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## Insurer: Illinois farm collision claims reached 180 last year

By TIM ALEXANDER  
Illinois Correspondent

MINONK, Ill. – Illinois COUNTRY Financial insurance agents received more than 180 farm equipment collision claims between the months of March and June 2025, including those involving collisions on the road with other vehicles as well as collisions with buildings or other equipment on the farm. This is according to data shared by Zack Hinthorn, COUNTRY agribusiness underwriter, who noted the timing of the claims serves to highlight the enhanced risk farmers face during the spring field preparation and planting seasons.

"Many of the collision claims are between vehicles on the road and farm implements," said Hinthorn, a loss prevention specialist who works out of COUNTRY's Minonk (Woodford County) insurance office. "We want to spotlight this at this time of the year because after a few months of little farm activity, (motorists) become a little more comfortable in not thinking about farm equipment on the road. If you see large tractors pulling equipment, they are actually moving a lot more slowly than you even think. It's not uncommon for people not to be able to slow down on time."

Hinthorn said the most common types of collisions include those that occur due to impatient motorists attempting to pass slow moving farm vehicles. Often, those collisions occur as a tractor, combine or sprayer operator attempts to execute a left or right hand turn onto another road or into a farm field.

"Sometimes a motorist may not be aware that a farm implement is preparing to turn because their flashers may also be in operation," he said.

"This can result in more frustration and people trying to pass right at the worst time. When motorists are frustrated, that is when accidents happen."

Because these types of collisions are among the most common claims for COUNTRY Financial farm clients during planting season, agents are encouraging farmers to double down on their own safety and preparedness. This includes an annual check on farm insurance coverages. Taking proactive steps now can help reduce accidents, prevent breakdowns and protect farm operations during one of the busiest times of the year, according to Hinthorn.

"The farmer obviously knows where they are going, but when someone is behind that tractor waiting for it to turn patiently on the next road, it can throw off drivers. Especially if they are making a left or right turn into a field entrance; they don't know where those field entrances are like the farmer would," Hinthorn said. "We want motorists to be aware there will be a lot of equipment on the roads soon. Try to anticipate that, and if you live in a rural area maybe plan for that and leave a little bit earlier."

Hinthorn shared the following tips with Farm World farmers for a safe and successful planting season:

- Improve visibility on the road

"Accidents involving farm equipment often occur at dawn or dusk during peak commuting hours, especially when motorists attempt to pass slow-moving vehicles or do not anticipate turns or stops. Use flashing lights, ensure reflective tape and Slow-Moving Vehicle emblems are clean and confirm all lights are functioning properly to help maximize visibility and reduce risk. Remember to use turn signals, as drivers often misinterpret a tractor moving to the right side of the road before making a left turn.

"Drivers should plan ahead during the busy planting season, remembering that farmers will be on the road and allowing for extra time. Slow down, stay focused on the road and look for the lights on farm vehicles."

- Prepare equipment

"Equipment malfunctions are a common cause of farm accidents. Thoroughly inspect and maintain all farm equipment before hitting the fields. Regular maintenance such as checking worn parts, replacing filters and lubricating moving components

(See Illinois on page 2)



Above: This group of cows decided to pose for a photo in Fountain County, Ind., with the new calf front and center. Photo by Lindsey Wann

## Indiana to invest \$1 billion to add jobs in ag, life sciences

By Michele F. Mihajevich  
Indiana Correspondent

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana Gov. Mike Braun's plan to invest \$1 billion over the next 10 years to create thousands of high-wage jobs in agricultural and life sciences has the backing of the director of the state's department of agriculture.

The plan calls for spending \$100 million a year over the next decade to create 100,000 jobs in Indiana. The state's investment will focus on increasing jobs and wages, according to a press release. The funds will be tied to measurable outcomes to ensure accountability and long-term return on investment, the release said.

The goal of the investment, the release said, is to make Indiana the premier U.S. destination where human therapeutics, animal health, agritech, biotechnology and environmental innovation flow together along the vital, anchored pathway of private-sector excellence. The governor announced his plan March 17.

Don Lamb, director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, said it's encouraging to have a governor who not only recognizes the value of agriculture, but is willing to invest in its future.

"(The investment) is one-third of the investment Indiana is already committed to spending to attract new companies through incentives for economic development efforts," Lamb told Farm

World. "This announcement commits that we are going to specifically target this type of industry.

"The ag bioscience/life science industry creates good, high-paying jobs and attracts quality people to an ecosystem, not just a place. Stack on top of it, that Indianapolis is a great place to live and it creates a great opportunity. It's great news for agriculture."

The initiative will attract new companies to the area as well as encourage expansion of existing companies, he said. That, Lamb noted, is great for the state's economy as it will increase the tax base that helps build infrastructure.

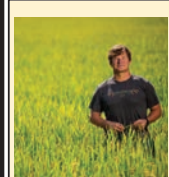
It's also great for innovation that will result in returns to agriculture, he added.

"We will have access to new products that will aid in the production, processing and safety of products that will be grown on tomorrow's farms," Lamb explained. "This is a big step toward ensuring that agriculture will be a priority in Indiana for a long time."

