 | 326 | 485.00 | 485.00 | |
| 10 | 333-345 | 340 | 500.00-520.00 | 510.11 Fancy | |
| 8 | 376-385 | 381 | 475.00-497.50 | 485.21 | |
| 5 | 350-370 | 354 | 520.00-533.00 | 530.28 Fancy | |
| 4 | 402-430 | 410 | 427.50-445.00 | 439.89 | |
| 18 | 400-430 | 419 | 466.00-485.00 | 467.61 Fancy | |
| 2 | 455-475 | 465 | 435.00-445.00 | 439.89 | |
| 9 | 505-530 | 521 | 370.00-392.50 | 379.81 | |
| 21 | 525-545 | 533 | 430.00-435.00 | 432.88 Fancy | |
| 13 | 510-522 | 516 | 397.50-417.50 | 411.64 Value Added | |
| 27 | 572-596 | 579 | 372.00-382.50 | 376.30 | |
| 17 | 560-570 | 564 | 397.50-412.50 | 402.79 Value Added | |
| 38 | 600-645 | 618 | 346.00-371.00 | 359.94 | |
| 140 | 600-645 | 622 | 389.00-409.50 | 407.65 Value Added | |
| 20 | 650-696 | 676 | 320.00-339.00 | 326.42 | |
| 127 | 650-675 | 667 | 373.00-388.00 | 385.69 Value Added | |
| 41 | 700-740 | 723 | 321.00-345.00 | 334.33 | |
| 246 | 737-749 | 744 | 351.00-368.00 | 363.13 Value Added | |
| 43 | 750-788 | 774 | 315.00-334.00 | 323.30 | |
| 65 | 756-794 | 791 | 348.25-349.00 | 348.31 Value Added | |
| 19 | 812-847 | 828 | 305.00-321.00 | 312.19 | |
| 262 | 833-841 | 837 | 333.50-345.25 | 339.30 Value Added | |
| 15 | 852-887 | 868 | 303.00-324.00 | 308.93 | |
| 54 | 875 | 875 | 329.00 | 329.00 Value Added | |
| 11 | 905 | 905 | 318.00 | 318.00 | |
| 1 | 985 | 985 | 264.00 | 264.00 | |
| 57 | 950-976 | 975 | 300.00-304.50 | 304.35 Value Added | |
| 1 | 1010 | 1010 | 270.00 | 270.00 | |
| 4 | 1088 | 1088 | 271.00 | 271.00 | |

| STEERS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|---|----------|--------|---------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 270 | 270 | 385.00 | 385.00 | |
| 4 | 375-387 | 384 | 385.00-402.50 | 396.89 | |
| 8 | 405-440 | 431 | 399.00-412.00 | 407.28 | |
| 14 | 470-495 | 487 | 380.00-412.50 | 404.50 | |
| 6 | 500-547 | 524 | 347.50-360.00 | 354.53 | |
| 3 | 550-595 | 568 | 345.00-350.00 | 346.74 | |
| 3 | 600 | 600 | 327.00 | 327.00 | |
| 4 | 658-695 | 667 | 309.00-313.00 | 310.04 | |
| 7 | 728-740 | 731 | 301.00-314.00 | 310.97 | |
| 3 | 760-765 | 763 | 285.00-300.00 | 289.98 | |
| 1 | 825 | 825 | 297.00 | 297.00 | |

| STEERS - Medium and Large 2-3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|---|----------|--------|-------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 490 | 490 | 317.50 | 317.50 | |
| 1 | 605 | 605 | 287.00 | 287.00 | |

| HEIFERS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|------------------------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 205 | 205 | 420.00 | 420.00 | |
| 5 | 252-260 | 254 | 410.00-435.00 | 429.87 | |
| 3 | 305-325 | 315 | 389.00-400.00 | 393.91 | |
| 1 | 340 | 340 | 437.50 | 437.50 Fancy | |
| 40 | 355-385 | 374 | 382.50-405.00 | 396.14 | |
| 10 | 355-398 | 380 | 407.50-425.00 | 416.01 Fancy | |
| 19 | 400-445 | 425 | 362.50-382.50 | 373.56 | |
| 19 | 408-426 | 416 | 393.00-417.50 | 401.24 Fancy | |
| 35 | 455-498 | 484 | 351.00-371.00 | 362.87 | |
| 45 | 450-495 | 475 | 375.00-394.00 | 386.07 Fancy | |
| 42 | 500-547 | 521 | 345.00-363.00 | 357.26 | |
| 39 | 507-532 | 527 | 366.00-379.00 | 369.06 Guaranteed Open | |
| 27 | 550-585 | 575 | 330.00-350.00 | 344.75 | |
| 22 | 555-580 | 571 | 359.00-368.00 | 363.75 Guaranteed Open | |
| 80 | 600-646 | 630 | 326.00-353.00 | 338.39 | |
| 54 | 600-617 | 607 | 360.00-368.00 | 366.85 Value Added | |
| 63 | 650-694 | 688 | 302.50-323.00 | 318.32 | |
| 149 | 654-673 | 663 | 335.00-347.50 | 341.07 Value Added | |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---------|------|---------------|------------------------|--|
| 10 | 705-725 | 719 | 283.00-302.50 | 291.29 | |
| 115 | 717-738 | 725 | 330.00-333.25 | 331.96 Value Added | |
| 19 | 755-793 | 772 | 281.00-297.00 | 291.29 | |
| 79 | 752-788 | 762 | 308.50-323.50 | 318.44 Value Added | |
| 37 | 830-842 | 841 | 277.00-283.00 | 282.52 | |
| 62 | 828 | 828 | 301.50 | 301.50 Value Added | |
| 4 | 855-875 | 864 | 260.00-273.00 | 264.74 | |
| 3 | 902-925 | 910 | 252.50-267.00 | 262.09 | |
| 1 | 960 | 960 | 226.00 | 226.00 | |
| 5 | 953 | 953 | 261.00 | 261.00 Guaranteed Open | |
| 2 | 1055 | 1055 | 197.00-204.00 | 200.50 | |

| HEIFERS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 280 | 280 | 385.00 | 385.00 | |
| 1 | 345 | 345 | 362.50 | 362.50 | |
| 4 | 355-390 | 370 | 351.00-377.50 | 362.95 | |
| 4 | 435-437 | 436 | 340.00-354.00 | 347.02 | |
| 6 | 480-488 | 486 | 317.00-343.00 | 337.17 | |
| 8 | 500-545 | 532 | 325.00-337.00 | 329.96 | |
| 8 | 601-640 | 612 | 309.00-322.50 | 317.72 | |
| 6 | 657-690 | 667 | 265.00-287.50 | 273.90 | |
| 4 | 815-827 | 821 | 255.00 | 255.00 | |

| HEIFERS - Medium and Large 2-3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 2 | 285 | 285 | 330.00 | 330.00 | |
| 2 | 397 | 397 | 331.00 | 331.00 | |
| 3 | 410-415 | 413 | 300.00-310.00 | 306.69 | |

| BULLS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|--------------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 340 | 340 | 470.00 | 470.00 | |
| 5 | 325-340 | 333 | 517.50-540.00 | 528.20 Fancy | |
| 3 | 380-385 | 382 | 415.00-445.00 | 425.09 | |
| 3 | 365-380 | 375 | 490.00-530.00 | 502.98 Fancy | |
| 8 | 423-425 | 424 | 395.00-410.00 | 402.51 | |
| 4 | 450-460 | 456 | 383.00-400.00 | 394.55 | |
| 12 | 500-547 | 515 | 347.50-365.00 | 357.55 | |
| 8 | 520-521 | 521 | 379.00-382.50 | 379.87 Fancy | |
| 12 | 550-590 | 574 | 340.00-357.00 | 352.09 | |
| 1 | 555 | 555 | 372.50 | 372.50 Fancy | |
| 12 | 600-630 | 611 | 328.00-349.00 | 337.25 | |
| 12 | 650-695 | 682 | 310.00-332.50 | 317.74 | |
| 5 | 703-740 | 710 | 282.00-309.00 | 287.63 | |
| 3 | 755-760 | 757 | 280.00-292.50 | 288.31 | |
| 2 | 850 | 850 | 224.00-231.00 | 227.50 | |

| BULLS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 230 | 230 | 380.00 | 380.00 | |
| 1 | 295 | 295 | 390.00 | 390.00 | |
| 1 | 315 | 315 | 410.00 | 410.00 | |
| 1 | 375 | 375 | 400.00 | 400.00 | |
| 2 | 425 | 425 | 365.00-370.00 | 367.50 | |
| 6 | 465-495 | 480 | 350.00-371.00 | 361.37 | |
| 3 | 510-520 | 517 | 317.00-335.00 | 325.05 | |
| 2 | 637 | 637 | 320.00 | 320.00 | |
| 1 | 665 | 665 | 285.00 | 285.00 | |
| 1 | 1100 | 1100 | 165.00 | 165.00 | |

| BULLS - Medium and Large 2-3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|---------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 315 | 315 | 320.00 | 320.00 | |
| 3 | 360-390 | 380 | 321.00-335.00 | 330.58 | |
| 3 | 431 | 431 | 343.00 | 343.00 | |
| 3 | 470 | 470 | 315.00 | 315.00 | |
| 1 | 585 | 585 | 282.50 | 282.50 | |
| 1 | 620 | 620 | 240.00 | 240.00 | |

| BULLS - Medium 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt) | | | | | |
|--|----------|--------|-------------|-----------|--|
| Head | Wt Range | Avg Wt | Price Range | Avg Price | |
| 1 | 665 | 665 | 272.50 | 272.50 | |

MARKETS

Kentucky Daily Grain Bids

Grain Report for Thursday, December 11, 2025 - Final

| FUTURE SETTLEMENTS | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Exchange | Commodity | Closing Settlement Prices (¢/bu) as of 12/11/2025 | | | | | |
| CBOT | Corn | 435.25 (Dec 25) | 446.50 (Mar 26) | 454.25 (May 26) | 459.50 (Jul 26) | 453.25 (Sep 26) | 465.00 (Dec 26) |
| CBOT | Soybeans | 1093.50 (Jan 26) | 1102.75 (Mar 26) | 1112.25 (May 26) | 1121.25 (Jul 26) | 1114.00 (Aug 26) | 1094.75 (Sep 26) |
| CBOT | Wheat | 534.50 (Dec 25) | 533.50 (Mar 26) | 541.00 (May 26) | 549.00 (Jul 26) | 561.00 (Sep 26) | 577.00 (Dec 26) |
| CBOT | White Oats | 279.25 (Dec 25) | 291.25 (Mar 26) | 301.00 (May 26) | 306.50 (Jul 26) | 306.00 (Sep 26) | 311.50 (Dec 26) |
| KCBT | Wheat | 515.50 (Dec 25) | 522.25 (Mar 26) | 534.50 (May 26) | 547.00 (Jul 26) | 561.75 (Sep 26) | 581.00 (Dec 26) |
| MGE | Wheat | 581.50 (Dec 25) | 576.25 (Mar 26) | 585.25 (May 26) | 597.50 (Jul 26) | 613.00 (Sep 26) | 632.25 (Dec 26) |

US #2 WHITE CORN (BULK)

| Country Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| Pennyrile | 50.00H to 180.00Z | | UNCH | 4.9650-6.1525 | UP 0.0225-UP 0.0050 | 5.5588 |

| Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| Ohio River - Lower KY | 180.00H | | UNCH | 6.2650 | UP 0.0225 | 6.2650 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | 50.00Z | | UNCH | 5.1500 | UP 0.0125 | 5.1500 |
| Purchase | 170.00Z | | UNCH | 6.0525 | UP 0.0050 | 6.0525 |
| Purchase | 65.00Z | | UNCH | 5.3000 | UP 0.0125 | 5.3000 |

US #2 YELLOW CORN (BULK)

| Country Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| Purchase | 15.00H | | UNCH | 4.6150 | UP 0.0225 | 4.6150 |
| Green River | 15.00H | | UNCH | 4.6150 | UP 0.0225 | 4.6150 |
| Green River | -10.00Z | | UNCH | 4.5500 | UP 0.0125 | 4.5500 |
| Pennyrile | -5.00Z to 15.00H | | UNCH | 4.3025-4.6150 | UP 0.0050-UP 0.0225 | 4.4421 |
| Pennyrile | -30.00Z to -15.00Z | | UP 2.00-UNCH | 4.3500-4.5000 | UP 0.0325-UP 0.0125 | 4.4033 |
| Louisville | -8.00H | | UNCH | 4.3850 | UP 0.0225 | 4.3850 |
| Louisville | -8.00H | | UNCH | 4.3850 | UP 0.0225 | 4.3850 |
| Bluegrass | -20.00Z | | UNCH | 4.1525 | UP 0.0050 | 4.1525 |
| Bluegrass | -45.00Z | | UNCH | 4.2000 | UP 0.0125 | 4.2000 |

| Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| Ohio River - Upper KY | -3.00H to 3.00H | | UNCH | 4.4350-4.4950 | UP 0.0225 | 4.4650 |
| Ohio River - Upper KY | -30.00Z | | UNCH | 4.3500 | UP 0.0125 | 4.3500 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | 3.00Z to 15.00H | | UP 1.00-UNCH | 4.3825-4.6150 | UP 0.0150-UP 0.0225 | 4.5613 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | -35.00Z to -20.00Z | | UNCH | 4.3000-4.4500 | UP 0.0125 | 4.3767 |
| Purchase | 3.00H to 20.00H | | UP 1.00-UNCH | 4.4950-4.6650 | UP 0.0325-UP 0.0225 | 4.5800 |
| Purchase | -35.00Z to -15.00U | | UNCH | 4.3000-4.3825 | UP 0.0125-UP 0.0100 | 4.3383 |

US #2 SORGHUM (BULK)

| Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|--|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| Ohio River - Lower KY | -90.00H | | UNCH | 3.5650 | UP 0.0225 | 3.5650 |

| US #1 SOYBEANS (BULK) | Country Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------|
| Purchase | | 12.00F | | UNCH | 11.0550 | UP 0.0225 | 11.0550 |
| Purchase | | 15.00F | | UNCH | 11.0850 | UP 0.0225 | 11.0850 |
| Green River | | -20.00F | | UNCH | 10.7350 | UP 0.0225 | 10.7350 |
| Green River | | -20.00F | | UNCH | 10.7350 | UP 0.0225 | 10.7350 |
| Pennyrile | | -35.00F to 18.00F | | UNCH | 10.5850-11.1150 | UP 0.0225 | 10.6964 |
| Pennyrile | | -30.00F to 26.00F | | UNCH-UP 2.00 | 10.6350-11.1950 | UP 0.0225-UP 0.0425 | 10.7579 |
| Louisville | | -65.00F | | UNCH | 10.2850 | UP 0.0225 | 10.2850 |
| Louisville | | -65.00F | | UNCH | 10.2850 | UP 0.0225 | 10.2850 |
| Bluegrass | | -45.00F | | UNCH | 10.4850 | UP 0.0225 | 10.4850 |
| Bluegrass | | -40.00H | | UNCH | 10.6275 | UP 0.0175 | 10.6275 |

| Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|--|------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------|
| Ohio River - Upper KY | -1.00F to 0.00F | | UNCH | 10.9250-10.9350 | UP 0.0225 | 10.9300 |
| Ohio River - Upper KY | 10.00F to 12.00F | | UNCH-DN 2.00 | 11.0350-11.0550 | UP 0.0225-UP 0.0025 | 11.0450 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | -1.00F to 27.00F | | UP 1.00-UNCH | 10.9250-11.2050 | UP 0.0325-UP 0.0225 | 11.0617 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | 19.00F to 37.00F | | UP 2.00-UNCH | 11.1250-11.3050 | UP 0.0425-UP 0.0225 | 11.1900 |
| Purchase | 0.00F to 20.00F | | UNCH | 10.9350-11.1350 | UP 0.0225 | 11.0525 |
| Purchase | 20.00F to 28.00F | | UP 5.00-UP 3.00 | 11.1350-11.2150 | UP 0.0725-UP 0.0525 | 11.1725 |

US #1 MILLING SOFT RED WINTER WHEAT (BULK)

| Country Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------|
| Pennyrile | 5.00H | | UNCH | 5.3850 | UP 0.0400 | 5.3850 |
| Pennyrile | 10.00N | | UNCH | 5.5900 | UP 0.0300 | 5.5900 |

US #2 SOFT RED WINTER WHEAT (BULK)

| Country Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| Green River | -75.00N | | UNCH | 4.7400 | UP 0.0300 | 4.7400 |
| Pennyrile | -50.00H | | UNCH | 4.8350 | UP 0.0400 | 4.8350 |
| Pennyrile | -55.00N to -10.00N | | UNCH-UP 7.00 | 4.9400-5.3900 | UP 0.0300-UP 0.1000 | 5.0983 |
| Louisville | -15.00H | | UNCH | 5.1850 | UP 0.0400 | 5.1850 |
| Louisville | -74.00N | | UNCH | 4.7500 | UP 0.0300 | 4.7500 |

| Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional | Region/Location | Basic (¢/Bu) | Basis Change | Price (\$/Bu) | Price Change | Average |
|--|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|---------|
| Ohio River - Upper KY | -35.00N | | UNCH | 5.1400 | UP 0.0300 | 5.1400 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | 10.00H | | UNCH | 5.4350 | UP 0.0400 | 5.4350 |
| Ohio River - Lower KY | -15.00N to -5.00N | | UNCH | 5.3400-5.4400 | UP 0.0300 | 5.3880 |
| Purchase | -8.00Z to -20.00N | | UNCH | 5.2650-5.2900 | UP 0.0325-UP 0.0300 | 5.2775 |
| Purchase | -23.00N to -10.00N | | UNCH | 5.2600-5.3900 | UP 0.0300 | 5.3200 |

Explanatory Notes: Price & Basis Values quoted are for Current Delivery, unless otherwise noted.

CBOT/KCBT/MGE Trade month symbols: F January; G February; H March; J April; K May; M June; N July; Q August; U September; V October; X November; Z December. FOB: Freight On Board. CIF: Cost, Insurance, and Freight. T: Truck, R: Rail, B: Barge, T/R: Truck/Rail, R/B: Rail/Barge, T/R/B: Truck/Rail/Barge, OV: Ocean Vessel

USDAAMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News
KY Dept of Ag Market News-Kevin Bowling, Market Reporter | Frankfort, KY | (502) 782-4139
http://www.ams.usda.gov/lpgmm | https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/ | https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/2892

Daily Livestock and Poultry Slaughter

Report for Thursday, December 11, 2025 - Final

| Current Day Slaughter | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Thur., Dec. 11, 2025 | Week Ago | Year Ago | WTD | Prev Week | Last Year | 2025 | 2024 | YTD | YTD % Change |
| | | | | WTD | WTD | YTD | YTD | | |
| Calves | 1,000 | 1,000 | 434 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 2,648 | 194,562 | | |
| Cattle | 123,000 | 121,000 | 125,388 | 484,000 | 475,000 | 488,644 | 29,856,438 | | |
| Hogs | 494,000 | 490,000 | 473,143 | 1,965,000 | 1,943,000 | 1,927,879 | 122,884,839 | | |
| Sheep | 8,000 | 8,000 | 7,895 | 35,000 | 35,000 | 36,051 | 1,811,377 | | |
| Chicken (Young) | 35,370,000 | 35,475,000 | 35,269,000 | 141,652,000 | 141,410,000 | 140,213,000 | 8,915,210,000 | 8,995,829,000 | 0.2% |
| Previous Daily Slaughter | | | | | | | | | |
| Wed., Dec. 10, 2025 | Week Ago | Year Ago | WTD | Prev Week | Last Year | 2025 | 2024 | YTD | YTD % Change |
| | | | | WTD | WTD | YTD | YTD | | |
| Calves | 1,000 | 1,000 | 844 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 2,214 | 194,128 | | |
| Cattle | 123,000 | 117,000 | 125,065 | 361,000 | 354,000 | 363,256 | 29,731,050 | | |
| Hogs | 490,000 | 482,000 | 483,021 | 1,471,000 | 1,453,000 | 1,454,736 | 122,411,696 | | |
| Sheep | 9,000 | 7,000 | 7,758 | 27,000 | 27,000 | 28,156 | 1,803,482 | | |
| Chicken (Young) | 35,471,000 | 35,433,000 | 34,937,000 | 106,282,000 | 105,935,000 | 104,944,000 | 8,979,840,000 | 8,960,560,000 | 0.2% |
| Previous Day Breakdown | | | | | | | | | |
| Wed., Dec. 10, 2025 | | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle | | Steers/Heifers ... 101,000 | | Cows/Bulls ... 22,000 | | | | | |
| Explanatory Notes: Livestock Species listed consists of young and mature animals. Poultry references young only. Year to Date calculation is based on week 1 of calendar year R = Revision WTD = Week to Date YTD = Year to Date | | | | | | | | | |
| USDAAMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News Washington, DC (202) 720-1990 https://ams.usda.gov/lpgmm https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/ https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/3208 | | | | | | | | | |



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Monroe Livestock Auction Market Report

Contact us at: (260) 216-5489 | Market Report (260) 216-5050
Address: 1871 E 200 S, Monroe, IN 46772

Sale every Tuesday night: Small animals @ 5pm • Livestock animals @ 11am
BID ONLINE VIA DVAUCTIONS.COM

**please note that our market report is an overall average price-they are not always the highest and lowest price.*

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Small Animals | 12/9/2025 | Sheep | Cows |
| Chickens | \$2-\$15 | Ewes | \$1-\$1.60 |
| Bantys | \$2-\$4 | 40-60# Lambs | \$2.55-\$4.15 |
| Ducks | \$3-\$11 | 61-80# Lambs | \$2.55-\$3.85 |
| Pigeons | \$3-\$4.50 | 81-100# Lambs | \$2.05-\$3.25 |
| Eggs | \$2.25-\$3.50 | | 156 |
| Rooster | \$2-\$11 | Goats | Fat Cattle |
| Turkey | \$21 | Billys | Holstein |
| Peacock | | Nannies | Colored |
| Rabbits | \$3-\$17.50 | Kids | |
| | 836 | | 163 |
| Veal Calves | Feeder Cattle Dairy and Beef | Feeder Pigs | |
| Holstein (80# & UP) | \$700-\$1020 | 200-500# | \$1-\$3.80 |
| Beef Cross (80# & UP) | \$975-\$1300 | 501-800# | \$1-\$3.40 |
| | 409 | | 65 |

The Best of Spaulding Outdoors is the best of Jack Spaulding's columns over 30+ years. Enjoy his humorous trials in the outdoors, and colorful stories of his rural Indiana childhood. Available through Amazon.com in paperback for \$14.95, and for Kindle at \$3.99.