Companies such as Eli Lilly and Company, Elanco Animal Health, Corteva Agriscience, Cook Medical and Beck's Hybrids – all based in Indiana – will participate, the release said. These industry leaders operate in close partnerships with research institutions such as Purdue and Indiana universities, the release said.

Together, these assets anchor a life

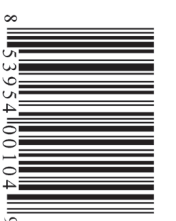
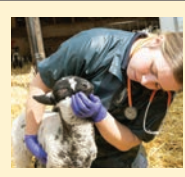
(See Indiana on page 2)



Illinois farmer turns flooding fields into advantage with rice.....Page 1B

### In this Farm World:

Project OHIO looks to fill rural veterinarian void..... Page 19



## Illinois

FROM PAGE 1

can reduce unexpected breakdowns and improve overall safety.”

- Take extra caution when handling chemicals

“Chemical safety is another critical focus during planting season. Review safe handling procedures for fertilizers, pesticides and other hazardous materials with all farm workers to help ensure everyone is aligned on proper protocols. Have Safety Data Sheets (SDS) on-hand in case of emergency and ensure the use of personal protective equipment, including gloves, goggles and masks.”

- Prevent theft

“Theft of tools, chemicals and other personal property is common during planting season and can occur when equipment is left unlocked in the field, and when farmers are in and out of sheds frequently and don't close and lock the doors. Take time to ensure valuable items are secured.”

- Check insurance coverage and review extra coverage options

“Farmers should check their farm insurance coverages to be sure they have the right endorsements and coverages. For example, with Extra Ex-

pense coverage, a farmer who has a covered loss on a piece of equipment may be able to receive additional payment to rent equipment and resume operations. Farmers who sell seed corn need to purchase additional coverage. Check farm inventory lists to be sure they are accurate and up-to-date, especially if you have sold or purchased new equipment.

“Meeting with an insurance agent to discuss equipment, buildings, livestock, crops and employees can help ensure proper protections are in place and that any recent changes to operations are addressed.”

- Take care of your health

“Finally, farmers are encouraged to prioritize their health and wellbeing. Long hours and physical demands can take a toll, making it important to take breaks, eat healthy meals, get enough rest and understand how medications may affect alertness. Let family members or employees know where you're working and keep a phone or walkie-talkie nearby in case of emergency.

“Safety on the farm isn't just about equipment - it's about awareness, communication and looking out for one another,” Hinthorn said. “Refreshing safety practices each season helps prevent injuries and protects everyone involved.”

## Family turns farm into Yak destination

By Leondia Walchle  
Indiana Correspondent

ARCADIA, Ind. - First-generation farmers, Chris and Cathy Lammer, made the move from the suburbs working in finance positions to operating a 25-acre yak ranch in 2022. “We basically had to learn everything, which involved a lot of growing pains,” they said. Wanting to raise something unique with less maintenance, along with a lower environmental impact, is what led to their first yak purchase, then came the cute babydoll southdown sheep, and lastly kunekune pigs.

The Woolly Yak Ranch and Winery came with an existing orchard, which they have since grown, and now consists of 160 pawpaw trees (27 varieties), 72 persimmon trees, and 250 pecan



Above: Wine and Yak fiber can be found at the Woolly Yak Ranch and Winery.



Above: Nine Yaks now make their home with Chris and Cathy Lammer.

trees (13 varieties). Several varieties of aromatic lavender surround their one-acre pond.

Just over a year ago their business opened to the public creating a relaxed, family-friendly environment where they can showcase their unique animals. The Lammer's have collaborated with a local winery to create small-batch, handcrafted wine (depicting their woolly yaks) that is available for purchase in their tasting room. The home-grown pawpaw wine is currently their best seller. Fiber from both the yaks and sheep are available, along with their pecans, and local vendor goods.

The Lammer's have plenty of ideas on how they want to continue to expand the business, which they would like to pass along to their children, who are also involved in the daily operations.

Live music is featured Friday nights.

For more information on upcoming events or to schedule a field trip, visit [www.woollyyak.com](http://www.woollyyak.com) or Facebook.

## Indiana

FROM PAGE 1

sciences economy that supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and generates billions in annual gross domestic product statewide, according to the release.

“It all gets back to the synergy that is developed by companies who want to operate in a common ecosystem,” Lamb said. “These companies attract the same kind of workforce, they attract the same kind of support industries and supply chain service providers, among other things.”

The project builds on a Braun ex-

ecutive order directing Indiana's regions to submit formal growth plans tied to employment growth, per capita income, and educational attainment, the release said. The Central Indiana Regional Development Authority was chosen by the governor as the first regional steward to coordinate alignment and execution of the initiative.

Lamb said Hoosier farmers will benefit from the plan.

“The agricultural supply chain impacts everyone in agriculture and even the consumers of food,” Lamb pointed out. “The products of ag bioscience start at the farm gate, end at the farm gate, and provide for consumers in-between.”

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# Inflation is becoming market topic as food cost index rises

No changes were made to U.S. corn balance sheets in the April World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. This held the U.S. corn carryout at 2.127 billion bu. The USDA did raise the average cash corn estimate by 5 cents per bushel though, putting it at \$4.15 per bushel. This was from demand, as corn consumption for the first half of the marketing year was 9.6



MARKET ANALYSIS  
By Karl Setzer

bu, 1 bbu more than a year ago. This elevated demand is starting to offset the bearishness of last year's record crop. As with corn, no changes were made to soybean carryout this month. This held ending stocks at 350 million bu. We did see an increase to crush of 35 mbu but an equal reduction to exports. The USDA still bumped its soybean value up by 10 cents to an average of \$10.30 per bushel.

Minimal adjusting was seen in the wheat balance sheets this month. The USDA increased imports 5 mbu and lowered seed usage by 2 mbu for a 7 mbu increase to ending stocks when an 8 mbu reduction had been expected. This put the U.S. carryout at 938 mbu. Even with this increase the USDA raised the average cash value by 5 cents, taking it to an even \$5.00 per bushel.

Global ending stocks adjustments were mixed this month. Corn carryout is now estimated at 294.81 mmt, 600,000 mt more than expected. The world soybean carryout is now forecast at 124.79 mmt, 500,000 mt less than in March. The world wheat end-

ing stocks came in 5.5 mmt more than expected at 283.12 mmt.

Only minimal changes were made to U.S. beef and pork production numbers as well. Beef production for 2026 is now estimated at 25.79 billion pounds, a 20-million-pound reduction from March's estimate. The average steer value is now \$241.66 per hundred-weight, 34 cents under the March projection. Pork production is estimated at 27.98 billion pounds, 300 million less than in March. The average hog value is now \$69.13 per cwt, a month-to-month decline of \$1.13.

On the demand side, U.S. beef exports are now estimated at 2.365 billion pounds for 2026, 30 million fewer than in March. Beef imports for the year were bumped up to 5.79 billion pounds, 115 million more than last month. Pork exports were elevated by 15 million pounds, putting them at 7.2 billion pounds.

Inflation is once again becoming a market topic, and this has now started to be seen in world food values. The global food cost index increased 2.4 percent in the month of March, the 2nd consecutive month of rising food values. March's increases were driven by a 7 percent increase in sugar and a 5.1 percent gain in vegetable oils. These rising food costs are compounding the negative economic impact of elevated energy costs following the start of the U.S./Iran war. The concern from several economists

(Setzer continued on page 5)

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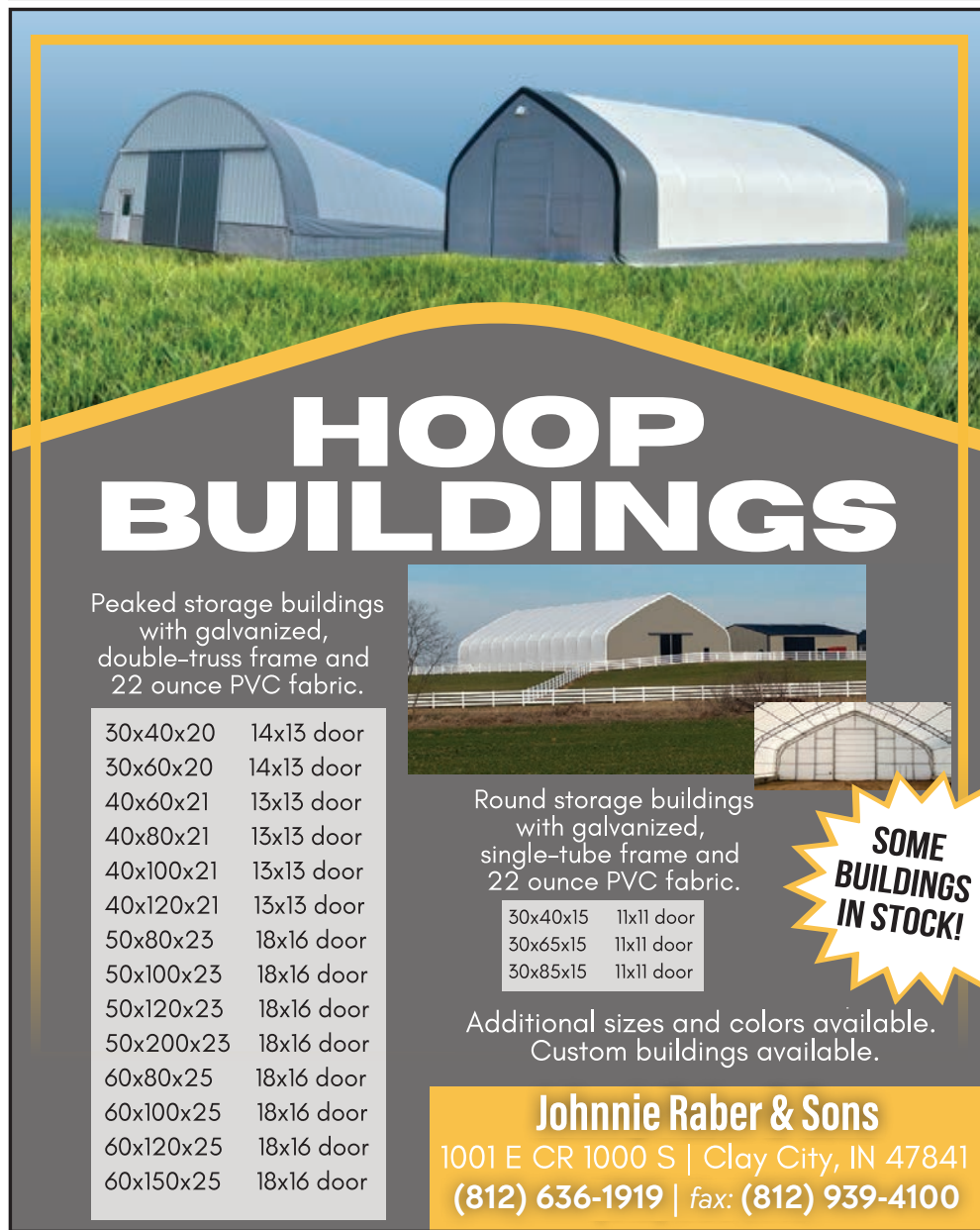
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## Setzer