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Midway Auction Barn

Market Report
December 10th 2025 31st Auction
This Report Is the Actual High and Average Prices.

| | Hd. Ct. | High | Avg. |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Fat Hogs: | 2 | \$.525 | \$.49 |
| Sows: | 1 | \$.40 | \$.40 |
| Boars: | N/A | | |
| Feeder Pigs: | 5 | \$40 | \$37 |
| Beef & X Veal #1: | 23 | \$1350 | \$1211.30 |
| Beef & X Veal #2: | 7 | \$750 | \$543.57 |
| Dairy Veal #1: | 50 | \$1170 | \$1069.60 |
| Dairy Veal #2: | 14 | \$600 | \$397.14 |
| Jersey Cross: | 2 | \$275 | \$187.50 |
| Beef Fdrs 200#-550# | N/A | | |
| Beef Fdrs 551#-1000# | N/A | | |
| Dairy Fdrs 200#-550# | 20 | \$2.20 | \$1.15 |
| Dairy Fdrs 551#-1000# | N/A | | |
| Cull Cows #1: | 3 | \$1.43 | \$1.37 |
| Cull Cows #2: | 5 | \$1.29 | \$1.23 |
| Fat Cattle Colored: | N/A | | |
| Fat Cattle Holstein: | N/A | | |
| Bulls: | N/A | | |
| Cow/Calf Pair: | N/A | | |
| Breed Cows Colored: | N/A | | |
| Milk Cows: | N/A | | |
| Springers: | 1 | \$1535 | \$1535 |
| Sheep Ram: | N/A | | |
| Sheep Ewe: | N/A | | |
| Lamb 0-60: | N/A | | |
| Lamb 61-85: | N/A | | |
| Lamb 86-100: | N/A | | |
| Goat Nannies : | N/A | | |
| Goat Billys : | 1 | \$130 | \$130 |
| Goat Wethers: | 9 | \$110 | \$69.44 |
| Total Hd.Cnt: | 143 | | |

Auction Every Wednesday
Sale Order

Hay / Straw / Firewood

11:30 AM

Livestock

12:00 PM

Small animals

5:00 PM.

Licensed and Bonded # AC32500012

Next Beef Cattle sale!!! Friday Dec. 19th

The 1st sale of the month will have Vet on grounds for checks and vaccines, etc.

Contact Us: 1-765-725-2552
Market Report: 1-765-725-2552, Ext. 2
Address: 10927 N. US 27, Fountain City IN 47341

After Dec. 5th small animal sales will occur only on Dec. 17th, Jan.30th,Feb.27th,Mar. 27th

Greater Peoria Farm Show seminars included market outlook

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

PEORIA, Ill. – Visitors to the 2025 Greater Peoria Farm Show, Dec. 2-4 at the Peoria Civic Center, were treated to a slate of seminars from the University of Illinois farmdoc team covering topics ranging from small forest restoration management to plant abnormalities and their diagnoses. Kicking off the nine-seminar, three-day series was a grain market outlook that looked at challenges including advice on strategic planting decisions heading into 2026.

“USDA’s current corn yield projection at 186 bushels per acre is above trend, but not substantially above trend. A lot of people said this 186-yield line is totally out of line with what they’ve experienced. It may be a little high, but it certainly isn’t out of line with what we should expect,” said Joe Janzen, associate professor for the U of I College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences. He predicted that planted farm acreage could see a major shift back to soybeans in 2026.

“USDA has lowered their (2025) soybean yield estimate (to 53 bushels per acre, a record) to right around trend level yield. Thinking about the size of the 2026 crop, I do think we are going to see a swing back toward beans and away from corn. As a country, last year just over 98 million acres of corn were planted, and just over 80 million acres of soybeans. All signs would point to a reversal of that skew, swinging much more heavily back into beans in 2026.”

Current new crop prices of around \$4.60 per bushel for corn and \$11.20 for soybeans at the time of Janzen’s presentation served to further incentivize his projection for increased soybean acreage next year. “It is very rare historically that we see multiple years where the U.S.

crop picks skew heavily more to corn or beans, and then does it again the next year. We saw it once during the ethanol boom in 2007-2008, and it’s been rare ever since,” he said. “There is potential for a monster bean crop that fills up the balance sheet.”

Biofuels, particularly renewable soybean oil for sustainable aviation fuel and animal feed, are expected to further drive demand for more soybeans in 2026, according to the U of I agricultural economist. “The bean market really is an export market and an animal feed market, with a little bit of oil for food, industrial and biofuels,” Janzen said, before noting that market drivers have changed in recent years, resulting in a restructuring of the soybean market hierarchy.

Janzen pointed out that soybean demand has shifted away from exports and toward domestic biofuels demand. In this process, the shares of soybean value due to the value of oil and meal are shifting and becoming more variable. Crush margins are also becoming more volatile. This makes soybean price changes harder to predict.

Farmers and others trying to anticipate future prices should expect to make larger prediction errors. One component of this unpredictability has likely been the uncertain U.S. policy environment for renewable fuels. “Domestic demand has to be strong (in the face of) shrinking demand in the soybean export market for U.S. beans, specifically,” he said.

Increasing soybean demand will also hinge on broadening the animal feed market, which is in stagnation due to a historically low domestic herd count, according to Janzen. “The U.S. cattle herd is at a size that is substantially lower than in any other time in recent memory, with 86.7 million head (in January 2025) of all-cattle. Can we build animal feed demand both for corn and soybean

meal through growth in the herd? The trend will have to reverse itself at some point,” he said, adding that he is “somewhat concerned” about future international soybean meal demand for U.S. exports.



Growth in renewable diesel will continue to bolster the soybean oil market for U.S. producers, Janzen said, with recent favorable news around renewable volume obligations (RVOs) for renewable diesel likely to spur demand. “This is one of the things that is underpinning the soybean oil market that is causing it to react so positively in the last few months. Not only did we get some good news on the trade front, but we also have this robust domestic demand for soybean oil,” he explained.

Soybean oil extraction rates have vastly increased in recent years, further helping drive the increase in oil’s share of the soybean market. Between 2013 and 2020, the oil value share ranged between 25 to 35 percent. Since 2020, it has only rarely been below 35 percent. In both 2021 and 2025, it briefly reached

50 percent, according to Janzen, whose three part farmdoc series, “The Soybean Industry Response to the Renewable Diesel Boom,” examines the ramifications of further growth in biomass-based diesel production.

Of course, a return to “normal” trade relations with China in 2026 would re-energize soybean demand in all forms. “The administration’s framework agreement they have with China apparently includes very specific numerical targets for soybean exports. Those targets are not based on value, they are based on quantity. The question is how much you believe these commitments, which the administration has put out but have never been confirmed by China, are binding,” said Janzen, adding that the rumored commitment by China “wouldn’t really move the needle” on returning U.S. soybeans to the export level they had been at historically.

“The one wild card on the trade front is substantial uncertainty as to what tariff policy the U.S. will put out moving forward,” he said.

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AUCTION

Soybean, wheat balance sheets, and corn production, unchanged

Corn production data was left unchanged this month as it always is in the December WAS-DE report. This held the U.S. average yield estimate at 186 bushels per acre and crop size at 16.75 billion bushels. Demand was adjusted this month, though, with export demand rising 125 million bushels to a record 3.2 bbu. This lowered the projected corn carryout to 2.03 bbu, down from the 2.15 bbu estimate in November. This was also below the average trade guess for carryout. The average cash per bushel value estimate on corn was left unchanged at \$4.

No changes were made to the U.S. soybean balance sheets from either side this month. This held the average U.S. yield to 53 bushels per acre and crop size to 4.25 bbu. Ending stocks remained at 290 mbu this month while trade was mostly expecting a slight increase. Some analysts had been expecting a cut to U.S. soybean exports this month. The average cash value of soybeans was steady this month at \$10.50 per bushel.

No changes were made to U.S. wheat balance sheets this month either. This held total U.S. wheat production at 1.985 bbu and ending stocks at 901 mbu. As with corn and soybeans, this was also lower than the average trade estimate. The average cash value on wheat held at \$5.00 a bushel this month.

A few more changes were made to global balance sheets this month. The world corn carryout is now estimated at 279.15 million metric tons, 2.2 mmt lower than the November projection. This was a result of the lower U.S. ending stocks. The world soybean carryout is now estimated at 122.37 mmt, up 370,000 mt from November, but still less than trade was expecting. World wheat ending stocks are forecast at 274.87 mmt, a 3.4 mmt increase from last month and 2 mmt more than the average trade guess. Larger production in Canada, Australia, Argentina and others added to the world wheat supply.

Changes to red meat production were mixed this month. Beef production for 2025 was raised 190 million pounds to total 25.95 billion pounds. For 2026, beef production was bumped up 340 million pounds

to a 25.73 billion pounds total. Pork production for 2025 was trimmed 30 million pounds to a 27.46-billion-pound total and 2026 production was left unchanged at 27.48 billion pounds.

Red meat demand was also mixed. Beef exports for 2025 were lowered by 450 million pounds to a total of 2.587 billion. Beef exports for 2026 were cut 400 million pounds to total 2.485 billion pounds. Pork exports for this year were lowered by 100 million pounds to a 6.97-billion-pound target but increased for 2026 by 600 million pounds to total 7.02 billion pounds.

The biggest change in U.S. red meat trade was to beef imports. The U.S. is expected to import 5.34 billion pounds of beef in 2025, 200 million pounds fewer than the November projection. Next year's beef imports are forecast to spike 500 million pounds to a total of 5.45 billion pounds. This is a result of tariffs on Brazil beef being removed and recent trade agreements that include elevated imports of beef from Argentina.

The average U.S. steer value for 2025 is now estimated at \$223.97 a hundredweight, down \$2 from November on higher beef production forecasts. For 2026, the average steer value is now \$235.00 per cwt, down \$11. Hogs are expected to average \$68.58 per cwt for this year and \$66.75 per cwt for 2026, reductions of 50 cents and 25 cents respectively.

Argentina has announced it would be lowering its export taxes on several commodities, but did not give a start date. The export tax on corn will move to 8.5 percent, down 1 percent from the current rate. The revised export tax on soybeans will now be 24 percent, soy products will be 22.5 percent, and wheat will be 7.5 percent. These are all reductions from the current rates of 2 percent. While minimal these reductions will make Argentina more competitive in the global market.

Chinese officials are reporting November soybean imports of 8.1 million mt. This was up 13.4 percent from November 2024, but a sizable 14.5 percent decline from October. Year-to-date Chinese soybean imports now stand at 103.8 mmt, up 6.9 percent from last year. Analysts in China feel the country's soybean

imports could top 110 mmt. For 2026, China is holding to an import projection of 106 mmt.

The USDA has released its 2026 baseline acreage estimates for the U.S. crops. For corn the USDA is predicting 95 million acres, down from the 98.7 million that were planted a year ago. Soybean plantings are forecast at 85 million compared to 81.1 million last year. Wheat plantings are anticipated to decline by 1.3 million and total 44 million.


The White House has announced that \$12 billion in farm subsidies will start to be paid out in February. These payments will come from money collected on U.S. tariffs and is being offered to help offset losses from slow U.S. exports, mainly to China following the escalated trade war over the past year. For row crops these payments will be based on a per acre plan and will favor soybeans

and cotton. Details on this subsidy package are still coming in.

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By Karl Setzer



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| 40x100x21 | 13x13 door |
| 40x120x21 | 13x13 door |
| 50x80x23 | 18x16 door |
| 50x100x23 | 18x16 door |
| 50x120x23 | 18x16 door |
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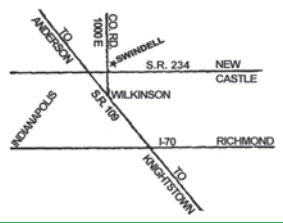
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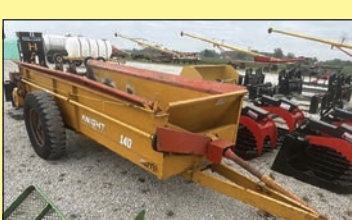
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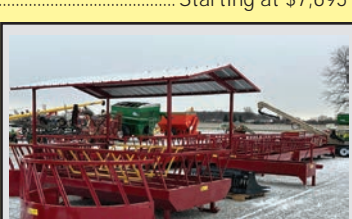
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Ohio man finds career in grape growing, distillery ownership

By Hayley Lalchand
Ohio Correspondent

GENEVA, Ohio - Gene Sigel, owner and operator of Red Eagle Distillery and South River Vineyard in Geneva, and vineyard manager at Debonné Vineyards in Madison, Ohio, always had an interest in farming.

Sigel remembers spending a lot of time riding his motorcycle during college through Peoria, Ill., and its outskirts, taking in the surrounding farming landscapes. He spent 10 years in college studying economics, including economic history and agricultural economics, expecting to teach economics to college students.

"I had no family connection or background in farming," he said. "Not only that, in 1984 when I graduated high school and then 1989 when I graduated in economics with my first degree, it was not a time that people were encouraging (and saying), 'Hey, you should go into farming!'"

In 1994, Sigel moved to Ohio to live with his parents while he finished his dissertation. He said he'd only been living in the area for two weeks when he saw an advertisement in the Farm and Dairy for an assistant vineyard management position at Debonné Vineyards. At the time, the vineyard wanted to launch an expansion project to increase the number of grapes they could produce because of the awards they were winning for their wines. Sigel landed the job, launching a career in agriculture that has spanned the last 32 years and counting.

Within the first year of his new position, Sigel began planting grapes on a piece of property he leased a couple of miles away from the vineyard, and went on to purchase 140 acres, becoming a supply grape farm for Debonné Vineyards and other local wineries. In 1998, he purchased the first parcel that would go on to become South River Vineyard. The vineyard features a century old church that was deconstructed in Shalersville, Ohio, and rebuilt in Geneva.

Around 2011, Sigel purchased the farm adjacent to South River Vineyard, a property that included a barn. This barn went on to become the home of Red Eagle Distillery, founded in 2012. He had already bought the still he'd use for the distillery in 2010 from Vendome Copper in Kentucky, having heard from his wife that there were many small distilleries popping up around the U.S. Sigel thought distilling would be the perfect counterweight to grape farming and give him something to do in the winter,

since most distillation takes place in colder months.

"One of the things that's informed the distillery has come from the vineyard. Historically and traditionally, the best wines are associated with close proximity to the vineyards," Sigel said. "The best California grapes don't get shipped to Ohio or New York, turned into wine, and become award-winning wines of California - those wines are made in California wineries. Grape farming is one of the unique areas of farming where the farm itself or the vineyard really establishes a heterogeneity that's recognized in the final product. When I moved into the distilling industry in 2010, I was a little surprised or mortified to find that in the distilling industry, there really wasn't a connection between the farm and its products."

Sigel wanted to do something different at his distillery - make distilled spirits from things that grow well on his farm, celebrating the local terroir. It has taken more patience, but Red Eagle Distillery now offers five spirits made from local ingredients: bourbon, rye, vodka and brandy made from grapes, and a red maple spirit distilled from maple syrup. The distillery is currently working on a 100th anniversary commemorative special bourbon for Wellington Implement, an agriculture and outdoor equipment company, that's anticipated to be released in 2029.



Above: Tom Stannard (left), president of Wellington Implement, and Gene Sigel (right), owner and operator of Red Eagle Distillery, are collaborating on a special commemorative bourbon. (courtesy of Gene Sigel)

"(Ohio-made spirits) are part of maintaining the fabric and culture of the farm community here. Our bourbon and rye represent (that) rather than some unique flavor," Sigel said.

However, Sigel added that the future for anybody manufacturing and selling alcohol in the U.S. looks grim,

especially as data consistently demonstrates that Americans are drinking less in favor of positive health outcomes. Traffic has dropped in wineries across the country and in the local region. The San Francisco Chronicle reported that California winegrow-

(Ohio Man continued on page 13)

Ohio Man

FROM PAGE 12

ers ripped out nearly 40,000 acres of grapes over the past year in response to the dropping demand for wine.

"There are thousands of acres being ripped out in California, and for me as a vineyard owner, I'm starting to confront that some of the vineyards I have either need to be removed, or I need to plant other varieties that might have a growing market," Sigel said. "The grapes are such a long-term commitment. The idea of ripping out vineyards and starting over again is challenging."

Still, Sigel said that although the demand for alcohol has decreased, it hasn't led him in any specific direction in his agricultural career. He said that his winery and distillery continue to be healthy businesses and that he and his family have been focused on building up their facilities in ways that appeal to people both architecturally and aesthetically.

"We're not ashamed of the fact that we farm alcohol," Sigel noted. "As much as it can be a problem in society, it has also been a good part of farming for certain specialty growers."

Red Eagle Distillery, 6202 S River Rd W, Geneva, OH 44041, is open seven days a week. South River Vineyard is just across the way at 6062 S River Rd W, Geneva, OH 44041.

Land atlas or plat books may make great Christmas presents

The National Weather Service outlook through Dec. 23 called for "near normal" outlook for both temperature and precipitation. As long as we're going into winter, we might as well review some winter weather words. Blizzard includes winter storm conditions of sustained winds or frequent gusts of 35 mph or more that cause major blowing or drifting of snow, reducing visibility to less than ¼ mile for three or more hours. El Niño is the cyclical warming of the ocean temperatures in equatorial waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean that can result in significant changes in global weather patterns. Flurries means light snow falling for short durations with no accumulation or just a light dusting. La Niña is a cooling of the equatorial waters in the Pacific Ocean that can result in significant changes in climate in the tropical Pacific Ocean and elsewhere around Earth. Eric Hunt, the University of Nebraska Extension Meteorologist, thinks spring 2026 could be warmer and drier for our part of the upper Midwest, including lower Michigan, and upper Ohio and Indiana.

Land atlas or plat books make a great Christmas present for the farmer or landowner who has "everything else." The Monroe County plat book

WEEKLY AG UPDATE
BY NED BIRKEY
MSU EXTENSION EDUCATOR EMERITUS
SPARTAN AG

was updated a couple of years ago and makes a great "gawker gift" for anyone wanting to look at the pages of land ownership for farming, hunting or other land uses. The cost is \$40 and they are available in Monroe at the Monroe Conservation District office, Greenstone Farm Credit Services or the MSU Extension office; or in Ida at the farm bureau office; or at the Ottawa Lake Co-op Elevator in Ottawa Lake, Mich. T They can also be mailed by sending a \$49 check, including \$9 postage, to Ned Birkey, PO Box 57, Ida, MI 48140-0057.

Farmer's Tax Guide, IRS Publication 225 is now available in either print or e-edition. Printed copies are available at most Monroe County and several eastern Lenawee County agri-businesses. This publication explains how the federal tax laws apply to farming as reflected by the IRS's interpretation of tax laws enacted by Congress, Treasury regulations and court decisions. There are

several changes, including: section 179 expense deduction dollar limits, special depreciation allowances, disaster relief benefits, Social security and Medicare taxes for 2026, no federal income tax on qualified overtime compensation, tax on farmland sale or exchange, and other changes and reminders. The law does not require any specific kind of records, paper and pencil or electronic except for a few cases. Backup copies may be important in case of fire, theft or cyber threats.

2025 and 2026 This time of the year can be farmer "information overload" as all the 2025 plot data and research reports are released and new 2026 information becomes available. Examples include the 2026 MSU Weed Control Guide for Vegetable Crops, the 2026 Midwest Vegetable Production Guide and the 2026 Michigan Fruit Management Guide available at the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo. On Dec. 19, the new 2026 MSU Field Crop Weed Control Guide will be released at another meeting. Jan. 16, 2026, will be the 2025 OSU eFields report at Corn-Soybean Day at Sauder Village, Archbold, Ohio. The same scenario is playing out at numerous university and commercial company meetings. This is a great time to learn something for next year.

Houseplants may be a simple, relatively inexpensive way to reduce your stress or anxiety and improve your life. Having some greenery may have beneficial effects on the brain and mental health. Simply spending time in green spaces, indoors or outdoors, can relieve stress. One study noted that small plants with green foliage and a light fragrance made people feel happier. Something to think about, especially going into the winter months.

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Above: Carriages and horse tack are lit up during the evening portion of the Lebanon Horse-Drawn Carriage Parade. (photo submitted)

Lebanon home to nation’s largest horse-drawn carriage parade

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

LEBANON, Ohio – Lebanon is known for its quaintness and charm. This small and historic city in southwest Ohio has a population of just 21,000. For 364 days a year, it’s very quiet.

But much like Dr. Seuss’s fictional town of Whoville, this small city magically transforms into a holiday wonderland during its Horse-Drawn Carriage Parade, which is the first Saturday in December.

Roughly 70 carriages participated this year, all of them pulled by equines. And not just carriages. The entire city gets into the holiday spirit with entertainment, wagon rides, a living nativity, a craft and food fair, visits with Santa, and happenings at the library and local churches. This tradition has been going on for 36 years. This year’s parade saw cloudy skies and a 25-degree wind chill.

Pat South was the Lebanon Chamber of Commerce president when the idea for a parade came up in 1988.

“We wanted to establish some holiday events in beautiful downtown Lebanon to showcase the businesses around town and to entertain,” South said. “In 1988, we had a trial run of this idea of horse-drawn carriages. We maybe had just eight horses and carriages that first year. The next year, we decided that we had hit on something and had our first official parade. We wanted it to be all horse-drawn carriages. We didn’t want any other types of entries. We had 15 or 20 units that second year and a crowd of about 15,000.

“The next few years, the spectator attendance climbed by 10,000 or more each year, and then by 1992 it jumped to 100,000. By this time, our parade entries had climbed to nearly 40 and it just continued from there.

The town picked up the theme of decorating with miniature white lights downtown, so at nightfall, it looked like glittery stars and glistening icicles. It was an instant success.”

Since 2000, the parade has held the title of largest horse-drawn carriage parade in the United States, a distinction awarded by the U.S. Carriage Association.

The parade features all sizes and breeds of equines, ranging from draft horses to minis, as well as donkeys and mules, and standardbreds, all pulling a wide array of horse-drawn conveyances. Rigs in the parade pass a pre-parade safety check and are accompanied by grooms walking

(Lebanon continued on page 15)

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'17 John Deere S690, 1775 hrs., Stk #00707372, \$234,500 (SO)

'24 John Deere 6110M, 943 hrs., Stk #00707947, \$93,500 (HO)

'20 John Deere 330G, 475 hrs., Stk #01304563, \$57,500 (HO)

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Above: The Lebanon Horse-Drawn Carriage Parade drew thousands of viewers to the 36th annual event. (Doug Graves photo)

Lebanon

FROM PAGE 14

alongside.
“We have a rich history of harness horses at the Warren County Fair-

grounds, and through their cooperation and contacts, the parade grew in popularity,” said Janis Baker, executive director of the Lebanon Area Chamber of Commerce. “Each year it brings together thousands of residents and visitors to celebrate the holiday season. It’s become a beloved tradition here in our community.

“The afternoon parade allows spectators to fully appreciate the intricate details of the carriages and horses. As evening descends, the atmosphere transforms with a stunning display of lighted carriages and horses, creating a magical spectacle.”

The event includes 13 organizers who work in the area of hospitality, reserved box seating, VIP parking and entertainment. Under those organizers are roughly 70 volunteers per parade who staff 43 locations covering 20 city blocks.

Long-time volunteer Georgetta Vice has been part of the parade for 32 years.

“A life-long love of horses brought me to the parade, and I have always loved the city of Lebanon,” Vice said. “It takes a village to put this event together. We have a lot of fun delivering a beautiful parade.”

Carriages participating (as well as those visitors on the sidelines) at this year’s parade were from Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Missouri.

Tom and Gale Simpson and their two children live near Dawson Springs in western Kentucky. That city held its Old Fashioned Horse Drawn Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting on Nov. 23.

“My sister, Rita, lives in Morrow, Ohio just outside of Lebanon,” Gale said. “Rita and her family attend our horse-drawn parade each year so we drove to Lebanon to catch both of their parades. Both are fabulous and neither are just another parade. The wonderful experience lingers long after the horses have trotted home. There’s something magical about the events.”

The Lebanon parade is an annual ritual for Aaron and Lisa Scott, of Lima, Ohio. Their children are now grown, but the Scotts still make the 100-mile drive to take in the afternoon parade.

“There’s something timeless about the sound of jingling bells, the rhythmic clomp of hooves against brick streets and the sight of horses draped in ribbons and holly,” Lisa said. “The lanterns on the carriages glowing and the laughter of children are things you never forget.”



1960 John Deere 730, Dsl., Pony Start, WF 3 pt., PTO, All Orig. Survivor, Runs & Drives... \$9,750



2016 John Deere 8345RT CAH, IVT, 3 Pt., 4 Remotes, 24" Tracks, Very Nice... \$99,500



2011 John Deere 1590 Drill, 15', Like New, Low Use w/Rear Seed Auger \$39,500



2011 John Deere 75D EROP, Dsl., Hyd., Thumb, Steel Tracks, Backfill Blade, 3K Hrs... \$42,500



Wacker Neuson WL34 OROPS, Dsl., 2 Spd., Hydro., 72" Bkt... \$19,500



2018 John Deere 630 Moco, 1000 RPM, Rubber Rolls, Like New, Low Use... \$18,000



2014 John Deere S690 CAH, ProDrive, 5 Spd., FDRH, Powerfold, Powercast, 29' Auger, 520/42 Duals, 3700/2351 Hrs., Gd Cond... \$64,500



2000 Case IH STX 450, Quad Trac, CAH, QSX-15 PS Trans., Drawbar, 4 Rem., 5800 Hrs... \$79,500



1998 John Deere 862B Self Loading Scraper, CAH, PS, 29.5x25 Tires, Good Chain, Work, Ready, \$19,500



2005 JD 956 Moco 14'6" Cut, Impeller Conditioner, Good Knives, Gone Through, Ready to Mow... \$8,450



Ford 139 Soil Saver Chisel, 15 Shank, Used Very Little, From a Collector, Like New... \$9,750



1998 DDT 630B , Cummins Dsl., 30 Ton Capacity, Ejector Bed, Low Hrs... \$22,500



2017 Manac Dark Wing 53' Step Deck, All Aluminum, Spread or Close Axle, VG Condition... \$34,500



2022 JD S780, CAH, Pro Drive, 4x4, 5 Spd., Feeder House, Power Cast, Firestone, 650 Duals, Extended Grain Bin, Like New, Very Nice... \$119,500



2005 Volvo EC160BLC, CAH, 9'11" Stick, 24" Pads, 46" Bkt... \$29,500



2003 CAT MT865, CAH, C-18, PS, Drawbar 4 Remotes, Auto Steer, Frt. Wts... \$62,500



1998 Case IH 8940 CAH, PS, 3 Pt., PTO, Duals, 74331 Hrs., 1 Owner, Very Sharp... \$79,500



2006 Case 621D, CAH, PS, 2.5 Yrd ACS Quick Tach Bkt, 20.5x25 Tires, All Orig. Nice... \$34,500



2016 JD 8245R CAH, PS, 1300 Frt 3 Pt PTO, 4 Remotes, Like New, Super Low Hrs., Local Farmer Retirement... \$199,500



2018 JD 8320R CAH, ILS, PS, 60GPM Pump Frt & Rear Duals, 50" Rears, Immaculate Condition, Local Farmer Retirement... \$249,500



2005 JD 2210 27'6" Field Cultivator, 5 Bar Drag, Local Farmer Retirement, Low Use, Really Nice, Field Ready... \$29,500



2013 Yale GDP80VX, Veracitor 80VX 2 Stage Mast, 144.7" Max Lift Ht, 90" Lowered Mast Ht, 42" Forks, Aux. Hyd. Plumbing, tier 4, 2013 US EPA Label, Kubota V3800 CR-T-EF02 54.6 KW 3.8L Dsl Eng., \$9,450



2015 New Holland Workmaster 60HP, Dsl., Loader, 4x4, 3 Pt., PTO... \$19,500



2011 JD 9330, 5956 Mi., CAH, PS, PTO, 4 Rem., 480/50 Michelin Tires w/Duals, Very Nice, 2 Owner Tractor... \$144,500



2005 CAT 304 Enclosed Cab, Swing Boom, 6' Stick, Aux. Hyd. Plumbing, Backfill Blade, 16" Rubber Tracks, 28" Digging Bkt, Thumb Bracket... \$19,500



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2012 Case IH 7230 Dsl., Hydro, 2WD, Power Fold, Chopper, Very Sharp, Through the Shop, Field Ready... \$84,500



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International 4586 pulled an impressive \$1,850 at toy tractor auction

By William Flood
Ohio correspondent

EDGERTON, Ohio – Farm toy collectors were treated to a two-day farm toy and agricultural collectibles auction Dec. 5-6, where more than 600 lots crossed the block in a live/online event hosted by United Edge Real Estate and Auction Co. The lineup represented a broad sweep of equipment brands, including Case, Farmall, International, John Deere and New Holland.

Things kicked off the first day with 276 lots. Over 150 of them were model tractors – most made by Ertl or its affiliated brands. Overall, bidding was modest throughout the day. The day's high of \$190 went for a 1/16-scale Ertl Precision Classics John Deere 4440 wide front, complete with its box and all original contents. Close behind at \$180 was another Precision Classics entry – a 1/16-scale Deere 8020 diesel, also with the box and original materials.

Fans of early tractor history had several gems to chase. A 1/16 Precision Classics Waterloo Boy kerosene tractor (circa 1918) sold for \$90 even with a missing belt. Then, a boxed 1/16 Millennium Farm Classics 1892 Froelich gasoline traction engine – often recognized as the first true tractor – sold respectably at \$60. And a 1/16-scale Ertl replica of a 1910s-era British Overtime hammered at just \$15, a steal for anyone wanting to round out an early-era display.

For collectors drawn to implements, nearly three dozen lots came forward. Prices ranged from \$45 for an Ertl 1/16 John Deere 452 grain drill to \$100 for a 1/16 John Deere 4020 with a 237 corn picker by Precision Classics.

In addition to farm equipment, almost two dozen Deere-branded diecast airplanes were available, providing some interesting variety. Bidding on those was surprisingly strong, ranging from \$20 for a 7-inch bank depicting a 1927 Lockheed Vega to \$85 for a 7-inch model of a World War II-era Lockheed P-38 Lightning.

Advertising items closed the day on a quiet note. A dozen lots of vintage tractor magazines, some bound and some loose, each moved for \$2. Nine batches of reproduction Deere signs, sold in sets of two or three, each brought \$25 or less. A few vintage advertising premiums were also available, including a Sunoco gas-pump novelty transistor radio and a John Deere pencil holder complete with branded pencils and pens, sold at \$20 apiece.

The second day brought more energy, with 383 lots that included additional model makers, more manufacturers represented, and the highlight category for many: pedal tractors. The bidding intensity jumped, producing multiple four-figure results. Among them was a black-on-black Precision Engineering 1/16-scale International 4586 with front/rear duals, which soared to \$1,850. A more traditional red 4586, also by Precision Engineering, came close at \$1,750. A third Precision Engineering entry – an International 4786 – rolled right behind at \$1,650.

Less meteoric bids picked up pieces like an Ertl 1/16-scale Allis-Chalmers 190 XT Landhandler wide front with ROPS that went home for \$160. Later, an Ertl Precision Series 1/16 Oliver Super 77 narrow front with its box scored \$140, and an unopened 2002 SpecCast 1/16 Lafayette Farm Toy Show edition IH/Farmall 450 was grabbed for a modest \$45.

Implement collectors had another solid round on day two. A Coble 1/16 John Deere 42 pull-type combine drew an attention-getting \$625. A boxed Die-Cast Promotions 1/16 Bush Hog 2615 flex-wing rotary cutter reached \$150, and

a Precision Classics 1/16 John Deere 494-A four-row planter closed at \$130.

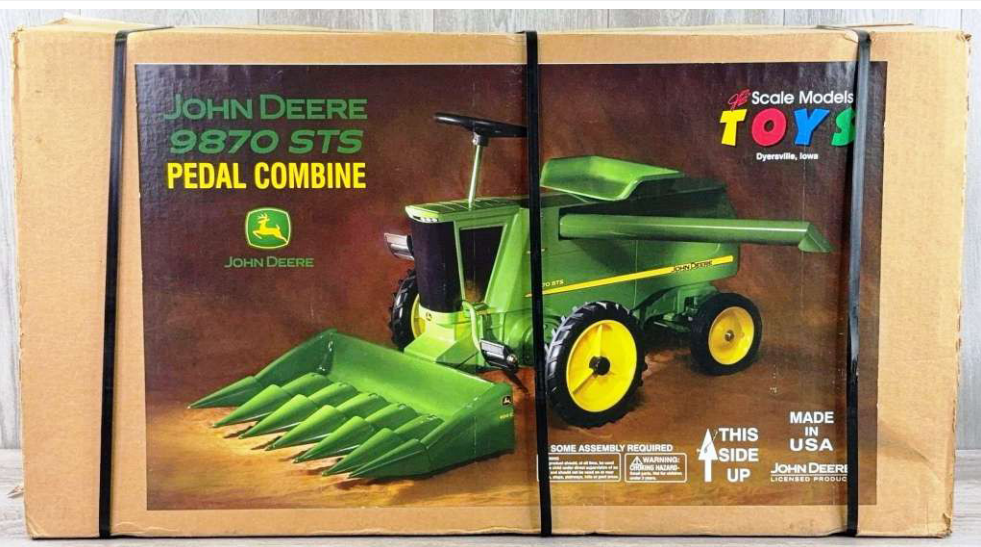
As on the first day, the early decades of farm horsepower were well represented. Examples included a Precision Series rendition of a McCormick-Deering No. 8 Little Genius plow that sold for \$40; an Ertl 1920s steel wheeled McCormick-Deering Farmall Regular that pulled \$35; and a 1920s Ertl Case L that changed hands for \$25.

With the holidays approaching, eight pedal tractors and four pedal-trailers saw plenty of interest. The tractors sold from \$170 for a used and worn 1967 International 856 to a hefty \$1,100 for an unopened John Deere 9870 STS pedal combine. Trailers saw softer bidding, ranging from \$50 for a repainted Ford by Ertl to \$130 for a used and rusty vintage JD trailer by Eska.

Things wrapped up with a final set of premiums and advertising collectibles. Six lots with multi-year collections of vintage calendars brought only their minimum bid of \$1. A trio of lots featuring Ertl 4-inch ag-company snow globes fared better: \$35 for a pair of Deere varieties and \$45 for a single Case IH globe. A John Deere lamp closed out the category at \$25, a fitting finish to a weekend that clearly pleased farm toy and memorabilia fans.



Above: Replicas of antique farm equipment spanned the 1800s-1920s. An Ertl McCormick-Deering Farmall Regular with its box was taken home for just \$25.



Above: A new-in-box John Deere 9870 STS pedal combine by Scale Model Toys fetched an impressive \$1,100.



Left: Several farm toys got four-figure bids, including this Precision Engineering black-on-black International 4586 that brought \$1,850.

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**Modern soil testing models
are focusing on precision**

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — A conversation about modern soil testing methods that use advanced lab techniques to glean data from high-tech field and on-site methods of data collection was held during the Illinois Soybean Association's (ISA) recent "Talk Dirt to Me: Soil Test Interpretation for Profitable Management" seminar. Held at the ISA office in Bloomington, the morning-long conference attracted dozens of central Illinois farmers concerned about rising input prices, especially for fertilizers.

"We've been testing soils the same way for quite a while, but there are some new things on the horizon," said Tim Smith of CropSmith, Inc. of Farmer City, Illinois. His company's laboratory provides soil testing for farmers throughout Ford and McLean counties.

Modern soil testing relies on ad-



Above: Tim Smith of CropSmith, Inc., led a conversation about modern soil testing methods that use advanced lab techniques to glean data from high-tech methods of data collection. Smith, a soils expert from Gibson City, Illinois, made his remarks during the Illinois Soybean Association's recent "Talk Dirt to Me: Soil Test Interpretation for Profitable Management" seminar. (T. Alexander photo)

vanced lab analysis techniques, including spectroscopy (which uses light wavelengths to quickly assess organic matter) and atomic absorption, to produce precise, real-time information on soil nutrient levels. Smith noted that the rapid acquisition of results provided by modern soil testing techniques can offer farmers rapidly usable data on nutrient levels, salinity, organic matter and more to enable smarter, scientific nutrient management decisions. Flow injection analysis can also be used to measure specific nutrient levels like nitrate and phosphate.

High-tech data collection tools include GPS-guided sampling, drones and remote sensing, and embedded sensors that continuously monitor fields for pH levels and more. One company that offers high-tech soil sampling is Radicle Agronomics, a central Illinois-based offshoot of Precision Planting that provides farmers with simplified, streamlined soil analysis using automation. The company's soil sampling and analysis process, first developed in 2015, provides near-instant analyses that historically take hours or days to complete.

"We've been working with Precision Planting who have developed their own soil testing laboratory, and it's really a pretty cool piece of equipment. It's all automated, so you take a lot of the human element out of doing the soil testing," said Smith. "When the collecting is done, you just go back to your computer to see what's going on. I think this is where soil testing is going."

Precision Planting's Radicle Agronomics offers the world's first fully automated soil laboratory, according to the company's website, with accompanying tools that make soil nutrient management more precise and efficient.

"The (Geopress) measures very precisely how much soil is going into the analysis, and that is a huge improvement in where soil tests have been going. It's all very temperature-controlled, Smith said. "I think we are going to see more automated processes in soil testing in order to take the human element out of it."

Removing the "human element" from the soil collection process would reduce the number of common mistakes made by farmers in what Smith termed the most crucial of steps in soil testing. GPS-driven automation handles everything from staking out recurrent site testing locations to recording which samples were taken from each drilling location.

"You don't have to write anything on the (collection) tube or anything, because it uses GPS to write electronically to the tube. When you slide it in the machine it reads exactly where that (sample) came from and shows you on a map on your computer," Smith said.

Precision Planting is far from the only crop service company to embrace advanced soil testing technology; others include Biome Makers (BeCrop), Stenon (FarmLab), EarthOptics, and Chrissa Labs which offers an AI probe. Deveron and Midwest Labs are also moving beyond traditional lab tests for precision agriculture, according to a web search.

Precision Planting's Radicle Lab suite, which was brought to market in 2022, is so far recommended as a lease model rather than a farmer-owned unit. However, Smith told Farm World that it is not out of the realm of financial reason for a farmer to purchase the product suite.

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The Ohio Cheese Guild promotes artisan cheesemakers in the state

By Mike Tanchevski
Ohio Correspondent

LICKING COUNTY, Ohio – Ohio holds a unique place in the national dairy landscape. It proudly claims the title of the nation’s number-one Swiss cheese-making state, anchored by industrial giants like Brewster Cheese and Guggisberg Cheese. Yet, just as vital to its identity is a growing, passionate community of artisan cheesemakers – small-batch processors dedicated to their craft.

At the heart of promoting this artisanal growth is the Ohio Cheese Guild. Founded nearly a decade ago, the Guild emerged in response to a changing marketplace. “The organization was created out of a need to market Ohio cheeses as international and national competitors flooded store shelves,” Ohio Cheese Guild Treasurer Tracy Enslen said. “The philosophy behind its work is simple yet powerful: ‘When the tide rises, so do all the boats.’”

By working together, Ohio’s cheesemakers could ensure that their local products stood out, even as international and national cheeses crowded store shelves. “We started with the need to market Ohio cheeses, as we were seeing an influx of other cheeses in our market,” Enslen said.

The Guild, currently supported by 11 cheesemaker members, industry suppliers, and cheese enthusiasts, focuses primarily on education and marketing. It serves as a home for shared knowledge, bringing members together to discuss matters that are “pre-competitive” and benefit everyone.

Recent educational events demonstrate this focus, including a dairy food safety day class with professional speakers and seminars on specialized topics like brine health and sensory testing to help makers identify cheese defects.

The artisan cheese story begins with milk. Enslen clarifies the distinct terminology within the dairy

industry. “Producers are the farmers who generate the milk, and processors are the cheesemakers,” she said.

Cheesemakers are highly selective about the milk they use. Most bring milk in from dedicated partner farms, while others use the traditional, integrated model of being both processor and producer on-site.

Two integrated operations stand out. “Canal Junction (near Defiance, Ohio), known for its on-farm production and Sweet Grass Dairy (in Frederickstown), a family operation that serves as a one-stop shop, raising cows and making cheese, butter, and ice cream on site,” Enslen said.

The commitment to milk quality and farmer relationships is illustrated by Black Radish Creamery, which operates its facility near Granville, Ohio, and runs a specialty cheese shop in Columbus’s North Market.

Black Radish cheesemaker Rob Shield reinforces the primary rule of cheesemaking: “You can’t process good cheese from bad milk.”

For Black Radish, the foundation of their award-winning cheese is its partnership with Pine Tree Dairy in Marshallville. The milk comes from cows that carry the A2-A2 milk protein gene. “A2A2 milk has a shorter protein (actual length of protein molecule), making it easier to digest,” said Andrew Steiner, Pine Tree’s cow-side assistant and geneticist.

Pine-Tree’s herd consists primarily of Holstein cattle with a sprinkling of Brown Swiss and Jersey – an important characteristic in the cheesemaking process.

Black Radish Creamery originally sourced milk from Ayrshire cows, known for their consistency and moderate butterfat content. The switch to a mix of Jersey, Holstein and Brown Swiss cows from Pine Tree brought a significant change. “Jersey cows, for example, deliver milk with high-

er butterfat – around 5 percent compared to the 3 percent found in standard whole milk – while Holsteins offer higher volume,” Shield said. “When we switched, I saw about a 15 to 25 percent increase in yield across almost all of our makes. More fat means a better yield, but also richer flavor and texture.”