FROM PAGE 4

is that the full negative impact of the Iran war has not been felt yet, nor the added tariff costs.

This rise in inflation is not just being seen on the retail side. Production costs are rising as well, mainly for energy products and crop inputs, especially fertilizer. More farmers from across the U.S. are indicating they may need to switch intended crops as costs are rising above breakeven on some crops, mainly those needing higher volumes of nitrogen. Farmers in other regions of the globe are facing the same inflation and input concerns, specifically Australia and Brazil.

The latest official Census U.S. export data for the month of February was mixed. Corn exports totaled 266.5 million bu in February, a 2.4 percent increase from January and a record for the month. Soybean exports were 154.2 mbu, a 28 percent decline from January but a 34.6 percent increase from February 2025. Wheat exports in February were 71.28 mbu, a 26.7 percent increase from January and a six year high for the month. The U.S. also exported a record 794.45 million gallons of ethanol in the month of February.

Red meat exports were well divided in February. Beef exports totaled 183.3 million pounds, a 6 percent decline from January and a 10-year low. This was not a surprise given the

low U.S. cattle inventory and lower beef production. February pork exports totaled 574.24 million pounds, a 2.7 percent decline from January but the 4th largest January volume on record.

A story that is making its way through the market is the heavy rain that has recently moved through the Eastern Corn Belt and its impact on soil conditions. Some analysts immediately started talking about excessive moisture and its potential impact on planting conditions. Given the fact many of the impacted areas have yet to reach insurance plant dates, wet fields are not a worry for the market. In fact, building soil moisture ahead of the growing season is more bearish than bullish.

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# MARKETS

## Blue Grass Stockyards Lexington, KY

**Livestock Weighted Average Report for 4/13/2026 - Final AUCTION**

	This Week	Last Reported 4/6/2026	Last Year
<b>Total Receipts:</b>	1,269	554	1,989
<b>Feeder Cattle:</b>	1,055(83.1%)	489(88.3%)	1,769(88.9%)
<b>Slaughter Cattle:</b>	179(14.1%)	62(11.2%)	208(10.5%)
<b>Replacement Cattle:</b>	35(2.8%)	3(0.5%)	12(0.6%)

Special Note: Beef Calf: 275.00 to 1100.00 perhead

Compared to last Monday the feeder market was mostly steady with an average quality offering of mostly new crop calves. Feeder steers 350 lbs and under were mostly steady, while the 400-600 lbs steers were steady to 5.00 higher with a good supply and good demand. Yearling steers appeared steady but with limited head to head comparisons. Feeder heifers 400 lbs and under were steady to 5.00 higher with a good supply, while the 450-600 lbs heifers were steady to 5.00 lower or greater in spots with a good supply and moderate demand. Slaughter cows were 2.00 to 3.00 higher with a good supply and slaughter bulls were steady to 3.00 higher with good demand. Supply included: 83% Feeder Cattle (39% Steers, 42% Heifers, 19% Bulls, 0% Dairy Heifers); 14% Slaughter Cattle (78% Cows, 22% Bulls); 3% Replacement Cattle (26% Stock Cows, 67% Bred Cows, 5% Cow-Calf Pairs, 3% Bulls). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 29%.

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### STEERS

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### FEEDER CATTLE

**STEERS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	295	295	605.00	605.00
14	280-293	292	690.00-701.00	699.03 Fancy
4	300-335	324	620.00-635.00	626.08
2	310-315	313	670.00-690.00	679.92 Fancy
10	350-395	372	575.00-635.00	591.36
6	350-360	356	650.00-700.00	666.87 Fancy
14	400-440	422	540.00-572.50	560.48
8	405-431	422	585.00-609.00	595.55 Fancy
11	455-495	478	500.00-519.00	512.71
8	461-490	472	530.00-545.00	538.86 Fancy
29	500-541	524	479.00-505.00	494.59
12	508-537	518	512.50-555.00	525.70 Value Added
18	551-585	564	450.00-472.00	461.75
46	552-568	563	487.00-529.00	502.76 Value Added
34	600-647	622	400.00-430.00	419.19
10	605-617	613	446.00-454.00	449.68 Value Added
8	650-682	674	399.00-413.00	405.62
5	700-725	720	355.00-378.00	359.47
54	703-740	732	385.00-405.00	395.66 Value Added
3	768	768	380.00	380.00
2	800-820	810	346.00-356.00	350.94
5	865-895	878	339.00-351.00	344.15