Black Radish Creamery gets weekly milk deliveries – typically 2,500 to 2,800 pounds – adjusting slightly for holidays or vacations. The reliability of their dedicated farm source ensures consistency, allowing the team to produce a regular rotation of aged, surface-ripened cheeses.

Seasonal changes in milk composition also impact a cheese’s flavor. “Winter milk is typically higher in fat because the cows are indoors,” Shield said. “Summer milk is lighter and grassier, with more herbaceous notes.”

Black Radish’s production focuses 100 percent on cow’s milk cheeses, with a regular rotation of aged, surface-ripened and fresh cheeses, including Camembert, wash-rind Pious

Etti, cheddar curds, Raclette, and farmer’s cheese. “With clean milk and the quality we get from Pine Tree, I can set a timer and know exactly when things are going to happen – it’s extremely consistent,” Shield said.

Artisan cheesemakers operate in Ohio’s highly transitional dairy industry. Enslen, who has worked on behalf of dairy farmers for 25 years through the American Dairy Association, notes the trend of farm consolidation: “When I started... we had over 3,400 dairy farms in the state of Ohio. Now we’re down to just over 2,000, but the number of cows is the same.” This trend reflects a national shift to fewer, larger operations.

The Guild’s collaborative network provides a valuable resource for the smaller artisan makers to navigate this competitive landscape, offering a platform to share techniques and support each other’s work. The Guild also highlights the quality of Ohio’s award-winning artisans, who have achieved worldwide recognition in the quality of their cheeses.

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In observance of New Year's Day our offices will be closed Thurs., Jan. 1

The following deadlines will be in effect for the **January 9th** issue for classified and regular display advertising:

Regular Display Advertising
Wednesday, December 31st, 12 Noon

Classified Advertising
Friday, January 2nd, 11 AM

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'09 J&M 875-18 w/ Tarp, Scales, 65K43X25 Floater Tires.....\$ 32,000

'12 J&M 875-18 w/ Tarp and 66K43X25 Floater Tires.....\$ 25,000

'15 J&M 875-18 w/ Tarp, Scales, 1000S/R32 Floater Tires.....\$ 33,500

'16 J&M 1112-20 w/ Tarp, Scales, Tracks.....\$ 86,000

'22 J&M 1112-20 w/ Tarp, Scales (Farm), V< Tracks.....\$ 99,000

'22 J&M 1112-20 w/ Tarp, Scales (Farm), V< Tracks.....\$ 99,000

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'12 J&M 1151-22T, elect. tarp, LT Track System.....\$ 67,000

'13 J&M 1251-22 w/ Tarp, Scales, Tracks.....\$ 75,000

'23 J&M 1312-20 w/ Tarp, RH Unload, and 1250S/R32 Tires.....\$ 92,000

'11 J&M 1326-22 w/ Tarp, J&M Tracks.....\$ 63,000

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'17 J&M 1522-20 w/ Tarp, Scales, G7580, V3 Track System.....\$ 95,000

'12 J&M T8600H 42' High Speed Head Cart, 4 Wheel Brake.....\$ 7,500

J&M H7874 25' Head Cart.....\$ 4,000

'17 Brandt 1020XR Tarp, Scales, Tracks.....\$ 55,000

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Brent 472 w/ Tarp, and 23.1X26 Diamond Tires.....\$ 7,500

'08 Unverferth 9250 w/ Tarp, Scales, 900R32 Tires.....\$ 32,000

'11 Unverferth 1315 w/ Tarp, 520R32R42 Walking Duals.....\$ 39,000

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'12 Bush Hog 12715 1000 RPM, 8 Laminated Tires, Chains.....\$ 14,200

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'10 Bush Hog 12715 1000 RPM, 8 Airplane Tires, Chains.....\$ 10,900

'12 Bush Hog 12615 1000 RPM, 8 Airplane Tires, Chains.....\$ 9,800

'04 Bush Hog 12615 1000 RPM, 8 Laminated Tires, Chains.....\$ 13,000

'23 John Deere FC15R 540 RPM, 8 Airplane Tires, Chains.....\$ 29,000

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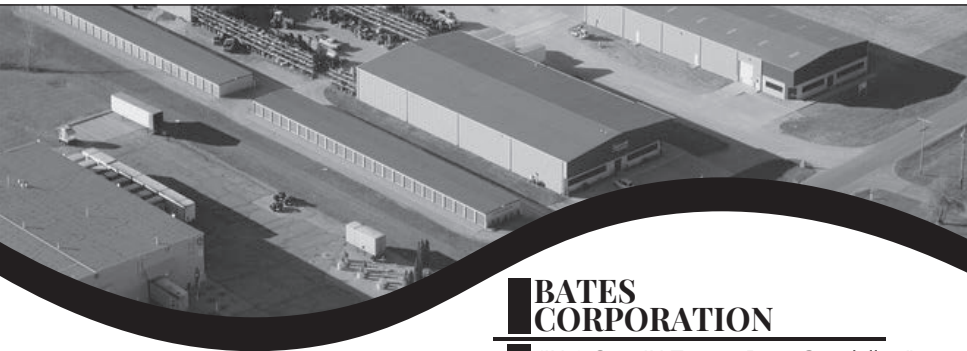
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CHRISTMAS CLOSING

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Illinois Extension offers many educational opportunities in 2026

Illinois Extension is offering several agricultural, environmental and horticulture programs online and in person around the state in upcoming months. For questions contact extension@illinois.edu.

Livestock

Jan. 22-23: Driftless Region Beef Conference, Grand River Convention Center, Dubuque, Iowa

The 14th annual Driftless Region Beef Conference brings together Extension specialists from Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin for programs that address production needs and timely topics relevant to the challenges faced by cattle producers today.

Feb. 3-26: Certified Livestock Manager Training, Multiple dates and locations, including online

The Livestock Management Facilities Act requires facilities designed for 300 or more animal units to have at least one employee certified in environmentally aware manure management techniques. Facilities with more than 1,000 animal units must have a certified livestock manager attend a workshop and pass the IDOA exam or complete the online training and pass the online test.

2026 Training Schedule: Feb. 3, Effingham; Feb. 4, Breese; Feb. 5, Pittsfield; Feb. 6, Bloomington; Feb. 24, Freeport; Feb. 25, Sycamore; Feb. 26, Monmouth.

Feb. 19, 11 AM: Illinois Performance Tested Bull Sale, Illinois Beef Expo, Springfield

The sale gives bull buyers the information needed to make positive herd progress. All bulls will have genomic-enhanced EPDs.

Farm management and crops

Jan. 12-Feb. 24: Illinois Extension Agronomy Summits, Multiple dates and locations statewide

Attendees will hear research updates from university experts to gain insightful tips for making informed decisions around farm management.

- Jan. 12: Peoria (East Peoria). Register by Jan 6.
- Jan. 22: Southeastern (Fairfield)
- Jan. 28: Northwest Illinois (Freeport)
- Feb. 3: Southwestern (Waterloo)
- Feb. 5: Oglesby
- Feb. 10: Joliet. Register by Jan. 31.
- Feb. 17: Springfield
- Feb. 24: Clark County (Marshall)

March 1-April 30: Crop Management Conference, Online only

Dig deeper into what is impacting Illinois Crop production with the latest research updates to improve productivity and output from crop science experts at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and beyond. Crop producers, agriculture consultants, industry professionals and students are invited to attend. Full event details and registration are available at go.illinois.edu/CMC. Register by April 15.

March 2: Focus on the Future: Sustaining Farm Legacy Meetings, Multiple dates, hybrid in-person and online options

Illinois Extension and Illinois Farm Bureau will provide resources, networking opportunities, and support through new, informative meetings designed specifically for Illinois farmland owners and agricultural stakeholders. Events: March 2, Champaign; June 30, Sycamore; and Aug. 25, Mt. Vernon. Cost is \$20. Event details and registration are available at go.illinois.edu/FarmLegacy.

Pesticide safety

Illinois Pesticide Safety Education Program, Multiple dates and locations, including online

Need to obtain a pesticide applicator or operator license? Sign up for in-person

training and testing, or complete it anytime online. Seating for the in-person clinics is limited.

- Private Applicator In-Person Clinics: Jan. 6, Carterville; Jan. 20, Rock Island; Feb. 10, Springfield; Feb. 11, Quincy; Feb. 17, Collinsville; Feb. 25, Peoria; March 10, Rockford

- Commercial Applicator/Operator In-Person Clinics: Jan. 7-8, Mount Vernon; Jan. 12-13, Springfield; Jan. 27-28, Tinley Park; Feb. 18-19, Collinsville; Feb. 23-24, Peoria; March 3, Mount Vernon; March 11-12, Rockford; March 31-April 1, Skokie; April 7-8, Crystal Lake

Specialty Crops

Jan. 28-30: From Food to Flowers: Everything Local Conference, Bank of Springfield Center, Springfield

This combined Illinois Food, Farmers Market, and Specialty Crop Conference will bring together more people than ever from across the state’s local food, specialty crop and farmers market supply chains.

Feb. 10, 6 p.m.: Forming an LLC, Online

Discover the key questions to ask before selecting the LLC entity option. The session includes a quick recap of why an LLC is a good risk management tool, how to form one, best practices to implement after it’s formed, and regular obligations to keep the LLC in top legal shape. This program is part of the Legal Training for Illinois Small Farms Series with Farm Commons.

Feb. 11, 8:30 a.m.: Southern Illinois Fruit and Vegetable School, Doubletree Meeting and Event Center, Mt. Vernon

Get practical research-based information to make specialty crops flourish and profit at the 2026 Fruit and Vegetable School in Mt. Vernon. The program will feature three separate tracks to address vegetables, tree fruits, small fruits and

cut flower production. Vendors will also be on-site to discuss production needs.

Feb. 12, 8:30 a.m.: Southwestern Illinois Commercial Tree Fruit School, Barefoot Restaurant, Hardin

The program features a wide range of topics to help individuals meet the challenges of commercial fruit production in southwestern Illinois.

Feb. 16, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.: Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, NIU Rockford, Rockford

Intended for Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin fruit and vegetable growers, this day-long program provides vital updates from Illinois Extension specialists and educators to address challenges and opportunities that beginning and established commercial growers may encounter in the upcoming growing season. Cost \$40.

Horticulture

Jan. 13-Feb. 17, 9 to 11 a.m.: Community Tree Care Series Webinars, Online

Understanding and providing proper and routine maintenance is important to ensure a tree’s best life and a healthier urban forest. This training provides information and resources to those seeking insights for keeping trees healthy and minimizing risks. CEUs are available

- Jan. 13: Trees for Pollinators and Evergreen ID
- Jan. 20: Forest Health Updates and Fungal Mutualists
- Jan. 27: Construction and Urban Soils
- Feb. 3: Chainsaw Safety and Pruning Young Trees
- Feb. 10: Changing Climate and Historic Pests
- Feb. 17: After Planting and Tree Responses

Find full details and registration at go.illinois.edu/TreeCareSeries.



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Tikkun Farm teaches locals how to live off the land

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

MOUNT HEALTHY, Ohio – It's called Tikkun Farm and it's a 3.5-acre non-profit farm founded in 2015 by Rev. Dr. Mary Laymon and her husband, Greg York. The farm sits in the middle of the old, congested neighborhood of Mount Healthy in Hamilton County. What was once a dairy farm in the early 1900s and eventually became a junkyard, has been transformed into a farm which supports needy families in this community.

"Through cleanup and diverse farming practices, wildlife has returned and the soil has been replenished," Laymon said.

Laymon and York are trying to help the community by providing ministry

Right: Tikkun Farm is frequently visited by school children in the Mount Healthy area. (photo submitted)

and food on their property. Over the past years, the number of children and adults served by Tikkun Farm has grown significantly.

Tikkun is a Hebrew word meaning "repair" or "restore." It's the goal of this couple to restore healing and help build relationships through its many offerings, whether it's tending to animals on the farm, practicing yoga, learning how to prepare a dinner meal or simply working in the gardens or small orchards. There's a small orchard at Tikkun, as well as a large greenhouse and a large pond.

"Our farm helps people become the



authors of their own stories by integrating care experiences for all ages through our many programs," Laymon said. "We offer a community of people here to help them establish trust and help restore healing."

Whether she's serving as the pastor of St. Simon's of Cyrene Episcopal Church in nearby Lincoln Heights or mentoring those at Tikkun Farm, her goal is the same – teach others to love and respect each other and the land.

"As you get to know us, you will notice we have a lot going on," Laymon said. "We feed families and heal souls. We train young people for jobs, we participate in yoga classes, repair the farm fences, work in the garden, practice meditation and more. Sometimes we simply sit and engage in reconciling conversations about race."

While Mount Healthy isn't considered a food desert, there is a need for food among many in the community. Tikkun Farm receives food donations from stores such as Aldi, as well as from farmers in the county. Then, the



Above: Ten years ago, Mary Laymon and her husband, Greg York, purchased 3.5 acres in the heart of Mount Healthy and turned the one-time dairy into a productive farm. (photo submitted)

(Tikkun Farm continued page 2B)

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Tikkun Farm

FROM PAGE 1B

farm feeds the community through its Nourishing Families Program. Visitors may shop one day a week on Tuesday, Friday or Saturday and select the food they need. It serves the people much like a food pantry.

“We have our market and people can come from all over the city and pick up whatever food they need to support their families,” Laymon said.

Residents of Mount Healthy can sign up for crockpot meals, a curated meal bag with all the ingredients for an easy-to-prepare meal.

The couple offers cooking classes to show visitors how to prepare nourishing meals from fresh fruits and vegetables that are either grown at Tikkun Farm or donated by stores and farmers.

“None of the food waste from our Nourishing Families Program ends up in the landfill,” Laymon said. “Instead, it feeds chickens, worms and soldier flies. Soldier fly larva compost food waste in the most efficient way possible, growing into nutritious, protein packed food for our chickens, ducks and turkeys. We’re expanding our composting program by inviting neighbors to bring in their food waste to the farm.”

Thanks to a generous grant from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation, Tikkun Farm extends its teaching into the Mount Healthy City Schools.

“We’ve created a comprehensive



Above: Not only do those at Tikkun Farm grow their own food but they spend time learning how to prepare healthy meals. (photo submitted)

curriculum of hands-on experiential learning activities for every grade, connected to their core curriculum goals,” Laymon said. “These activities include raising baby chicks, seed starting, compost systems, testing water and soil quality, establishing pollinator gardens, removing invasive species and more.

“We invite high school seniors to participate in a monthly permaculture curriculum. The students interested in this work may apply for our Environmental and Urban Agriculture Job Training program after graduation. This program provides students with the skills necessary to pursue work in landscaping, hydroponic and aquaponic growing, urban gardening and more. In partnership with 80 Acres, Brick Gardens and other employers in our city, we’re creating a school-to-work pipeline for the young adults in our neighborhood.”



Above: Tikkun Farm owner Mary Laymon turned an old room that once housed dairy cows into a coop for her many chickens. (photo submitted)

This farm may be “landlocked” on just 3.5 acres, yet there’s plans for more growth.

“We really want to expand and be able to help young people have a culinary art experience so that it might lead them into something like culinary art school, say, at Cincinnati State,” Laymon said. “We eventually want to expand that even further to offer training in the building trades like electrical work, plumbing, carpentry and welding. These are areas where there’s actually a huge need for more artisans. Again, we do more than one thing. We seek diversity for stability, resilience and abundance.

“Some of the things that are coming up for our future programming include an expansion of our environmental education program. We’re going begin launching a job training program for youth in our neighborhood and that’s going to begin with an urban farming



Above: A picturesque walkway at Tikkun Farm winds its way through a small orchard, small gardens, compost piles, the large dairy barn and to the large pond. (photo submitted)

focus and an environmental focus, so we’ll be training young people to get jobs at places like 80 acres and other indoor farming facilities in the city.”

The farm has a variety of animals and families across the Cincinnati area that sign up for animal care. There are the tasks of putting the Guinea hens to bed, collecting eggs, refilling water bowls, feeding the pot-bellied pig, fostering baby chicks in the spring and leading farm tours for visitors. During the spring, summer and fall it’s common to see visitors of all backgrounds planting, weeding, mulching, tending and harvesting the land.

“We believe that nature heals and restores us,” Laymon said. “In every corner of our farm, one will discover habitats that invite human engagement with nature.”

Indiana Pork, South Bend Cubs donate 2,000 meals to food bank

South Bend, Ind. – The South Bend Cubs and Indiana Pork donated 2,000 ground pork meals to the Food Bank of Northern Indiana. This comes after the team sold 500 pork items at Four Winds Field during a series of games in June this past season.

In the spirit of Hoosiers helping their fellow Hoosiers, for each pork item

sold, a ground pork meal was donated to help members of the community. This was the first year for the partnership, which resulted in 2,000 ground pork meals to the food bank.

“Indiana’s pig farmers are always looking at new ways to give back to our neighbors,” said Jeanette Merritt, director of communications for Indiana Pork. “One of our We Care Principles prioritizes community. Our pig farmers focus on how they can help feed their neighbors through their own donations and partnerships like this program with the South Bend Cubs.”

Cubs Assistant General Manager Andy Francis said, “We’re thrilled to have a partnership that results in so much good for our community. Our community is one of the top three poorest in the state and we are grateful to Indiana’s pig farmers for helping us

feed our neighbors as we head into the holiday season.”

Marijo Martinec, CEO of the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, said, “The pantry doesn’t always have access to protein. Our guests will be excited to have ground pork available to them as

a versatile option for their family dinner tables.”

The 2,000 meals translates to 500 pounds of ground pork. Indiana is the fifth-largest pork producing state in the U.S. with nearly 2,200 Hoosier pig farmers.



Left: Indiana Pork Director of Communications Jeanette Merritt (far left) is joined by Marijo Martinec, of the Food Bank of Northern Indiana, and Andy Francis, of the South Bend Cubs, to make a ground pork donation to the food pantry.

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Bellmore Volunteer Fire Department practices grain bin rescues

The Bellmore Volunteer Fire Department of Bellmore, Ind., recently completed its annual grain bin rescue training.

“Our rural community is built on agriculture, and with that comes the presence of large grain bins storing corn, soybeans, and other commodities across our jurisdiction. While these structures play a vital role in local farming operations, they also present significant hazards,” the department posted on its Facebook page. “Tragically, grain engulfment incidents happen every year, and when they do, having the right equipment and properly trained responders is critical to saving lives.”

The fire department got an assist from nearby Reeder Trausch Marine who offered training space inside when outdoor weather did not cooperate.

“We are incredibly grateful for the training simulator and expertise provided by Key-stone, which helps ensure we’re prepared should an emergency strike close to home.”



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TUESDAY, JANUARY 20 @ 10:00 AM EST

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INSPECTION DATE: Tuesday, January 13 | 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM EST



Highlights: 2010 John Deere 8345RT Track Tractor; John Deere 4455 Tractor; John Deere 4430 Hi Crop Tractor; John Deere 2755 2WD Tractor; 2015 John Deere S660 Combine; 2011 MacDon FD70 40ft. Flex Draper Head; John Deere 608C Corn Head; Unverferth AMS-42 Head Cart; Unverferth HT30 Head Cart; Parker 675 Grain Cart; Parker 500bu. Grain Cart; 2010 Hagie STS 14 Self Propelled Sprayer; 2012 Peterbilt 384 Semi Tractor; 1999 International 9100 Day Cab Semi Tractor; 2013 Trail King ASHR-2-4278 Walking Floor Trailer; John Deere 1790 Bulk Fill Planter; 2016 Kuhn Krause 8005 Excelerator Vertical Tillage Tool.

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FFA Foundation executive receives Silver Stevie Award

INDIANAPOLIS – National FFA Foundation’s Molly Ball, National FFA Foundation president, has been named the winner of a Silver Stevie Award® in the Female Executive of the Year – Government or Non-Profit – category in the 22nd annual Stevie Awards Women in Business.

The Stevie Awards for Women in Business honor the achievements of women executives, entrepreneurs, employees, and the companies they run – worldwide. The Stevie Award has been hailed as the world’s premier business award.

The awards were presented to the winners Nov. 10 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City.

More than 1,500 entries from organizations and individuals in 48 nations and territories were submitted this year for consideration in more than 100 categories, including Executive of the Year, Entrepreneur of the Year, Company of the Year, Startup of the Year, Women Helping Women, and Women Run Workplace of the Year. Ball won in the Female Executive of the Year category for Government or Non-Profits of 11-2,500 employees.

Ball has served as the president of the National FFA Foundation and the chief marketing officer for the National FFA Organization for nearly 11 years. In her role with the National FFA Foundation, she has played a pivotal part in building partnerships with individuals, businesses, and organizations to secure hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for the future of agricultural education and FFA.

“Molly is an inspiring philanthropic female leader in our organization,” said



Molly Ball

National FFA Organization CEO Scott Stump. “She’s passionate about building a strong future for students by teaching, mentoring, and supporting the next generation. We’re so proud of Molly and this acknowledgement and honor from the Stevie Awards Women in Business.”

Gold, Silver, and Bronze Stevie Award winners were determined by the average scores of more than 190 business professionals around the world, working on seven juries.

“In its 22nd year, the Stevie Awards for Women in Business received its most varied and diverse body of nominations ever, and that’s reflected in the caliber of this year’s winning nominations,” said Maggie Miller, president of the Stevie Awards. “We are gratified by how meaningful it is to women to win a Stevie Award, and how impactful it can be on the futures of their careers and their organizations. We congratulate all of this year’s Grand, Gold, Silver, and Bronze Stevie Award winners for their achievements.”

Details about the Stevie Awards for Women in Business and the list of winners in all categories are available at <https://Women.StevieAwards.com>.

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TRACTORS: 2018 John Deere 8245R Tractor-920 hrs, 245 HP, 3 pt, quick hitch, 1,000 PTO, 5 remotes, rear duals, front fenders, cab, heat, air, Bluetooth radio, Active seat, instructional seat, HID lights, suspension seat, adjustable steering column, block heater, dual radar, *SECOND OWNER TRACTOR* SN#1RW8245RLHP130632; 2015 John Deere 8245R Tractor-2,250 hrs, 250 HP, Powershift, rear duals, front fenders, 4 remotes, 1,000 PTO, 3 pt, quick hitch, Cab, heat, air, radio, Active seat, instructor seat, HID lighting, adjustable steering column, block heater, **ONE OWNER** SN#1RW8245RLFP103573; 1981 International 3088 Tractor, 2 remotes, 540 PTO, 3 Pt, rear duals, lights, open station, SN#2480003U00165; **HARVEST EQUIPMENT:** 2013 John Deere S550 2002 Engine Hours, 1224 Separator hours, Front singles, bin extensions, contour feeder house, rear straw chopper, rock trap, single point header hookup, heat, ac, radio, instructional seat, under seat cooler, rear camera, auto guidance ready, **ONE OWNER**; 2013 John Deere 606C Corn Head, 6 row, single point hook up, poly snouts, lights, used this year for harvest, SN#1H00606CEDX755525; 2013 John Deere 630E Poly full finger auger, poly finger reel, fore aft reel, marker lights, PTO drive, single point hookup.; **Unverferth Manufacturing** HT30 Header Cart, adjustable beam height, adjustable stops/rests, rear lights, front steer, extendable hitch; 2006 J&M 385 SD Gravity Wagon, 385BU wagon with lights, front ladder roll tarp side discharge, lights, and brakes, 425/65R22.5 tires; 2006 J&M 385 SD Gravity Wagon, 385BU wagon with lights, front ladder roll tarp side discharge, lights, and brakes, 425/65R22.5 tires; 2006 J&M 385 SD Gravity Wagon, 385BU wagon with lights, front ladder roll tarp side discharge, lights, and brakes, 425/65R22.5 tires; 1996 J&M 350 SD Gravity Wagon, 385BU wagon with lights, front and rear ladders roll tarp side

discharge, lights, and brakes, 425/65R22.5 tires; **PLANTERS:** 2018 John Deere 1795 Planter, 12/24 row, bulk fill, with loading conveyer, Vac system Max Emerge 5, double disc openers, no-till coulters, 1 Spike closing wheel, 1 rubber closing wheel, corn discs and bean discs, lights, was used this year, *SECOND OWNER* SN#1A01795AKFA760169; 2013 1770NT 12/30 Planter, used for corn, Vac system, precision corn meters, Martin row cleaners, on seed fertilizer, 3 bushel boxes, Pneumatic down pressure, Red Ball system, 1 Spike closing wheel, 1 rubber closing wheel, corn discs and bean discs, was used this year, * ONE OWNER* SN#1A01770WTCM750188; **SPRAYERS:** 2011 Fast 9613 Pull Type Sprayer 90ft Booms, 1350-gallon tank, Hydraulic drive quick connect fittings, T Jet nozzles, induction tank, * ONE OWNER* Tri-State Liquid Tender tandem axle 1400 gallon tank, 15 gallon inductor tank, Briggs and Stratton 2 inch pump, gas engine, front tote storage rack, quick connect fill; **Tri-State Liquid Tender** Tandem Axle, 1000 gallon tank, 2 Inch Gas pump, quick connect fill and discharge, **TRUCKS:** 2012 Ford F350 SD XLT Truck-132,705 miles, bumper hitch, 4X4, long bed, standard cab, power windows, power locks, heat, air, radio, Boss Power-V XT 8 Ft. 2 In. snow plow, hooked up and operational controller in cab, *ONE OWNER VIN#1FTRF3B69CEB72883; 2005 Dodge Ram 2500 truck-77,680, standard cab, long bed, 4X4, 5.7 Hemi Engine, power windows, power locks, heat, air, radio, *ONE OWNER* VIN#3D7KS26DX5G829398; **TILLAGE EQUIPMENT:** 2017 Great Plains 2400 Turbo-Max, 24 Ft working width, hydraulic raise & lower, hydraulic fold, lights, rear rolling basket, SN#GP-C6553H; 2011 KONGSKILDE VIBRO TILL 2900 Cultivator, 26 Ft 8 In working width, rear double rolling baskets, hydraulic raise & lower, hydraulic folding, SN#002141; **Remlinger Strip Till Bar**, 3 Point mount 14ft working width, 30 inch spacing, 6 row, rear rolling baskets, *ONE OWNER* YETTER 3530 Rotary Hoe, 30 Ft working width, 3 pt, hydraulic folding, lights; **Glencoe Soil Saver Cultivator**, pull type, hydraulic raise and lower, single section, rear Remlinger Coil tines, 15-inch row spacing front mounted disc blades.; **John Deere 915 Ripper** 7 Shank 20 inch spacing, rear coil tines, 3-point mount.; **Unverferth 300 Implement Caddy** 3-point mount, pull type caddy, hydraulic lift.; **International 720 5 Bottom Plow**, 2-point mount, Rear wheel, hydraulic raise lower; **AUGERS:** J&M Elevator Honda Gas Engine towable, adjustable height.; 2020 MAYRATH 10X63 Auger, self-driven swing away, 2 remotes for swing away, 540 PTO, 10 In, 63 Ft, SN#HU02A471924720

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- John Deere 2640 Diesel
- 2014 Brent 1082 Grain Cart
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- 2023 Kinze 3605 16 row no-till planter
- 2013 Kinze 3600 12/12 24 row planter
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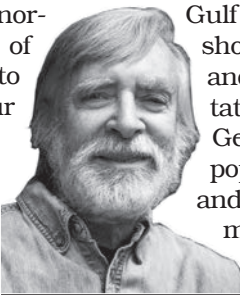




PREVIEW DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30TH FROM NOON TO 4 PM

New moon on Saturday; Winter Solstice occurs Sunday morning

Beneath this sense of cold's enormity is an equally strong sense of its ability to make us sensitive to one another, to ourselves, to our world. – Susan Felch



POOR WILL'S ALMANACK
By Bill Felker

The Moon in December
The Moon is new on Dec. 20
The Moon enters its second quarter on Dec. 27

Sun Time: Winter Solstice occurs on Dec. 21 at 10:02 a.m. The Sun enters the deep winter constellation of Capricorn on the same day.

The Stars: for the unusual star that shone down on Bethlehem, the sky of midnight on Christmas Eve is almost the same as the one seen by shepherds 2000 years ago: Orion due south, Leo with its brilliant Regulus in the east and the Great Square in the far west, the Milky Way dividing the heavens from the southeast to the northwest.

Weather Time: The Dec. 25 Front: The Christmas cold front is one of the most consistent highs of the entire year, bearing precipitation five years in 10. It is typically followed by some of the brightest days of December. Travel and transport of livestock is recommended as this weather system moves east but before the arrival of the New Year's front.

The Dec. 31-Jan. 1 Front: The Jan. 1 cold front often brings rain or snow prior to its arrival. Plan on chilly, freezing weather to follow.

Zeitgebers: Events in Nature that Tell the Time of Year: Milder December weather may open pussy willows and draw up snowdrops, crocus and aconites as the days expand, but along the


Gulf of Mexico, the sun is already shortening the dormancy of trees and shrubs, hurrying the gestation of spring. Across coastal Georgia, sweet gums and yellow poplars finally lose their leaves, and their buds swell almost immediately to replace the loss. In central Florida, red maples open, and Jessamine produces its yellow blossoms.

Farm and Garden Time:

Collards and kale, and well mulched carrots and beets can survive to this point in the season, but January's cold spells eventually take them. Indoors, however, tomato and pepper plants, seeded in middle summer and brought inside before frost, should continue to produce fruit in a south window. Basil, parsley, rosemary, thyme and oregano may also be doing well. In the warmth of greenhouses, bedding plant seeding is fully underway, and some young plants scheduled to be sold in April and May have four to six leaves by now.

Mind and Body Time: Mark the deepest entry of the Sun through one of your south windows today. A pencil mark on the floor or wall will provide a comforting measure of the advance of spring as the sunlight recedes (as the sun grows higher in the sky) during the months ahead – not only in your home, but in all of North America. Even though you can't control the weather or what happens in nature, you can at least follow along, keeping your finger literally on path of the Sun in your private observatory.

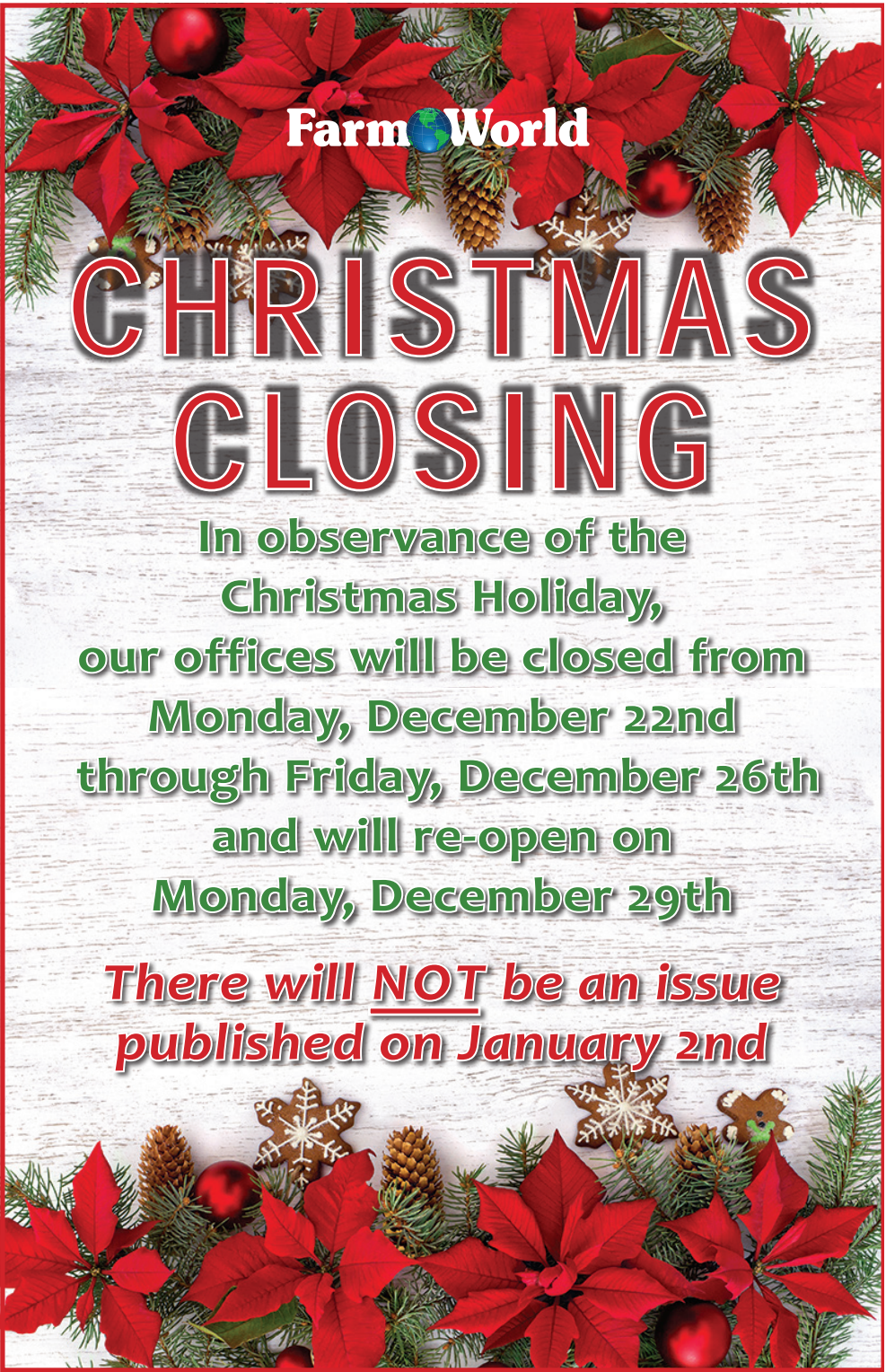
Creature Time (for fishing, hunting, feeding, bird watching): most productive
(Poor Will continued on page 9B)



CHRISTMAS CLOSING

In observance of the Christmas Holiday, our offices will be closed from Monday, December 22nd through Friday, December 26th and will re-open on Monday, December 29th

There will NOT be an issue published on January 2nd



In warm appreciation, we would like to *Thank You* and Wish You A *Merry Christmas* and a *Happy New Year!*

From all of us at **FarmWorld**



FarmWorld

New Year's Day Deadlines

*In observance of
New Year's Day
our offices
will be closed
Thursday, January 1*

The following deadlines will be in effect for the January 9th issue for classified and regular display advertising:

Regular Display Advertising
Wednesday, December 31st, 12 Noon

Classified Advertising
Friday, January 2nd, 11 AM

Poor Will

FROM PAGE 8B

days should be those before the Dec. 25 front. The days prior to the arrival of that front will also milder, and will be less likely to freeze (and damage) the carcasses of your fish and game. Precipitation, however, could complicate your outings. White-tailed bucks in gray winter coats drop their antlers as the old year comes to an end; see if you can find them. And dieters should plan to have a balanced snack at about 3:30 p.m. and a moderate early dinner to keep lunar influence under control.

Journal

Dec. 25, 2009: I got up about 5 this morning in the middle of a Christmas rainstorm, the wind and raindrops pelted the southeast corner of the house. After an hour, the rain stopped, but the wind kept on, and by sunrise, my neighborhood lay in the center of the low-pressure cell, the sky clearing.

Then when I went outside, I found a polygonia comma - an angel-wing butterfly - on the head of the stone crucifix my sister had given me some years ago. The insect must have emerged or was driven from its winter quarters in the storm and had found refuge on the cross.

The polygonias overwinter as adults, so I thought it might have a chance to survive the coming cold. I watched it all day as the temperature held steady in the 40s. I went out to check on it before I went to bed, and it was still there.

Dec. 29, 2009: Titmice were singing about 8:30 this morning, but the polygonia butterfly that arrived in the Christmas storm and perched on the head of the crucifix between the 25th and the 28th was gone when I went out to the porch once again, its message to me apparently complete.

ALMANACK CLASSICS

A Frightening Experience at Christmas Time

By Clarence Dinnen, Jamestown, Ohio

The year 1939-1940 was a memorable one for me. I was in the third grade at the Bowersville, Ohio, school. All 12 grades were in the same building. One morning, we were bused to Xenia to hear a symphony orchestra. The music had a lasting impression on me. And at Christmas time, the high school acted out Dickens' A Christmas Carol. I was genuinely scared of the ghosts of Marley, Christmas Past, Present and Future.

But the most frightening experience happened one day unexpectedly. A high school girl came into our third-grade room and spoke with our teacher, Miss Vanami, and left. A few moments passed, and then our teacher said, "Clarence, you are to go upstairs to the superintendent's office."

A murmur rippled through the class. I stepped into the hall and the girl was waiting. She escorted me up the long flight of stairs to the second floor and the office. I was really frightened, much more so than of the ghosts in the Christmas play. There were rumors circulating that there was a paddling machine in the office!

The superintendent, Mr. Alfred, greeted me warmly with a big smile and asked me to sit down. (So far so good.) Then he said, "Clarence I hear that you have lost your dog."

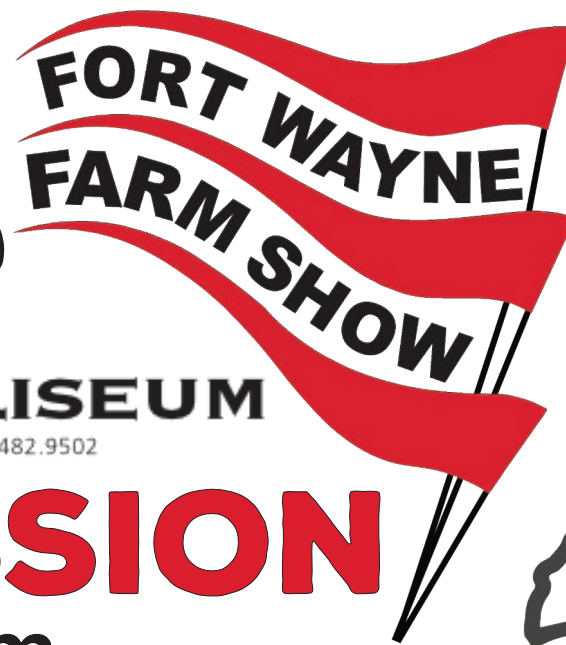
I said, "Yes, he was run over by a car."

He said, "Well, I have found you a new puppy."

Oh, I was greatly relieved! Then he told me to ask my parents about the puppy. I couldn't wait to get home from school to tell them. I got the puppy and named him Mickey. He was a spaniel mix that grew into a fine, affectionate dog that I had for years.

JANUARY 13 14 15

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Tips for surviving in years with negative income

I recently read about income forecasts in agriculture for 2025 and 2026. The smart guys are predicting marginal profits in 2025(?) and declining profits in 2026. I really worry about data being interpreted in a way that defies logic. I really don't know how the additional subsidies the USDA will be giving out in 2025 will be distributed, but I maintain that subsidies are not the solution, but a Band-Aid. I also believe that suppliers will be the first to take a cut in new subsidy payments.

It seems logical that we take a very academic approach to our finances setting aside emotions and being very rigid with our financial decisions. I've been watching good, successful farms making decisions based on a simplified business model. If there is no ROI (return on investment) reasonably assured, you don't spend the money. To survive these years of negative income on the farm, you adopt this model.

There are three parts to our production "pie" for grain farmers. Land costs, look closely at cash rents and land purchases. There are always opportunities in a down environment. Can you renegotiate cash leases involving the landlord into benefiting more when profits are available and sharing in the belt tightening when needed. Simplify in-

55 YEARS AND
COUNTING FROM THE
TRACTOR SEAT
BY BILL WHITMAN

puts. To the extent possible stick to the basics and target average yields instead of reaching for "super yield" (I saw that phrase recently). There are some lower cost-

ing seeds available from reputable seed dealers. I heard Matt Griggs mention that Beck's had a seed that produced a "decent" yield and was lower priced than others he used this year. Next is equipment and storage. I imagine that Farm Service Agency will be offering 0 percent interest on grain bins on a 10-year note. When that deal reappears, it seems like a good investment. Just this fall we saw a lot of farms selling corn at \$3.90 a bushel and soybeans around \$10 a bushel price. A scant 2-1/2 months later, corn is at \$4.35 and \$11.20. It doesn't take long to pay for storage with price swings like this.

Now I want to speak about equipment costs. I've watched good farms lower equipment costs by slightly downsizing equipment in exchange for more seat time. Others need to look at lease costs because there are now times when buying out the lease will save you money and put an asset (albeit depreciating) onto the financial statement. What's the tradeoff? Maybe you don't have the latest in technology and comfort but if you have taken care of the equipment, you

know what you have. In each decision you do what makes academic sense.

The previous paragraphs were speaking toward grain farmers. This is not to exclude livestock farmers, who happen to be enjoying a pretty good, sustaining market. Despite how bright the future appears, try and take advantage of the extra money to invest in your livestock. Keep heifers that are breeding prospects to expand your herd to provide for a larger inventory when prices are moderate. Remember, cash in the bank is a depreciating asset. Put your profits to work. Swine and poultry farms need to be readdressing their agreements with their partners. I suspect that both swine and poultry will enjoy the same market increases as cattle have because beef is starting to stretch the pocketbooks of the consumer.

This will be my last article this month and this year. This means we find ourselves in December, a month that has such significance in so many ways. Though there are fewer who understand what happened Dec. 7, 1941, over 400,000 Americans gave their lives because of the attack which brought us into World War II. Then there's Christmas, a celebration of a birth that changed the world and gives each of us hope. It continues to change my life and allows me to grow each day into what I hope is a better person. And finally, Dec. 31 is when we can either celebrate a good year or put a bad year behind us. Either way, each of us can look forward to a new year with new opportunities.

IndianaAg@bluemarble.net

Horse Sense: You can't see the sunrise looking west, though many try.

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ODON, INDIANA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2025 * 9:00 AM EST

Address: 613 W, Elnora St, Odon, Indiana 47562

TRACTORS: John Deere 4440, John Deere 4640, five M-M antique tractors, Oliver 550 gas.

COMBINE: John Deere 7720 Titan II; JD 918 grain platform: header cart.

SEMI & HOPPER BOTTOM: 1993 Volvo, N-14 Cummins, 10 speed; Agri Trailers single hopper bottom trailer.

IMPLEMENTS & MISC: Landoll 7410-14' vertical till; Tye Paratill; Mac Don 4000 mower conditioner; Bush Hog 15' Bat Wing mower; Hardi 550 gal pull type sprayer, 42' boom; Unverferth 24' Rolling Harrow; IH 18VT; E-Z Trail 3400 double compartment seed tender; Gehl 170 feed grinder/mixer; Willmar 600 fert spreader; JD 6row split planter; Bush Hog 121-9' grader blade; JD 400 15' rotary hoe, White 508 semi mnt 4 bottom plow, 2 bottom plows grader blades; other items.