**STEERS - Medium and Large 2-3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
4	360-395	386	500.00-515.00	511.50
11	420-436	433	492.50-515.00	508.00
3	485-495	488	482.50-491.00	488.13
3	530-545	537	441.00-472.50	457.90
3	620-630	627	380.00-385.00	381.65
12	650-675	665	356.00-383.00	378.19

**HEIFERS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	435	435	390.00	390.00
1	485	485	430.00	430.00
2	532	532	375.00	375.00
1	555	555	393.00	393.00

**HEIFERS - Medium and Large 2-3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
3	270-290	280	570.00-575.00	571.73
9	255-292	274	610.00-640.00	626.66 Fancy
7	281	281	685.00	685.00 Thin Fleshy
9	310-336	329	532.50-560.00	544.07
12	310-341	328	595.00-635.00	613.45 Fancy
19	350-397	373	510.00-540.00	526.03
15	358-396	377	550.00-595.00	578.51 Fancy
45	410-448	429	470.00-497.50	487.91
3	415	415	530.00-545.00	540.00 Fancy
28	460-495	478	430.00-460.00	444.43
13	450-466	461	467.50-495.00	474.66 Fancy
37	502-540	513	410.00-430.00	422.09
11	500-540	512	435.00-442.50	436.16 Value Added
29	550-585	572	380.00-402.50	395.61
1	580	580	371.00	371.00 Fleshy
21	550-580	565	407.50-422.50	413.88 Value Added
10	600-645	619	370.00-395.00	380.98
19	602-621	609	397.00-405.00	400.05 Guaranteed Open
17	656-697	671	360.00-377.50	374.01
2	680	680	342.50	342.50 Fleshy
7	670-673	672	390.00	390.00 Guaranteed Open
16	703-745	720	331.00-358.00	348.10
3	775	775	341.00	341.00
1	810	810	302.50	302.50
2	835	835	326.00	326.00 Guaranteed Open
2	920	920	325.00	325.00 Guaranteed Open
1	1010	1010	290.00	290.00 Guaranteed Open
1	1060	1060	267.50	267.50 Guaranteed Open

**HEIFERS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	340	340	510.00	510.00
9	350-395	377	477.50-505.00	490.48
2	430-435	433	435.00-456.00	445.44
3	475-495	488	412.50-425.00	418.41
3	500-530	518	385.00-400.00	394.94
3	600-635	623	350.00-362.50	358.49
3	665-675	672.3	35.00-350.00	345.05
1	735	735	307.00	307.00

**DAIRY HEIFERS - Large 3 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	545	545	280.00	280.00
4	625-635	633	310.00-335.00	328.82
1	840	840	195.00	195.00

**BULLS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	180	180	750.00	750.00 Fancy
1	205	205	655.00	655.00
1	260	260	605.00	605.00
2	275	275	680.00	680.00 Fancy
2	300-305	303	600.00-610.00	605.04
4	310-345	331	670.00-690.00	683.51 Thin Fleshy
3	372-375	373	520.00-560.00	546.60
12	355-370	365	595.00-635.00	618.89 Fancy
2	355	355	690.00-710.00	700.00 Thin Fleshy
7	405-440	416	525.00-550.00	537.83
11	415-438	433	567.50-590.00	581.18 Fancy
1	410	410	460.00	460.00 Fleshy
24	450-497	476	490.00-520.00	506.70
6	470-495	481	535.00-542.50	539.10 Fancy
10	52-542	525	470.00-495.00	480.02
3	500-520	513	515.00-525.00	521.75 Fancy
9	570-585	577	405.00-413.00	410.98
9	557-585	563	465.00-480.00	471.90 Fancy
8	613-647	623	380.00-400.00	385.08
1	610	610	415.00	415.00 Fancy
5	650-677	663	370.00-387.50	376.29
3	700-720	710	350.00-372.50	358.51
3	705-707	706	379.00-385.00	383.00 Fancy
1	890	890	290.00	290.00
1	915	915	260.00	260.00
1	1020	1020	267.50	267.50

**BULLS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	245	245	560.00	560.00
1	345	345	550.00	550.00
1	385	385	500.00	500.00
12	405-446	428	480.00-510.00	503.35
2	492	492	460.00	460.00
5	510-515	512	420.00-445.00	437.00
1	580	580	382.50	382.50
2	655-690	673	322.50-340.00	331.48
1	700	700	320.00	320.00
1	895	895	236.00	236.00

**BULLS - Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	205	205	325.00	325.00
1	270	270	495.00	495.00
1	325	325	445.00	445.00
2	437	437	445.00	445.00
1	815	815	225.00	225.00