Lawn Mower: JD Z530R Zero Turn mower, 24 hp, 60" cut, only 65 hrs.

JIM MELTON & OTHERS, OWNER

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This is a Live (on the premises) & Online auction. The live auction will start at 9:00 am and the Online auction will begin at 11:00 am EST. To bid online, google equipmentfacts/jyagle, register and start bidding. You will also be able to bid online while the auction is in progress.

TERMS: Cash or check with proper ID. All items sold "AS IS". Not responsible for accidents.

NOTE: Complete listing & pictures on www.auctionzip.com J. Yagle Auction Service, LLC (ID #15097)

For more information contact Auctioneers:
J. Yagle 812-890-149, AU01037688 * Vernon Graber 812-787-1733, AU09200190
Elam Wagler 812-257-9700, AU19500162

MAJOR FIREARM & AMMUNITION

AUCTION

RIFLES, SHOTGUNS, HANDGUNS, AMMUNITION, ACCESSORIES

DECEMBER 19TH - DECEMBER 26TH

TWO PREVIEW LOCATIONS:
FIREARMS: 215 E. MARKET ST, BLUFFON IN | AMMO: 115 E CRAIG ST, OSSIAN, IN

OVER 95+ FIREARMS

Westley Richards SxS • Browning Citori CX/CXS/CXT (12/20/28 GA) Ruger Precision (.308, .22 LR) • Colt M4 & Modular Carbines (5.56, .308) Mossberg Silver/Gold Reserve O/U • Mossberg 500/590 Tactical • Sig Sauer P220/P320 • KEL-TEC KSG • Marlin 1895 (.45-70) • Winchester Classics

OVER 100,000 ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION

Bulk .22 LR (CCI, Remington) • 5.56/.223 (PMC, IMI, Wolf, Winchester) • Handgun: 9mm, .40 S&W, .45 ACP, 10mm, .357 Mag, .38 SPL • 5.7x28 (Federal, Speer) • .308/7.62x51, 30-30, 44 Mag, 45-70 • .338 Lapua Mag HPBT

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AUCTION PREVIEW: SAT, DECEMBER 20TH (10:00 AM - 12:00 PM)

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WAITE RETIREMENT AUCTION

STEUBEN COUNTY, IN

Located at 4045 W 175 N, Angola, IN 46703

INSPECTION DATE: Friday, January 2nd 11am - 1pm

Saturday, January 3rd • 9:30am

ONLINE BIDDING AVAILABLE

COMBINE - HEADS

- 2008 John Deere 9670 STS chopper, Lateral Tilt feeder house, Maur Bin extension, 520-42 straddle duals & 28L-26 rear tires, 3203 eng 2199 sep hrs, H096705727128
- Drago 8 x 30 corn head, knife rolls, header control • John Deere 630F Hydraflex grain table, good poly, Orbit flip over reel, works good • Smyth 30' head cart

TRACTORS - CAT WHEEL LOADER

- 2016 John Deere 8245R MFWD, Power Shift, 4 remotes, QH, hammer strap, Buddy Seat, front weights & inner wheel weights, 420/90R30 front & Good Year 480/80R46 rear duals, 4,590 hrs • 1987 John Deere 4450 Cab, 2wd, Power Shift, 2 remotes, center link, New style step, 540/1000 pto, Firestone 480/80R-42 duals, 8,467 hrs • 1996 John Deere 8300 tractor, MFWD 5 remotes, 1000 pto, Front weights, 420/90R30 front & like new 480/80R46 duals, 9,455 hrs • 2007 John Deere 6415 tractor, MFWD, Cab, Power Quad with LH reverser, 2 remotes, 540/1000 pto, RH door, wheel weights, John Deere 563 QT loader 18.4-34 rear & 340/85R24 rear tires, 3,839 hrs • John Deere QT bale spear • John Deere 3000 receiver • Cat IT28G wheel loader CHA, 4 spd trans, 3rd valve, JRB style quick attach bucket, 20.5R25 tires

SEMI TRACTORS - TRAILERS

- 1987 Freightliner Day Cab Semi Tractor, Cat eng, 8 spd with dble low trans, air ride, dual mufflers, alum headache rack, alum front & Daytons on the rear, strong running truck, shows 416,943 miles • 2007 Freightliner Day Cab Semi Tractor, Mercedes Benz eng, Eng brake, 10 spd trans, air ride cab & suspension,

air seat, dual mufflers, 11R 22.5 tires, on all alum rims, runs good, shows 265,250 miles • 1997 Timpco Alum 41' grain trailer, 60" sides, roll tarp, spring ride • Goose Neck trailer, 20+4 with ramps, 16" tires

PLANTER - TILLAGE EQUIPMENT

- Kinze 3600 Interplant, 16/31, liquid fertilizer, till coulters, seed firmers, markers, monitor • Sunflower 6630 VT Disc, 27', Saber Blades, gauge wheels, Hydra Fore/Aft, rear hitch & hydra outlets

HAY EQUIPMENT

- John Deere 450M round baler, net wrap, 21.5L-16.1SL tires • 2021 Case IH DC133 13' discbine, rubber rolls, center swing hitch, 2 pt hitch • Sitrex RT/5200H 4 basket tedder, hydraulic fold • 2022 Ennorossi RR420 rotary rake, hydraulic lift • Sitrex MK-12 12 wheel hay rake, 2 center kicker wheels • 350-400 bales of this 2025 1st, 2nd & 3rd Net wrapped round bales stored inside

GRAIN CART - WAGON

- Killbros 1200 grain cart, 1000 pto, 30.5-32 Diamond tires, lights • J&M 540 gravity wagon

AG CHEM ROGATORS

- RoGator 1100, Sisu eng, with New Leader L4258 G4, Multi Applier Ready Dry Box with twin Spreaders, roll tarp, Green bar guidance, 710/70R38 tires, 6,290 hrs • RoGator 1184, Cat eng, 1100 gal SS tank, 90' booms, Raven Monitor, 380/90R46 tires, Very clean sprayer, 3,546 hrs • Set of Narrow tires & rims for RoGator, tires are 380/90R46 • Semi trailer with 1065 gal tank & 2 totes with pumps & inductor • 1000 gal Nurse trailer with pump & inductor

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OWNERS: Waite Farms. Ronald & Patti Waite & (Ryan) Rebecca Waite
AUCTION MANAGER: Robert Mishler, 260-336-9750

USDA leaves 2025 milk production estimate unchanged, lowers 2026

The USDA left its 2025 milk production estimate unchanged in this week's World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimate report, and lowered its 2026 estimate, based on a reduced cow inventory more than offsetting a higher rate of growth in milk per cow.

2025 production and marketings were projected at 231.4 and 230.5 billion pounds respectively, unchanged on both from a month ago. If realized, both would be up 5.5 billion pounds or 2.4 percent from 2024.

2026 production and marketings were projected at 234.1 and 233.2 billion pounds, down 200 million pounds on production and down 100 million from a month ago. If realized, production would be up 2.7 billion pounds or 1.2 percent from 2025.

The 2025 import forecast was lowered on a fat basis, mainly due to less expected butter imports, and unchanged on a skim-solids basis. Exports on a fat basis were raised with U.S. butter continuing to be competitive in international markets. Exports were unchanged on a skim-solids basis for 2025.

Fat basis imports for 2026 were lowered primarily on reduced demand for imported butter products. Skim-solids basis imports were raised slightly. Exports were raised on a fat basis for 2026 due to additional shipments of butter. Skim-solids basis exports were lowered due to fewer shipments of skim milk powder.

The 2025 butter price average forecast was raised slightly. The cheese price forecast was lowered on recent price weakness. The nonfat dry milk (NDM) and whey price forecasts were unchanged. The Class III milk price

was lowered, while the Class IV price was raised.

The 2026 cheese and butter price forecasts were lowered as price weakness in late 2025 is expected to carry into 2026. The 2026 whey price was raised on strong demand expected to continue into next year. The NDM forecast was unchanged.

The 2025 Class III price was projected to average \$18.10 per hundredweight, down a nickel from last month's estimate, and compares to \$18.89 in 2024 and \$17.02 in 2023. The 2026 average is \$17.05, down 60 cents from a month ago.

The 2025 Class IV price is estimated to average \$17.40, up a nickel from a month ago, and compares to \$20.75 in 2024 and \$19.12 in 2023. The 2026 average is projected at \$14.40, down a dime from last month's estimate.

This month's corn outlook is for greater exports and lower ending stocks. Exports were raised 125 million bushels to 3.2 billion, up 12 percent from last year's record high. Export data showed robust foreign demand in November and implies total shipments during the September-November quarter will likely exceed 800 million bushels, surpassing the prior high set in 2007. Corn ending stocks are down 125 million bushels to 2.0 billion. The season-average corn price was unchanged at \$4.00 per bushel.

Global corn production for 2025/26 was forecast down slightly to 1.576 billion tons. The outlook is for lower production, trade and higher ending stocks relative to last month. Foreign corn production was cut with declines

for Ukraine, Canada, Nigeria, Indonesia and Senegal partially offset by increases for the EU, Russia and Zimbabwe. Ukraine corn production is sharply lower with reductions to both area and yield based on reported government data to date, where harvest has been slow because of wet conditions in key growing areas.

Soybean supply, use and price projections were unchanged. Global oilseed production for 2025/26 was raised. The global soybean outlook includes higher production, increased crush, lower exports and raised ending stocks. Global soybean production was increased to 422.5 million, reflecting higher crops for Russia and India but lower output for Canada and Ukraine.

The Dec. 9 Daily Dairy Report says, "First-quarter (corn) shipments surpassed the prior record set in September through November 2007. Through early November, U.S. commitments to ship additional corn were 28 percent above last year's pace, and full-season exports notched a new all-time high in the 2024-25 crop year."

Soybean exports remain depressed, according to the DDR. "U.S. commitments to export soybeans through early November were 40 percent lower than the prior year, and September through November shipments lagged 2024 volumes by 45 percent. Despite U.S. assertions that China promised to buy U.S. soybeans, China's state-owned buyers have purchased only a few U.S. cargoes," the DDR stated.

The Trump Administration announced a \$12 billion aid package this week for U.S. farmers. A USDA press release called it a "one time bridge payment in response to temporary trade market disruptions and increased production costs that are still impacting farmers. These bridge payments are intended in part to aid farmers until historic investments from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, including reference prices which are set to increase between 10-21 percent for major covered commodities such as soybeans, corn, and wheat and will reach eligible farmers on Oct. 1, 2026."

At first glance, the package offers nothing specific to dairy farmers and opinion varies as to market's reaction to the latest government intervention.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) introduced legislation this week to "Support family farms and grow agritour-

ism businesses across the country." The legislation would "Better tailor federal resources like loans, grants, broadband access, and educational programs that support family-owned and operated farms," according to a joint press release from a bipartisan group of senators. Reps. Suhas Subramanyam (D-Va.) and Dan Newhouse (R-Wash.) introduced companion legislation in the House.

USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins announced a \$700 million Regenerative Pilot Program to "help American farmers adopt practices that improve soil health, enhance water quality, and boost long-term productivity, all while strengthening America's food and fiber supply."

"Protecting and improving the health of our soil is critical not only for the future viability of farmland, but to the future success of American farmers," a USDA press release stated. "In order to continue to be the most productive and efficient growers in the world, we must protect our topsoil from unnecessary erosion and improve soil health and land stewardship. Today's announcement encourages these priorities while supporting farmers who choose to transition to regenerative agriculture."

Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve, on a 9-3 vote, announced a 25-basis-point interest rate cut, the third since President Donald Trump has been in office.

CoBank got out its crystal ball this week and took a look into 2026. "Economic uncertainty surrounding U.S. trade policy is much lower than it was a year ago," the report stated, "Steadying the broader outlook for 2026. The reduced market anxiety can be seen in historically low volatility metrics for equity, bond and currency markets, as well as in historically tight corporate credit spreads."

"The effective across-the-board tariff rate is now about 17 percent but based on tax collections, the actual average import tax paid is only about 10 percent," according to the report. "That rate is expected to drop even further as the reduced tariffs on China and imported food products take effect and more bilateral agreements are finalized."

Lead dairy economist Corey Geiger stated in the Dec. 15 Dairy Radio Now broadcast "We have sent price signals the last 10 years to dairy farmers to make more butterfat and they're meeting the challenge, so much so that, in the last five months, butterfat production on U.S. dairy farms is up 5-6 percent."



MIELKE MARKET WEEKLY
By Lee Mielke

Virtual Online Only Equipment Consignment Auction

BIDDING OPENS 12-29 @ 8:00 AM * CLOSES 12/31 @ 3:00 PM
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EARLY CONSIGNED EQUIPMENT:
TRACTORS: 1996 JD 8300, JD 4020.
COMBINES: JD 7720. **PLANTERS:** 1996 JD 7200 12-30 (updated), Crust Buster Drill.
SPRAYERS: 220 Spra-Coupe. **TRUCKS & TRAILERS:** 2006 IH 7500 box truck w/ lift gate, Wilson hopper bottom. **WAGONS:** Parker 350 gravity, Seed tender w/hyd. auger. **BALERS:** NH BR7060. **TILLAGE:** Sunflower 22' soil finisher, 21' Krause disk, JD 6-30 cultivator, 5-shank Blue Jet subsoiler, IH 720 plow. **FERTILIZER:** Blue-Jet 13 knife NH applicator, 2-200Gal. SS tanks, 1300 Gal. tank. 500 Gal. tank w/John Blue pump, Briggs

water pump. **SKID LOADERS:** Gehl 4635 SX skid steer, Pallet forks, **MISC:** 500 Gal. L.P. tank, Pontoon boat w/Mercury outboard motor, Northwoods Portable Saw Mill, Several bundles of new wooden end & line posts.

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Real Estate AUCTION

219[±] acres
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Thursday, January 22 at 6:00pm Online Bidding Available
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On the south and east sides of SR 67 at S 200 W and W 400 S, just south of Muncie, IN and east of Anderson, IN.

DELAWARE COUNTY, INDIANA • MONROE TOWNSHIP

TRACT 1 – 93[±] acres, 91.19 tillable and 1.72 ditch. 2.23 in CRP at \$445/acre. Excellent productive farmland. CPI = 162.2
TRACT 2 – 51[±] acres, 45[±] tillable. 8.97 in CRP at \$390/acre. Good productive farmland with the ditch banks in the CRP program. CPI = 155.6
TRACT 3 – 35[±] acres, all tillable. Excellent soils. CPI = 161.8
TRACT 4 – 20[±] acres, all tillable. Good productive farmland. CPI = 149.7
TRACT 5 – 20[±] acres, 7.15[±] tillable. 0.18 in CRP at \$300/acre. This tract has a 4.5-acre stocked pond with a converted corn crib cabin. Excellent recreational ownership opportunity.

Owner: N&H Miller Investments, LLC

Inspection: 2-4pm
Friday, January 16

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 27 • 6PM

75.1[±] acres
Offered in 4 Tracts or Combinations

• Beautiful Rolling Property Close to Warsaw • Potential Residential Development Opportunity • Great Country Estate & Mini Farm Building Sites • Productive Tillable Farmland with 74.7 FSA Cropland Acres • Tracts Ranging in Size from 13-21[±] Acres

AUCTION LOCATION: Zimmer Biomet Center Lake Pavillon, 119 E Canal St, Warsaw, IN 46580
PROPERTY LOCATION: 1727 S Ferguson Rd, Warsaw, IN 46580

INSPECTION DATES: Mon, Dec. 22 • 3-5pm & Tue, Jan. 6 • 3-5pm. Please Meet a Schrader Rep at Tract 2.

SELLER: Dennis C. Manning & Stephen K. Manning
LICENSED RE BROKER: Joseph Frederick Kessie • 260.609.4640 #RB23001983
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Above: JD A & B models sold a combined 600,000 units.

Participation in 4-H remembered

National 4-H week is in October each year. News about it reminded me of my membership a long time ago.

Aaron Rhodes was our leader. He was a farmer, but he put great effort into teaching us 4-H values. He was gentle, soft-spoken, and earned a lot of respect by how he treated us. He even laid out a baseball field on his farmstead for our use. Because he was a good leader, we had a lot of members.

I've often commented on FFA activities in this column. As I look back at my 4-H membership, I believe it was also of great value in different ways and projects. I'm grateful for what I learned from both. This year's National FFA Convention drew a record 73,000 attendance.

4-H is America's largest youth development organization with about 6 million members. Youth and teens 8-18 can join. There's also a program for youth ages 5-7.

Some of the benefits of 4-H membership are the programs available to research future careers and expenses of that education. To find a 4-H chapter in your area, go to 4-H.org.

Allis Chalmers WC – their best seller

I first drove our dad's WC soon after Pearl Harbor. I must have been 7, and I remember driving around the barnyard. I'll bet it was in first gear.

The WC had a long run, from 1933 to 1948. It was the largest-selling model ever for Allis Chalmers, reaching 178,000. Horsepower was 23. There were a lot of them in our neighborhood.

In later model years, an electric starter and lights became standard. The one negative feature was hand brakes.

There were several reasons for the WC's success. It was the first tractor to be offered with standard rubber tires in 1932. The price on rubber was \$825. The

ALL ABOUT TRACTORS

BY PAUL WALLEM

price on steel was \$675. (In 1936, the price increased to \$900/785.)

The "C" in the name stood for cultivating. It became the tractor of choice for that job.

1948 brought its replacement - the WD with 28 HP. With fully independent PTO and power-adjusted rear wheels, many users traded their WC's for the new model.

A big step forward was in 1953 with the introduction of the WD-45. A 226 cu. in. engine produced 45 DB horsepower, almost double that of the earlier model. A snap-coupler hitch was released, and later, a Buda-powered diesel engine.

My sentiments as this year comes to a close

Even though this column is named "All About Tractors," it's all about agriculture. Since I was old enough to drive a tractor the first time, agriculture has been a major part of my life, just as it has been yours.

It's great to remember the good years: corn pickers replacing hand picking, and combines replacing pickers; \$12 soybeans for a short time, and big increases in land values in the late '70s.

It's not so great to recall 21 percent interest rates in 1980 and plummeting land values; tremendous fluctuations in crop prices. Some years it has been great, other years not so much. But agriculture is more than a job: it is a way of life, and I greatly respect you for your resilience and grit!

Paul Wallem was raised on an Illinois dairy farm. He spent 13 years with IH in domestic and foreign assignments. He resigned to own and operate two IH dealerships. He is the author of THE BREAKUP of IH and SUCCESSES and INDUSTRY FIRSTS of IH. See all his books on www.PaulWallem.com. Email your comments to pwallem@aol.com.

AUCTION TUES., DEC. 30 11:00 A.M.

LOCATED: LIVE ON-SITE at 2455 Stringtown Road, Sardinia, OH, 50 mi. E. of Cincinnati, OH, 80 mi. SW of Columbus, OH, 14 mi. SW of Hillsboro, OH. Follow signs off SR 138 or SR 321 to auction.

TRACTORS - PLANTER - TILLAGE TRUCK - GRAIN HANDLING - MISC.

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This auction consists of super clean, well maintained items that are in excess of seller's needs. Carraher Farms is continuing their farming operation. Auction will not last long. No small items. Please be on time.



2013 John Deere 9560RT, 2,725 hours, 36" tracks, powershift transmission, 5 rear SCV, 20 front weights, no pto, SN# 1RW9560RJD902582

2011 John Deere 8260R, 1,743 hrs., 16 spd. power shift, Pre DEF, 4 rear hyd. SCV, 1000 pto, 3pt. w/quick hitch, full coverage rear fenders, 12 front weights, 480/80R50 rear duals, 420/35R34 front tires, SN# 1RW8260RHB044121

2020 John Deere 716C Corn Head, knife rolls, header height sensing, SN# 1H00716CCKX810007

2021 Unverferth AWS-42 Header Cart, 11L-15FI, SN# A67990159

John Deere 1795 Split-Row Planter, 16/32 rows, 15"/30" spacing, 2-point hook up, hydraulic drive, pneumatic down force, no-till coulters, Yetter twister closing wheels, markers, 420 gal. liquid fertilizer tank, piston pump, single disk fertilizer openers, SeedStar II, SN# 1A01795CJKA780452

2023 Unverferth 410XL Seed Tender, 4 boxes, 8"x 21" conveyor, 2520 scale, Honda motor, elec. start, wireless remote, talc applicator, ST235/85R16 tires, 1-owner, SN# D69220122

2011 Freightliner Business Class M2 Grain Truck, 125,054 mi., 500 HP 12.8 L Detroit, modified fuel system, Allison auto. trans., 24'x8' Kann grain bed, roll tarp 315/80R22.5 steer tires & drop down axle,

RM254/11R22.5 rear tires, VIN# 1FVHC5DV6CH-BF2807

Great Plains 4800 Turbo-Max, 48ft, hydraulic raise & lower & fold, adjustable disk gang angle, spike harrow, rolling basket, tire size: 480/45R17, 12 hydraulic hoses, 7 pin light connector, rear hitch w/1 rear hydraulic remote, 1-owner, SN# GP-C7845H

John Deere 2310 Mulch Finisher, 5 section fold, 45".9", spike harrow, rolling basket, rear hitch w/ hydraulics, 340/65R18 tires, SN# 1N02310X-HB0745317

2021 Unverferth 1245 48' Rolling Harrow, spike leveler bar, 5 section fold, SN# 88382G

2022 J&M 5016 Liquid Fertilizer Applicator, 1,600 gallon tank, 17 knives, new knives, 5 section fold, JD rate controller, 1-owner, SN# 2250019,

Portable 1000 Gallon Plastic Tank with Pump, 11L-15SL tires, 2" plumbing,

Portable 1000 Gallon Stainless Tank with Pump, 11L-15SL tires, 2" plumbing

Sunflower 1435 40' Disk, adjustable gang, 12.5L-15FI tires, 1-owner

Wheels & Tires for Turbo-Max, VF480/45R17IMP tire size, one brand new BTK tire & rim, 2 bad tires with good rims,

BKT 460/85R38 tires & rims

CARRAHER HOME FARM LLC, OWNER

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RANDOLPH CO, IN: JANUARY 8 (ONLINE) 205.16+/- Acres
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8 Tracts Contact: Chris Peacock: 765.546.0592 or Lauren Peacock: 765.546.7359

HOWARD CO, IN: JANUARY 13 (ONLINE) 76.02+/- Acres • 2 Tracts
(2) Homes • Potential Development Contact: Brandon Stroble: 765.499.1170, AJ Jordan: 317.697.3086, Emma Barr: 260.494.0992 or Larry Jordan: 765.473.5849

HAMILTON CO, IN: JANUARY 15 (ONLINE) 34.92+/- Acres
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Contact: Sam Clark: 317.442.0251 or Jim Clark: 317.697.6928

PRIVATE SALES

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AUCTION

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PROPERTY LOCATION: In northeast Randolph County, approximately 5 miles northwest of Union City.