**SLAUGHTER CATTLE**

**COWS - Breaker 75-80% (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
19	1270-1775	1463	168.00-183.00	177.61	Average
17	1270-1790	1466	185.00-196.00	189.02	High

**COWS - Boner 80-85% (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
34	1065-1395	1221	164.00-184.00	176.79	Average
10	1085-1350	1257	185.00-203.00	190.06	High

**COWS - Lean 85-90% (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
15	840-1205	1008	142.00-156.00	150.24	Average
9	870-1355	1057	159.00-173.00	165.34	High
3	805-990	917	125.00-137.00	132.11	Low
1	735	735	115.00	115.00	Very Low

**BULLS - 1 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
3	1815-2105	1997	237.00-241.00	239.29	High

**BULLS - 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
3	1205-1555	1370	188.00-193.00	191.83	Average
23	1165-2105	1590	208.00-232.00	218.82	High
2	1035-1280	1158	180.00-182.00	181.11	Low

**REPLACEMENT CATTLE**

**STOCK COWS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-4	O	3	865-915	892	225.00-242.50	231.79
>5	O	7	1020-1165	1079	181.00-217.50	197.96

**BRED COWS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Unit / Actual Wt)**

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-4	T2	1	1165	1165	3900.00	3900.00
2-4	T2	2	920-960	940	2950.00-3600.00	3281.91
>5	T1	2	1095-1335	1215	2200.00-2400.00	2290.12
>5	T2	8	1030-1390	1216	2900.00-3900.00	3353.60
>5	T3	3	1165-1360	1273	3200.00-3800.00	3403.40
>8	T3	2	1185-1295	1240	2150.00-2250.00	2197.78

**BRED COWS - Medium and Large 2 (Per Unit / Actual Wt)**

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
>5	T2	4	1090-1415	1273	2650.00-2800.00	2720.68
>5	T3	4	1090-1225	1178	2625.00-2800.00	2729.88

**COW-CALF PAIRS - Medium and Large 2 w/ <150 lbs calf (Per Unit / Actual Wt)**

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-4	O	1	785	785	2400.00	2400.00
>8	O	1	975	975	2850.00	2850.00

**BULLS - Medium and Large 1-2 (Per Cwt / Actual Wt)**

Age	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-8	1	1415	1415	2900.00	2900.00

Explanatory Notes:  
The above USDA LPGMN price report is reflective of the majority of classes and grades of livestock offered for sale. There may be instances where some sales do not fit within reporting guidelines and therefore will be included in the report. Prices are reported on an FOB basis, unless otherwise noted.

Explanatory Notes:  
Stage (Cattle) - Represents pregnancy stage (O = open; T1 = 1st Trimester, 1 to 3 months; T1-2 = 1st/2nd trimester, 1 to 6 months; T2 = 2nd Trimester, 4 to 6 months; T2-3 = 2nd/3rd Trimester, 4 to 9 months; T3 = 3rd Trimester, 7 to 9 months; T1-3 = all trimesters, 1 to 9 months)  
Age - Numerical representation of age in years.

Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News  
KY Dept of Ag Market News Richard Midden  
Frankfort, KY | (502) 782-4138 | www.ams.usda.gov/pgmm  
https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/  
https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/2127

## Kentucky Daily Grain Bids

# MARKETS

## Weekly National Sheep Summary For Week Ending Friday, April 10, 2026

Weekly Trends: Compared to last week slaughter lambs traded 10.00-20.00 higher and ewes firm. All sheep sold per hundred weight (CWT) unless otherwise specified.

Category	Weight Range	Price Range
Slaughter Lambs	Choice and Prime 1-3	
San Angelo	50-60 lbs	382.00-460.00
	80-90 lbs	382.00-460.00
	90-100 lbs	344.00
New Holland	40-50 lbs	445.00-500.00
	50-60 lbs	415.00-465.00
	60-70 lbs	385.00-440.00
	70-80 lbs	365.00-445.00
	80-90 lbs	385.00-425.00
	90-100 lbs	375.00-415.00
	100-110 lbs	365.00-400.00
	120-130 lbs	307.00-340.00
Billings	No test	
Ft. Collins	50-60 lbs	342.50-375.00
	60-70 lbs	345.00-365.00
	70-80 lbs	340.00-372.50
	90-100 lbs	355.00-380.00
	110-120-130 lbs	315.00-355.00
Hope	30-40 lbs	350.00-390.00
	40-50 lbs	360.00-435.00
	50-60 lbs	380.00-450.00
	60-70 lbs	372.50-420.00
	70-80 lbs	380.00-405.00
	80-90 lbs	372.50-407.50
	90-100 lbs	345.00-385.00
Kalona	40-50 lbs	405.00-460.00
	50-60 lbs	405.00-420.00
	60-70 lbs	380.00-415.00
	70-80 lbs	380.00-420.00
	80-90 lbs	377.50-395.00
	90-100 lbs	365.00-390.00
Equity Coop	No test	
Sioux Falls	60-50 lbs	415.00-425.00
	70-80 lbs	355.00-400.00
	80-90 lbs	360.00-405.00
	90-100 lbs	380.00-415.00
	100-110 lbs	322.00-395.00
	120-130 lbs	285.00
	130-140 lbs	270.00-275.00
	140-150 lbs	280.00-281.00
	150-160 lbs	240.00-270.00
Buffalo, MO	No test	
Missouri	No test	
Equity Coop	No test	
Slaughter Ewes	Good 2-3	
San Angelo		149.00-185.00

Category	Weight Range	Price Range
New Holland		130.00-195.00
Billings	No test	
Ft. Collins		115.00-180.00
Hope		145.00-162.50
Kalona		130.00-170.00
Equity Coop	No test	
Sioux Falls		120.00-170.00
Buffalo, MO	No test	
Missouri	No test	
Feeder Lambs	Medium and Large 1:	
San Angelo	No test	
Billings	No test	
Sioux Falls	30-40 lbs	560.00
	40-50 lbs	480.00-525.00
	50-60 lbs	465.00-510.00
	60-70 lbs	395.00-435.00
	70-80 lbs	387.50-390.00
Buffalo, MO	No test	
Missouri	No test	
Ft. Collins		40-50 lbs 380.00-410.00
Kalona	No test	
Equity Coop	80-90 lbs	341.00
Arkansas	No test	
Replacement Ewes	Medium and Large 1-2:	
San Angelo	No test	
Billings	No test	
Ft. Collins	No test	
South Dakota	No test	
Kalona	No test	
Missouri	No test	
Arkansas	No test	
Sioux Falls	No test	
Buffalo, MO	No test	

Sheep and lamb slaughter under federal inspection for the week to date totaled 30,000 compared to 29,000 last week and 42,647 last year.

Source: USDA Livestock, Poultry and Grain Market News  
General inquiries, please call: (202) 720-1990  
[https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/sa\\_ls855.txt](https://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/sa_ls855.txt)  
email: [mymarketnews@usda.gov](mailto:mymarketnews@usda.gov)

## Daily Livestock and Poultry Slaughter

Report For Thursday, April 16, 2026 - Final

Current Day Slaughter									
Thurs., Apr. 16, 2026	Week Ago	Year Ago	WTD	Prev Week	Last Year	2026	2025	YTD	% Change
Calves	1,000	1,000	300	4,000	4,000	1,414	33,186	39,263	-15.5%
Cattle	104,000	105,000	120,987	429,000	425,000	476,286	8,007,614	8,906,641	-10.1%
Hogs	491,000	487,000	477,000	1,968,000	1,840,000	1,938,330	37,967,733	38,365,389	-1.0%
Sheep	8,000	7,000	8,858	30,000	26,000	40,132	566,806	589,137	-3.8%
Chicken (Young)	35,335,000	35,205,000	35,059,000	140,644,000	140,290,000	139,530,000	2,732,595,000	2,766,747,000	-1.2%

Previous Daily Slaughter									
Wed., Apr. 15, 2026	Week Ago	Year Ago	WTD	Prev Week	Last Year	2026	2025	YTD	% Change
Calves	1,000	1,000	426	3,000	3,000	1,114	32,186	38,963	-17.4%
Cattle	109,000	109,000	121,754	325,000	320,000	355,299	7,903,614	8,785,654	-10.0%
Hogs	494,000	489,000	490,629	1,477,000	1,353,000	1,461,330	37,476,733	37,888,389	-1.1%
Sheep	6,000	6,000	8,355	22,000	19,000	31,274	558,806	580,279	-3.7%
Chicken (Young)	35,334,000	35,343,000	34,860,000	105,309,000	105,085,000	104,471,000	2,697,260,000	2,731,688,000	-1.3%

Previous Day Breakdown		
Wed., Apr. 15, 2026		
Cattle	Steers/Heifers ...	93,000
	Cows/Bulls ...	16,000

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

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<https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/> | <https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/3208>

## Missouri Direct Hay Report


### Direct Hay Weighted Average Report

Rains have greatly improved conditions for the northern 2/3 of the state. The case is much different in southern 1/3 however as it remains very dry with much of the far SE in severe to extreme drought. Planting of grain crops has been fairly slow due to scattered rains, most producers have gotten fertilizer spread. Several farmers waiting for a window to start wrapping some hay but thus far no reports of any being done but it wouldn't be surprising if there has been a least a few bales wrapped at this point. Hay prices are steady to weak for the more common quality hay, higher end hay remains fully steady. The Missouri Department of Agriculture has a hay directory at <https://apps.mda.mo.gov/hay-directory> or visit the University of Missouri Extension feed stuff finder at <https://feedstufffinder.org>

HAY (Conventional)		
Alfalfa - Supreme (Ask/Per Ton)		
Medium Square 3x3		250.00-300.00
Alfalfa - Supreme (Ask/Per Bale)		
Small Square		10.00-15.00