205.16 +/- ACRES

8 TRACTS | 188.787 +/- Tillable | 7.863 +/- Woods

Chris Peacock: 765.546.0592 | Lauren Peacock: 765.546.7359

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Auctioneer: Russell D. Harmeyer IN Auct. Lic. #AU10000277, HRES IN Auct. Lic. #AC69200019,
Seller: GLF Farms LLC

TRACT 1

TRACT 4

TRACTS 5-8

Fertilizer Research Act reintroduced to provide more transparency

By DOUG SCHMITZ
Iowa Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Reps. Ashley Hinson (R-Iowa) and Randy Feenstra (R-Iowa), alongside U.S. Reps. Nikki Budzinski (D-Ill.) and Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-Wash.), recently reintroduced the Fertilizer Research Act, a bipartisan bill that aims to provide more transparency for U.S. farmers facing high input costs.

“America’s farmers are being squeezed by high fertilizer costs and low commodity prices, making it incredibly difficult to afford the inputs needed to maintain strong yields,” Hinson said. The legislation is endorsed by the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, and the National Farmers Union.

This past September, U.S. Sens. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) introduced companion legislation in the U.S. Senate. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-Iowa) is an original co-sponsor of the legislation.

Under the bill, the USDA would be required to conduct a study on the fertilizer market, which would include market factors driving those costs, such as competition, long-term mar-

ket trends, regulatory costs and import impacts, and then publish a report on its findings.

More specifically, within one year of its passage, USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins, in consultation with the agency’s Economic Research Service, would be required to issue a report on the USDA’s website regarding the U.S. fertilizer industry, which would include a description of impacts on the fertilizer market that influence price; market trends in the past 25 years; a description of the imported fertilizer and market impacts; and impacts of anti-dumping and countervailing duties.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, anti-dumping occurs when a foreign producer or exporter sells a product in the United States at a price that is below normal value. Countervailing duties cases are established when a foreign government provides assistance and subsidies, such as tax breaks to manufacturers that export goods to the United States, enabling the manufacturers to sell the goods cheaper than domestic manufacturers.

In addition, under the bill, Rollins would be required to submit an assessment of the regulatory environment governing fertilizer production; a study of fertilizer industry concentration; a study of emerging fertilizer technologies; and a description of whether current public price reporting is sufficient for market transparency.

Feenstra said, “Representing one of the largest agricultural districts in the country, commonsense ways that we can help lower the prices of input costs like fertilizer is critical so that our farmers can keep feeding and fueling our country, and the world. It’s why I’m glad to help introduce legislation that will deliver more transparency into the factors driving up the cost of fertilizer, and ultimately, help reduce financial pressures for farmers.”

Budzinski said, “Illinois growers are struggling to make ends meet because of high input costs, including the cost of fertilizer. Fertilizer is an essential tool for farmers to maximize their crop yields, but they often lack insight into how fertilizer prices are determined, making it harder to balance their books.”

Mark Mueller, Iowa Corn Growers Association president and a fourth-generation Waverly, Iowa, said, “Fertilizer prices have continued to rise, putting pressure on Iowa corn farmers who are already facing low corn prices and increased input costs, resulting in slim or even nonexistent profit margins. We need to assess the fertilizer industry to better understand pricing practices, tariffs, and the exertion of market power by companies within the industry.”

Christopher Glen, The Fertilizer Institute (TFI) vice president of public affairs and communications, told Farm World, “While TFI is supportive of the Fertilizer Research Act’s intent and of improved transparency in the U.S. fertilizer market, we encourage refinement of the bill to provide more lasting solutions that will equip farmers with reliable information during periods of market volatility.”

He said TFI is recommending the USDA reinstate a full-time fertilizer economist, a position that once served as a liaison with Congress and farmers by providing ongoing reports on global and domestic market trends.

“TFI believes this approach, coupled with regular data collection and publication, would give farmers a clearer understanding of supply, demand, and price dynamics beyond the scope of a single study,” he added.

Ohio Pork Council pays up on bet over Indiana-Ohio State game

INDIANAPOLIS – What started as a friendly wager between two neighboring states’ pork associations on the outcome of the recent Big 10 football championship game between Ohio State and Indiana University, has turned into a big win for everyone in the end – especially for those Hoosier families in need of high-quality protein during the holidays.

“Congratulations to the Indiana Hoosiers on their win over Ohio State,” said Josh Trenary, Indiana Pork’s executive director. “We are pleased to accept the \$2,000 donation to our Hoosier Hogs to Homes program from the Ohio Pork Council. During this holiday season, we are thankful to be able to provide nutritious protein to those in need.”

The pork donation by the Ohio Pork Council should provide roughly 2,400 servings of pork to Hoosier families.

Receiving the donation on behalf of Indiana Pork was pork producer Jack-

ie Bowman Ponder, of Greenwood, Ind., who serves on the Indiana Pork board of directors as well as the National Pork Producers Council’s board of directors. “Indiana pig farmers are passionate about feeding our neighbors,” Ponder said. “We know how great the need is around the holiday season so we are excited that the Ohio Pork Council wanted to make this friendly bet and the IU Hoosiers came out as the winner!”

Clark Jordan, an Ohio pig farmer from Eaton who serves on the Ohio Pork Council board of directors, said, “The goal is to help ensure our communities are getting the assistance they need in terms of protein and we’re happy to do our part to make it happen. It’s a great feeling to know that we’re helping out families on both sides of the state line, which definitely helps ease any bruised egos after the big game.”

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TRACTORS, SKID STEER, UTV, MOWERS, EQUIPMENT & MISC.

KUBOTA 2015 M5-091HDC12 CAB TRACTOR, 92 HP W/LOADER; KUBOTA 2015 M6-141DTC-F CAB TRACTOR, 4 WD, 141 HP TRACTOR W/LOADER; JOHN DEERE 5300 TRACTOR, NEW RUBBER, CANOPY, FIELD READY; JOHN DEERE 2004 2210 TRACTOR, 23 HP, W/MOWER DECK; JOHN DEERE 2640, 2 SPEED TRANSMISSION, LOW HOURS; NEW HOLLAND 2016 T4.100 CAB TRACTOR, W/LOADER; NEW HOLLAND 2002 TN70 TRACTOR, W/LOADER; FORD 8N TRACTOR; FORD 2000 TRACTOR, GAS ENGINE DOES NOT RUN; DEMCO 2016 MODEL 850 PULL TYPE SPRAYER, 850 GAL., 60' BOOMS; KUBOTA 2022 SSV75PHC SKID STEER LOADER, W/HEAT AND AIR; JOHN DEERE 2024 XUV835M GATOR 773 HRS.; BAD BOY ZERO TURN MOWER; 2 WOODS DITCH BANK MOWERS; JOHN DEERE 6' MOWER; GOOSENECK TRAILER, 12 TON 25'+5' WITH MONSTER RAMPS, W/LOCKING CHAIN BOX. HAS DUAL TWO-SPEED JACKS; GOOSENECK TRAILER, 12 TON 27' PINTLE RING, W/LOCKING CHAIN BOX, HAS DUAL TWO-SPEED JACKS; TRAILER; NEW IDEA MODEL S220 MANURE SPREADER, TOP BEATER; 2 FUEL TANKS W/STANDS; HANDY QUICK ATTACH BLADE; BOX BLADE; STRAIGHT BLADE; SET 18.4X38 TIRES & RIMS; BOB CAT DISC ATTACHMENT; SET TIRES AND RIMS FOR 3930 TRACTOR; BOB CAT BROOM; 10 X 11 GARAGE DOOR; **TAKING CONSIGNMENTS! ITEMS MAY BE CONSIGNED UP TO THE DAY OF AUCTION. Tractors will be offered throughout the day in the lines.** Any announcements made by auctioneer on the day of sale will take precedence over this ad.

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Grave robber case should appeal to true crime fans, history buffs

“The Grave Robber: The Biggest Stolen Artifacts Case in FBI History and the Bureau’s Quest to Set Things Right” by Tim Carpenter
c.2025, Harper Horizon, \$29.99, 299 pages

You wouldn’t call yourself a perfectionist. Still, if something is amiss, you feel a need to make it right. Something’s broken, you fix it. If it’s off, you make it right. That goes for minor issues or, as in the new book “The Grave Robber” by Tim Carpenter, matters of grave importance.

The tipsters were adamant. Don Carlin Miller had “Indian bones.” And so, on a cool, cloudy fall afternoon, FBI bomb tech coordinator and sometime art crime expert Tim Carpenter and one of his associates headed to a remote property near Indianapolis in search of the truth.

Miller was well-known to the FBI; years earlier, he’d bragged that he was involved in the Manhattan Project and had some uranium in his possession. A case was filed in 2008 and he gave up those souvenirs, but this was different: Carpenter, who was “eager for a good art crime case,” had gotten photographs of Native American remains on Miller’s property.

A meeting was arranged and Carpenter was careful to stay above

the law. Introduced as someone with interest in antiquities, he paid close attention as Miller showed him around, and he noticed items that gave him pause. Furthermore, Miller, then around 90 years old, loved to tell stories and some of his tales confirmed what Carpenter suspected.

Over the course of decades, Miller had robbed Native American graves. Recovering what was stolen would take enormous effort.

Miller ultimately gave up the remains and stolen items without a fight and so, over the course of several days, Carpenter waded through many months of bureaucracy and red tape before leading an FBI team of experts, students and agents through Miller’s home and outbuildings. There, hidden in secret rooms, moldering closets, paper bags, and in plain sight, they found “hundreds of people’s bones” – most dug hastily and amateurishly, some in abysmal shape, most stored or displayed disrespectfully.

Miller considered himself somewhat of an expert in the field, but that wasn’t the case at all. Says Carpenter, he “wasn’t just a bad digger, he was far worse – nothing more than an unabashed grave robber.”

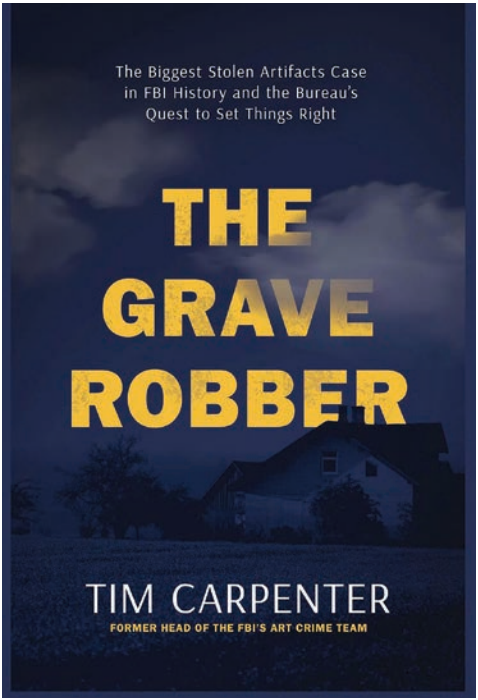
Wow. Be prepared to say it loud and say it often because “The Grave Robber” is a stunning story on many levels.



THE BOOKWORM SEZ
Terri Schlichenmeyer

There’s the book’s raison d’etre: the sometimes-thrilling tale of horrifying plunder and wrongly assumed privilege, both set right like a skewed, often obscene treasure hunt in reverse. True crime fans and those who love a good FBI procedural will be excited to see how Carpenter explains his case, how it proceeded and how it ended, with just enough biography inside the tale to make it personal. And history buffs will absolutely relish the backstory and the reasons the case came about in the first place.

If you’re a fan of all the above genres, well, what are you waiting for? Though it contains what is often a confusing alphabet soup or FBI acronyms, “The Grave Robber” is a can’t-miss story that’ll have you glued to your chair. For nonfiction readers like you, it’s perfection.



TELL THEM YOU SAW THEIR AD IN **FarmWorld**

“TUESDAY”
*** DECEMBER 30, 2025**
10:00 A.M. Sharp!

AUCTION LOCATION: Siefker Real Estate & Auction Co. Ltd.
@ 12062 Rd. M-10, OTTAWA, OH 45875
1 mile south of Ottawa on SR 65 to Rd. M, West on M to Rd. 11-J, south to Rd. M-10, west to Auction. “WATCH FOR AUCTION TODAY SIGNS”

Most items will have “LIVE INTERNET BIDDING (starting at approximately 10:45 AM)
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CONSIGNED ITEMS

2009 JD 1590 15’ NT 2 pt. Drill w/JD Markers, Hyd Fill, Single Rolling Basket, Electric Rate Control, Monitor, Ser. # N01590X730707; 1992 JD 9500 Combine, 5781 Eng/ 3872 Sep. Hrs.; JD 643 Corn Head on Cart; JD 925 Grain Head; J&M Cart; DMI Tiger II 5x Chisel Plow.

EQUIPMENT PREVIEW: Monday * December 23, 2025 * 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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Mike Shaffer Farm
RETIREMENT AUCTION
Saturday, December 27th, 2025 • 10am
Auction Location: Wagner Auction Center, 1174 N 675 W, Farmland, IN

TRACTORS | SPRAYER | MINI EXCAVATOR | LOADER | HARVEST EQUIPMENT
GRAIN HANDLING | TRUCKS & TRAILERS | PLANTING EQUIPMENT
TILLAGE EQUIPMENT | APPLICATOR MISC EQUIPMENT

PREVIEW DATE: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26TH | 9AM-5PM

TRACTORS/SPRAYER/MINI EXCAVATOR/LOADER

2021 John Deere 8R 280, 245 Hours, IVT Transmission, Starfire 6000 Integrated, 4 Remotes, 480/80R/50 Firestone Duals, 420/85R/34 Fronts, MFWD, SN: 1RW8280DJMB184534 • 2015 John Deere 8270R, 1110 Hours, 16 Speed Power Shift, 4600 Command Center and Processor, Premium Cab, Premium Lighting, Cold Weather Start Kit, 4 Remotes, Rears 480/80R/50 and Fronts 420/85R/34, SN: 1RW8270RAFFI05458 • 2015 John Deere 6150M, 1525 Hours, 16 Speed Power Quad Transmission, LH Reverser, Cold Start Package, 480/85R/42 Rears and 320/85R/34 Fronts, MFWD, SN: 1LO6150MEFH823442. • 1986 John Deere 2950, 3727 Original Hours, Wide Front, 6 Front Weights, 18.4x34 Rears (40%), 1 Remote, 8 Speed w/Torque, SN: LO2950T565655 • 2022 Apache AS1050 Sprayer, 171 Hours, Auto Height, Auto Steer, Auto Shutoff (9 Section), Heated Seat, 15” Spacing w/3 Way Nozzles, Clean Load Inductor, HiPro Pump and Inductor, 1000 Gallon Poly Tank, Raven Viper 4, 90 Foot Booms, 6 Speed Automatic Transmission, Cummins, 380/80/38 Fronts, 380/90/46 Rears, SN: 9220208 • Pair of Firestone 620/70R/42 Floater Tires On 10 Bolt Rims, 80% Tread • 2017 Deere 60 G Compact Excavator, 261 Hours, One Owner, Cab, with AC/Heat, 2 Speed, Long Arm, Counterweight, SN: 1FF060GXLGJ287916. • Kubota R430 Articulated Loader, 373 Hours, 4x4, Counterweight, Cab with AC/Heat, Spare Wheel, Auxiliary Hydraulics, Hydraulic Quick Attach, SN: KBCZ43CKM3D40793

HARVEST EQUIPMENT/GRAIN HANDLING

2010 John Deere 9770 STS, 2249/1537 Hours, PRWD, Contour Master w/High Torque Variable Speed, Extended Wear Grain Handling System, High Capacity Unload, Wide Spread, Fresh Oil Change, SN: 1H09770SCA0735849 • 2003 John Deere 893 Corn Head, Chalmers Knife Rolls/Gathering Chains/Gears, Stalk Stompers, Hydraulic Deck Plates, SN: H00893X701172 • 2005 John Deere 635F, SCH Pro Cutterbar, New Auger, New Sickle Drive Gear Box, SN: H00635F711728 • 2011 John Deere 635F, SN: H00635FEA0740332 • J&M 4WS15 Header Cart, 40 Ft 4 Wheel Steer • Unverferth AWS36 Header Cart, 36 Ft All Wheel Steer • J&M Model HT8 Header Cart • J&M 1222 Series X Grain Cart, Model 1112-20, Extended Reach, Hydraulic Spout, Low Bushels, 1250/50R/32 Tires SN: 1901578 • J&M 540SD Hopper Wagon, 425/65/R22 Tires, Surge Brakes, Lights, 15 Ton Model J&M 1592 Gear, Tarp, Extendable Tongue, 15 Ft Poly Auger • (2) J&M 385SD Hopper Wagons, 13 Ton J&M Gear, 11Rx24.5 Tires, Site Glass, Extendable Tongues, Lights, Tarp • Killbros 350 Hopper Wagon on JD 1065 Gear, Extendable Tongue • Mayrath 10x62’ Swing Away Auger, New Gearbox and New Main Auger, New Lighting In Swing Away • AGI- Mayrath WRX 10-36 Auger, PTO, 10” Intake Hopper, Caster Wheel Assembly, Under 10K Bushels Of Use • Swinger Remote Swing Away Hopper Drive

TERMS: Cash/Good Check/Credit Card (4% Fee For Credit Card) **NO ONSITE BUYER'S PREMIUM** | Statements Made Day Of Sale Take Precedence Over Printed Material

TRUCKS/TRAILERS

2007 Freightliner Columbia, 443K Miles, Detroit Series 60 Engine, 14.0L, 10 Speed Eaton, Aluminum Fronts, 4 New Aluminum and 4 New Steel Rear Rims, 8 New Tires On Back, New Starter, New AC Pump, Newer Alternator, Newer Turbo, Fresh Oil Change, Power Seats, PW/PDL, 14,686 Hours, VIN: 1FUJA6CK57LX83223 • 2019 Timpte Super Hopper, 40 Ft w/66” Sides, Ag Hoppers, Thunder 6000 XR Power Tarp, Electric Hoppers, 8 Aluminum Wheels, Disc Brakes, Bow Wear Strips On Tarp, 7 LED Side Lights, Air Ride, VIN: 1TDH40029KB164671 • 2016 Ford F250 Lariat, 30K Miles, Crew Cab, 6.7 L Diesel, 4x4, Leather, Loaded, Cushion Hitch, B&W Flip Over Hitch, Captain Seats In Front, PW/PDL, VIN: 1FT7W2BT3GEA93299 • 2019 Load Trail Gooseneck, Hydraulic Dovetail, 32’ Total Length, 23’ Flat w/9 Ft Dove, Tandem Duals, 33” Deck Height, 25,900 GVW

PLANTING EQUIPMENT

2021 John Deere N540C Air Seeder, 40 Ft, Central Fill, Auto 4 Section Shutoff, Mud Free Narrow Press Wheels, Hydraulic Alternator Drive, 2700 Acres, SN: 1A8N540CELM790101 • 2011 John Deere 1770 Planter, 16 Row, Vac, Martin Row Cleaners, NT Coulters, Spike Closers, Air Down Pressure, Keetons, Markers, 600 Gallon Liquid, Red Ball, SN: 1A01770Y1AM740165 • Stroebel 3 Space Easi Load Bulk Seed Trailer, Tandem Axle, Honda Engine w/Electric Start, Includes 3 Pro Boxes, Electric Auger Fold, Electric Brakes, SN: 03007 • Easi Load 2 Space Seed Tender Trailer, Honda Engine w/Electric Start, Electric Auger Fold, Poly Auger • Top Air Seed Conveyor, Hydraulic Drive, 6” x18 Ft. • (11) Pro Boxes

TILLAGE EQUIPMENT/APPLICATOR

Salford I-2124 Vertical Tillage Tool, All New Blades, 24 Ft, 3 Bar Harrow, Rolling Basket, Heavy Shank, SN: 131526ML • Krause 6150 Landsman XT Soil Finisher, 5 Bar Harrow, 22 Ft. • AG Systems 15 Knife 28% Applicator, Auto Wing Lock, John Blue Ground Drive Pump, 2” Fill, Good Steel, 380/90R/46 Tires

MISC EQUIPMENT

Schulte RS320 Rock Picker, Jumbo 320, Used On Under 150 Acres, SN: 901201490 • Schulte SRW1400 Rock Rake, Under 150 Acres Use, SN: R20011404904 • John Deere 275 Disc Mower, 9 Ft, 3 Point Hitch, SN: E00275X300302 • 1000 Gallon Stainless Tank On Clarke Gear, Sparge Bar, Honda Motor, Scott Pump, Platform Around Tank • 1300 Gallon Stainless Tank On EZ Trail 1074 Gear, Extendable Tongue, Sparge Bar, Banjo Pump, Briggs, 35 Gallon Induction Tank • 1300 Gallon Stainless Tender Trailer, Tandem Axle, Sparge Bar, 22.5 Tires, Honda Motor, Banjo Pump, Deck For Seed Pallet • 1000 Gallon Ply Tank On Clark Trailer, Honda Motor, Scott Pump, Pin Hitch, Deck For Seed Pallet • 1000 Gallon Poly Tank On Tandem Trailer, Honda Motor, Scott Pump, Pin Hitch • (3) 1000 Gallon Poly Tanks On Frames, Good Tanks, Clean • 3300 Gallon Offroad Fuel Tank, 110 V Fill Rite Pump, Meter, Filter, SELLS HORIZONTAL • Kwik Clean 5 Barrel Seed Cleaner, Hydraulic Drive • Shulte Snow Blower • Pair New American Farmer 21.5Lx16.1SL Tires, 8 Bolt Rims • Pair New American Farmer 19L-16.1SL Tires, 8 Bolt Rims

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California farmers will get more water under Trump plan

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) – The Trump administration is making good on a promise to send more water to California farmers in the state's crop-rich Central Valley.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on Dec. 4 announced a new plan for operating the Central Valley Project, a vast system of pumps, dams and canals that direct water southward from the state's wetter north. It follows an executive order President Donald Trump signed in January calling for more water to flow to farmers, arguing the state was wasting the precious resource in the name of protecting endangered fish species.

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum said the plan will help the federal government "strengthen California's water resilience." It took effect the following day.

But California officials and environmental groups blasted the move, saying sending significantly more water to farmlands could threaten water delivery to the rest of the state and would harm salmon and other fish.

Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom's office said the plan was an example of the Trump administration "putting politics over people."

"As per usual, the emperor is left with no clothes, pushing for an outcome that disregards science and undermines our ability to protect the water supply for people, farms and the environment," spokesperson Tara Gallegos said in a statement.

Most of the state's water is in the north, but most of its people are in the south. The federally managed Central Valley Project works in tandem with the state-managed State Water Project, which sends water to cities that supply 27 million Californians. The systems transport water through the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, an estuary that provides critical habitat to fish and wildlife including salmon and the delta smelt.

It is important for the two systems to work together, Karla Nemeth, director of the California Department of Water Resources, said in a statement. She warned the Trump administration's plan could limit the state's ability to send water to cities and farmers. That is because the state could be required to devote more water to species protection if the federal project sends more to farms.

Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director at Restore the Delta, said pumping more water out would result in more Delta smelt and juvenile salmon dying from getting stuck in the pumping system, and once the temperature warms, harmful algae blooms will develop that are dangerous to fish, wildlife, pets and people. That could have economic impacts, she said.

"When you destroy water quality and divorce it from land, you are also destroying property values," she said. "Nobody wants to live near a fetid, polluted backwater swamp."

The Bureau of Reclamation denied the changes would harm the environment or endangered species.

The plan is "a forward-looking approach to water management that balances the needs of California's communities, agriculture and ecosystems," said Assistant Secretary for Water and Science Andrea Travnick.

The Central Valley Project primarily sends water to farms, with a much smaller amount going to cities and industrial use. Water from the Central Valley Project irrigates roughly one-third of California agriculture, according to the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Westlands Water District, one of the largest users of Central Valley

Project water, cheered the decision. It "will help ensure that our growers have the water they need to support local communities and the nation's food supply, while also protecting California's wildlife," general manager Alison Febbo said in a statement.

But Vance Staplin, executive director of the Golden State Salmon Association, said in a statement that protections for salmon are already weak and some runs that rely on the water are close to being wiped out. He called for Newsom "to file a lawsuit to challenge this unlawful federal move."

During Trump's first term, he allowed more water to be directed to the Central Valley, a move that Newsom fought in court, saying it would push endangered delta smelt, chinook salmon and steelhead trout populations to extinction. The Biden administration changed course, adopting its own water plan in 2024 that environmental groups said was a modest improvement.

Trump renewed his criticism of the state's water policies after the Los Angeles-area fires broke out in January and some fire hydrants ran dry. The Central Valley Project does not supply water to Los Angeles.

The president dubbed his January executive order "Putting People over Fish: Stopping Radical Environmentalism to Provide Water to Southern California."

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Friday, January 9th, 2026 10:30am

Bloomington, OH

AUCTION LOCATION:
4918 Old State Rte. 38 NE,
Bloomington, OH 43106

INSPECTION DATE:
SATURDAY, JANUARY 3RD
9 AM-12 NOON



TRACTORS & EXCAVATOR

- **2011 John Deere 8335R Tractor**, MFWD, 480/80R50 rear tires & duals, 420/85R34 front tires & duals, 3 pt, quick hitch, 4 hyd remotes, 1000 pto, ILS front suspension, rear wheel wts, front wts, 3651 hrs, SN 1RW8335RKBPO43112
- **2011 John Deere 8360R Tractor**, MFWD, 480/80R50 rear tires & duals, 380/80R38 front tires & duals, ILS front suspension, 22 front wts, rear wheel wts, IVT trans, 3 pt, quick hitch, 4 hyd remotes, 1000 pto, 4253 hrs - approx. 50 hrs on NEW JD engine installed by John Deere, SN 1RW8360RABD044874
- **1997 John Deere 8300 Tractor**, MFWD, 380/85R34 front tires, 18.4R46 rear tire & duals, rear wheel weights, power shift, 3 pt, quick hitch, 3 hyd remotes, 1000 pto, 10 front wts, 5950 hrs, SN RW8300P010190
- **CAT E120B Excavator**, 20" tracks, 36" bucket, 4116 hrs, SN 007783
- **TILLAGE & PLANTING**
- **Kinze 3600 16/32 No-Till Planter**, Keeton seed firmers, spring down pressure, central fill, markers, corn

- and bean meters, KPM III monitor, scales
- **29'3" John Deere 2623VT Disc**, 7" spacing, dble hyd rear rolling basket, hyd fold, cushion gang, walking tandem on main frame & wings, SN 1N02623VLC0750282
- **32' Landoll 9360 Field Cultivator**, hyd fold, 3 bar harrow, single rolling basket, rear hitch & hyd, walking tandem on main frame & wings, front wing depth wheels
- **34' J&M TF212 Rolling Basket**, hyd X-fold
- **DMI Ecolo-Tiger 530B Ripper**, 5-shank, 4 lead shanks, disc leveler, McFarland 3-bar harrow
- **Great Plains 5-Shank 1300 Sub-Soiler**, 3 pt, depth wheels, SN 1828YY
- **Dalton 15-Knife Liquid Applicator**, Model DLQHD35, 1350 gal tank, 14.9R46 tires, hyd drive pump, red ball system
- **J&M 385-SD Seed Wagon**, roll tarp, sight windows, 2 compartment, 425/65R22.5 tires, J&M brush auger, Auger Mate power unit w/ 8 hp Honda 6X240 engine

- **Noble 8-Row Row Crop Cultivator**, hyd fold, 3 pt, S tine, depth wheels
- **5' x 16" International 720 Plow**, toggle trip
- **20' Dunham Lehr Harrowgator COMBINE, HARVEST EQUIPMENT & AUGERS**
- **John Deere 9670 STS Combine**, 4x4, 18.4R42 drive tires & duals, 28L-26 rear tires, Maurer bin ext. single point hook-up, hyd tail board, 3150 engine/2196 separator hrs, SN H09670S730389
- **2009 John Deere 608C 8-Row Corn Head**, single point hook-up, knife rolls, stalk stompers, hyd deck places, stubble lights, SN H0608CX730711
- **30' Unverferth HT30 Header Cart**
- **2015 35' John Deere 635FD Flex Draper Head**, single point hook-up, flip over reel, fore/aft, stubble lights, SN 1H0635FDCFO775397
- **35' J&M Header Cart**, ST 235/85R16 tires, light kit
- **J&M 750 Grain Cart**, 30.5L32 bar tires, corner auger w/ hyd spout, sight window, roll tarp, 1000 pto

- **J&M 385-SD Gravity Wagon**, roll tarp, sight windows, 295/75 R 22.5 tires, light kit
- **Rem 1026B Grain Vac**, 1000 pto
- **10" x 63' Westfield MKX 100-63 Auger**, hyd raise, swing away, 540 pto
- **10" x 61' Westfield MK100-61 Auger**, hyd raise, hyd driven swing away, 540 pto

GRAIN TRUCKS

- **2000 International 4900 Grain Truck**, DT530 engine, automatic Allison 5-speed, tandem axle, 20' Kann alum bed, roll tarp, cargo doors, air brakes, air ride, 11R22.5 tires, 241,477 miles
- **1995 Ford L8000 Grain Truck**, Spicer 7-speed manual trans, Cummins 505 8.3 engine, tandem axle, 20' bed, cargo doors, roll tarp, 295/75R22.5 tires, air brakes, 129,723 miles
- **RECEIVERS, DISPLAYS & MISC**
- **(2) John Deere Starfire 3000 Receivers**
- **John Deere Starfire ITC Receiver**
- **John Deere 2630 Display**
- **(2) John Deere 2600 Displays**
- **1000 gallon SS Nurse Trailer**, BS 9.5 hp engine & pump
- **(3) 2500 gallon flat bottom poly tanks**
- **(2) 2500 gallon cone bottom tanks with stand**
- **10' Bush Hog 3210 Rotary Mower**, pull-type, hyd raise, 540 pto

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Sometimes nature is too close for comfort

“Your deer ate my wife’s petunias and I want to know what you are going to do about it?”

“Excuse me?”

“I just moved into one of the rental houses that borders your ranch,” said the voice on the telephone, “and yesterday my wife planted \$60 worth of bedding plants in our backyard and this morning they are all gone. And I want to know what you are going to do about it?”

“I’ll be right over.” I recognized this situation as one that demanded my immediate attention, so I saddled up Gentleman and rode over to his place. Sure enough, there were deer tracks and other reminders indicating the presence of deer. And a newly planted garden had been recently defoliated.

“I see the deer got you pretty good last night,” I said as Gentleman reached over the wire fence and took a big bite out of the one shrub left standing.

“You think it’s funny do you,” my neighbor shrieked. “I’ll have you

know that my wife spent all day planting those flowers.”

“I should have warned you. Around here you’ll have to learn to live with the deer. If you look around, you’ll notice that the other folks in the neighborhood have either planted deer-proof shrubs or erected some kind of barrier.” I could see that my new neighbors were disgusted with my solution and the fact that I did not reimburse them for the damage that “my deer” did.

About a week later I got another phone call requesting my immediate presence. Once again, Gentleman and I meandered over to the new neighbor’s place only to find a three-generation family of deer munching on a freshly planted flower garden. Only this time the deer were trapped inside the neighbor’s backyard by a solar powered fence.

“I see you took my advice and put up a fence. I’ll help you scare the deer out of your yard.” I just had to laugh as they jumped the 2-foot “barrier.”

It wasn’t too long after that that I noticed the new neighbors cleaning up an awful mess in their front yard. “What the heck happened? It looks like you got hit by a tornado?”

“It’s your raccoons,” said my neighbors. “They came in the night and tipped over the garbage cans we had set out for the trash men. We’ve been picking up our trash all morning over the entire neighborhood. What are you going to do about your raccoons?”

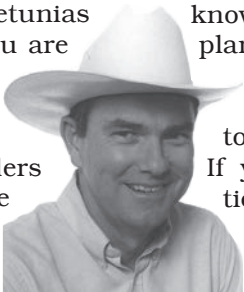
“Oh, I should have warned you about the raccoons and other nocturnal animals that strike in the night. Around here the neighbors just set their alarms for 5 a.m. to put their trash cans out when all the animals have gone to bed for the day.”

“That is your answer? To get up in the middle of the night? You’ve got to be kidding?”

I assured them that I wasn’t kidding and after that episode I never did actually speak to the neighbors ever again. But you can imagine my embarrassment when I read a letter to the editor in our local paper demanding to know what I was going to do about the “murderer” taking refuge on my ranch. It seems that “my bobcat,” which I must admit does take up occasional residence on the ranch, had eaten their pet cat, Whiskers, for dinner. The writer of the letter demanded to know what I was going to do about this terrible tragedy?

So, you can imagine my relief when a month later I noticed a “For Rent” sign in front of Whisker’s former residence. The couple was loading up their possessions in their minivan to move to a more civilized neighborhood. I did notice on their van was a “Greenpeace” bumper sticker and in the lower right-hand corner of the van’s rear window was the green leaf emblem for The Nature Conservancy.

Nature is indeed a wonderful thing and needs our support... it’s just that some people just can’t stand to get real close to it.



It’s THE PITTS
By Lee Pitts



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113 ± ACRE LAND AUCTION



COUNTY **SHELBY**

TOWNSHIP **PERRY**



AUCTION DATE AND TIME

JANUARY 8, 2026
6:00PM

AUCTION LOCATION

CLOPAY BUILDING
SHELBY COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
701 S. HIGHLAND AVE.,
SIDNEY, OH 45365.

CONTACT

DEVIN DYE
THE LAND GUY
419-303-5891

TELL THEM
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THEIR AD IN

FarmWorld

Ohio Farm

FROM PAGE 15B

Farm reached out to me. I had assumed they wanted me to hold some type of goat yoga on the farm or hold yoga classes around the cows or some other animal, but they asked if I would try holding otter classes. Since they were already allowing the public to swim and paint with otters we decided to give it a try.”

Westmeister Farm, a family-owned establishment, opened to the public in 2023 and gained in popularity due to a viral TikTok video showcasing its animals. It has become a sought-after destination for animal enthusiasts and families seeking unique experiences. About 90 minutes from Cleveland, the farm offers private tours that allow visitors to interact closely with a variety of animals. The farm is open year-round, accommodating visitors in all seasons.

The farm is home to over a dozen species, including both native and exotic animals such as a two-toed sloth named Charleigh, a zebra named Lincoln, kangaroos, African crested porcupines, and Eurasian eagle owls. But the otter duo and their involvement with yoga classes have become the highlight at this farm.

Because otters tend to follow their own agenda, yoga classes are less about perfect poses and more about enjoying the moment. Participants are encouraged to do “as much or as little yoga” as they want, even if it means taking an “otter nap” or offering belly rubs. The farm has just three rules: no jewelry, no hair clips and no items in pockets.

And for Sexstella, watching people interact with the otters is one of the most rewarding parts of her job.

“I love seeing the genuine joy, the

carefreeness, the laughter, the giggles,” she said. “For a couple hours each month, nothing else matters. It’s super wholesome, unstaged, unfiltered – just natural, genuine joy.”

Each session includes a trained handler to ensure safety and to protect the otters’ independence. And Sexstella said the animals truly enjoy the experience as well.

“They absolutely love it,” she said. “They even strike little yoga poses from time to time. It’s stimulating for them, and they need that. And those in the yoga classes oftentimes book a second and third class because they have such a blast.”

Sexstella said the farm is planning to add capybaras to its farm yoga classes.

“Capybaras are in the rodent family and they’re super cute, very friendly and they’re a little more docile than the otters, but for right now there’s Harbor and Cove. They have their own personalities. They’re little treasure goblins. Harbor and Cove are known for their curiosity and their thievery. They’ll unscrew things, unzip things. They go into pockets, up shirts, down pants. They’re very mischievous.”

Each class is \$80 per person; tickets must be purchased in advance. (As of press time, bookings have already been made six months in advance.) Kids 10 years and older are allowed with an accompanying adult.

“It opens up a door for people who



Above: Yoga instructor Trish Sexstella admits yoga classes with otters are a bit less rigid and more about the fun and experience. (photo submitted)

may not otherwise try yoga,” Sexstella said. “Some people show up just for the event, and then they email me later and start doing regular classes. It’s a good way to segue that into their lives. Plus, the bonus of a little animal therapy.”

Another standout at Westmeister Farm is its “Swimming with Otters” encounter. As the first USDA-certified facility in Ohio to offer this experience, visitors can swim with otters in a controlled environment. The farm’s otters,

River and Sailor, are known for their playful nature.

During private tours, guests can hold, feed and learn about a variety of animals in an intimate setting. The tours, priced at \$45 per person, last up to two hours and include animal feed.

Westmeister Farm is at 4097 Plymouth Springmill Road, Shelby, Ohio. Reservations can be made at <https://westmeister-farms.square.site/s/appointments>.



Above: Otter yoga has taken center stage at Westmeister Farm in Shelby, Ohio. Yoga sessions with the loveable otter pair are \$80. Farm guests can also book pool time for a swim with otters. (photo submitted)

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PUBLIC FARM AUCTION

Saturday, January 10, 2026 at 10:00 AM

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Address: 65511 CR 9, Goshen, IN 46526

TRACTORS – FARM EQUIPMENT - SILO

Oliver 1855 diesel tractor w. 5.9 Cummins repower w. fender fuel tanks; Oliver 1750 diesel tractor w. 354 Perkins repower; Minneapolis-Moline G750 diesel tractor; Ford 4000 gas tractor, row crop on steel; International A tractor as-is; Great Plains 15' center pivot hitch 1500 no till drill w. row markers; Kewanee 9 shank disc chisel; Noble 12' soil finisher; Kewanee 14' cultivator; White Horse 525 2 shank inline ripper w. crumbler; Oliver 12' disc; Krone 1800 Vario Pack round baler; Hesston 1320 discbine; Vermeer WRV10 variable width hay rake; Willmar fertilizer spreader; Protwin Knight Slinger 3030 in good condition; Real Rain 3" x 900' irrigation hose & reel & gun trailer; Water Winch 6000 irrigator w. 4 1/2" x 660' like new hose; Wagon gear; Skidloader wagon gear; Heavy duty implement trailer; John Deere 3 point grade blade; John Deere 4 bottom semi mount plow; John Deere 2 bottom 3 point plow; 16' James Way ring drive silo unloader; James Way ring drive silo unloader for parts; (2) rubber roundups for skidloaders; 3 point rototiller w. adjustable tines; 3 point hydraulic post pounder; 16'x 70' Madison silo

WHEELS – WEIGHTS - FARM MISC.

(3) complete sets of belting wheels for tractors; Belting wheels for skidloader; Lots of steel wheels; Lots of wheels & tires; (2) 7.5" x 18" rims; (6) front end Oliver weights; (4) Oliver wheel weights; (14) front end weights; (8) wheel weights for Ford 4000 row crop tractor; Wood splitter as is; 500 gallon plastic fertilizer tank; 800 gallon poly tank w. flat bottom; (3) quonsets; Lots of gates from 8' – 18'; Cattle panels; Silage weights; Mirafounts; T posts; (2) 4 ton steel feed bins; (2) 1 ton poly feed bins; 3 point fork lift mast w. forks for small tractor; (2) rolls 180' electronet fence; Hi tensel fence unroller; (50) step-in fence posts w. pig tails; Numerous fencing supplies; Large barn scales; (2) small balance scales; Driving horse collars; (2) SS hames; (8) 100 gal. Water tanks

MILKING PARLOR SETUP & SUPPLIES

Complete milking setup including stanchions to be sold individually or as a whole unit (Buyer is responsible to dismantle); Industrial water softener w. brine tank; Head lock; Newborn calf heater; Crowd gate system; Vacuum pump but is stuck; Calf cart; Mixer tank; (2) 110 volt fans; (2) 5 gallon poly milk cans w. lids; (2) 30"x46" foot bath pans; (9) nipple buckets; (3) 10 nipple 10 gal. Milk tubs; (1) 10 nipple 15 gal. Milk tub; (2) 36" free stall fans; (100 +) self locks various sizes and lengths

SHOP TOOLS & LAWN GARDEN & MISC.

Walcott & Wood Machine flat belt drive lathe; McCormick Deering hit n miss motor as is; L-Tee 250 amp wire welder; Miller MD500 stick welder; Model Zero Buffalo iron worker; Federal 50 ton press w. pin clutch; (3) custom built hyd. Rotary presses; Electric motor w. hyd. Pump; Dayton 7.5 HP electric motor; Dayton 5.5 HP electric motor; Volt Master 50 KW PTO generator; (1) 200 amp 240 volt double throw 3 phase electric switch; (1) 240 volt pressure washer (works but needs hose); Kalamazoo metal band saw 8" x 18"; 3/4" Milwaukee drill; Mantis tiller; Chainsaw; Older leaf vac as is; (2) Lawn boy mowers; Simplicity riding lawn mower w. 16 HP motor; Wheel hoe; Small cider press; (25) wooden potato crates; Orchard sprayer w. piston pump as is; Hand held bag sewer; Singer upholstery sewing machine as is; (6) landscape rocks 20" - 36"; (3) 4' dia. Concrete pipe; 10"x14' pipe w. 3/8" wall; 10"x18' pipe w. 3/8" wall; 10"x22' pipe w. 1/4" wall; 1.5 HP submersible pump plus pipe; Lots of misc. steel including 1/2"x12"x20'; (2) 3/16"x5'x8' sheets; (50) 1/2" x20' rods; 3/8" x5'x13'; 5/16"x6"x20'; 3/8"x3"x12'; 3/8"x4"x12'; Lots of scrap iron

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