Alfalfa - Premium (Ask/Per Ton)		
Medium Square 3x3		175.00-225.00
Alfalfa - Good (Ask/Per Ton)		
Large Round		150.00-175.00
Alfalfa - Good (Ask/Per Bale)		
Small Square		6.00-10.00
Alfalfa - Fair (Ask/Per Ton)		
Large Round		125.00-150.00
Mixed Grass - Premium (Ask/Per Ton)		
Medium Square 3x3		150.00-200.00
Mixed Grass - Good/Premium (Ask/Per Ton)		
Large Round		100.00-150.00
Mixed Grass - Fair/Good (Ask/Per Ton)		
Large Round		50.00-100.00
Mixed Grass - Fair/Good (Ask/Per Bale)		
Small Square		2.25-7.00
Mixed Grass - Fair (Ask/Per Bale)		
Large Round		20.00-40.00
<b>STRAW (Conventional)</b>		
Wheat - (Ask/Per Bale)		
Small Square		4.00-7.00

Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News  
<https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/>  
<https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/2929>




## 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](https://DVAUCTIONS.COM)

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

Small Animals	4/14/2026	Sheep	Cows
Chickens	\$2-\$15	Ewes	\$1-\$1.60
Bantys	\$3-\$16	40-60# Lambs	\$3.45-\$4.45
Ducks		61-80# Lambs	\$3.25-\$4.35
Pigeons	\$5.25-\$5.50	81-100# Lambs	\$2.50-\$3.85
Eggs	\$5.00-\$2		238
Rooster	\$3.50-\$14	<b>Goats</b>	
Turkey	\$85	Billys	\$55-\$585
Peacock		Nannies	\$65-\$270
Rabbits	\$4.50-\$27.50	Kids	\$40-\$195
	605 (small animals)		106
	934 (Eggs)	<b>Feeder Cattle Dairy and Beef</b>	
<b>Veal Calves</b>		200-500#	\$1.90-\$5.40
Holstein (80# & UP)	\$1300-\$1675	501-800#	\$1.60-\$3.75
Beef Cross (80# & UP)	\$1425-\$2025		125
	287		59



**Market Report**  
April 8th 2025

**This Report is the Actual High and Average Prices.**

	Hd. Ct.	High	Avg.
Fat Hogs:	N/A		
Sows:	N/A		
Boars:	N/A		
Feeder Pigs:	N/A		
Beef & X Veal #1:	32	\$2010	\$1743.28
Beef & X Veal #2:	10	\$1350	\$1112.50
Dairy Veal #1:	59	\$1500.	\$1404.58
Dairy Veal #2:	9	\$1025	\$605.55
Jersey Cross:	6	\$750	\$535
Beef Fdrs 200#-550#	4	\$3.90	\$3.31
Beef Fdrs 551#-1000#	2	\$3.00	\$2.89
Dairy Fdrs 200#-550#	2	\$4.10	\$2.29
Dairy Fdrs 551#-1000#	1	\$1.90	\$1.90
Cull Cows #1:	1	\$1.41	\$1.41
Cull Cows #2:	4	\$1.325	\$1.22
Fat Cattle Colored:	N/A		
Fat Cattle Holstein:	N/A		
Bulls:	6	\$2.00	\$1.84
Cow/Calf Pair:	2	\$3500	\$3500
Breed Cows Colored:	N/A		
Milk Cows :	2	\$1600	\$1525
Springers:	N/A		
Sheep Ram:	N/A		
Sheep Ewe:	N/A		
Lamb 0-60:	2	\$3.55	\$3.55
Lamb 61-85:	N/A		
Lamb 86-100:	N/A		
Goat Nannies :	1	\$180	\$180
Goat Billys :	N/A		
Goat wethers:	N/A		
<b>Total Hd. Cnt:</b>	<b>143</b>		

**Auction Every Wednesday**  
Sale Order

<b>Hay / Straw / Firewood</b>	<b>11:00 AM</b>
<b>Livestock</b>	<b>12:00 PM</b>
<b>Small animals</b>	<b>5:00 PM.</b>

**Licensed and Bonded # AC32500012**

**The 1<sup>st</sup> 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**

**Driving Horse Sale Fri. April 10<sup>th</sup> @ 10 a.m.**  
**Riding Horse Sale Sat. April 11<sup>th</sup> @ 10 a.m.**

# ORGANIC & CONVENTIONAL DAIRY SALE

Sat. May 9<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM.



**Sale Order:**  
Organic Milking Cows  
Organic Bulls  
Conventional Bulls  
Conventional Milking Cows  
Conventional Springers  
Organic Springers  
Organic Heifers  
Conventional Heifers  
Conventional Calves  
Organic Calves

All Organic stock will need to be accompanied by the farm certification and your stock list with ear tags.

**Receiving Livestock until Sale Time.**  
Call us with your consignments for additional advertising.




10927 N. US 27  
Fountain City IN 47341  
Ph# 1-765-725-2552

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# The Ohio Beef Expo remains the Midwest's premier seedstock destination

By Mike Tanchevski  
Ohio Correspondent

COLUMBUS, Ohio - Hosted by the Ohio Cattlemen's Association (OCA), the 2026 Ohio Beef Expo brought together cattlemen from across the Midwest. As the premier showcase for the state's cattle industry, the Expo featured a seven-breed seedstock sale that grossed \$1,738,250 across 284 live lots, averaging \$6,121 per lot.

While the sale takes place over the course of a day, the foundation for these multi-million-dollar figures was laid months in advance through the efforts of breed sale managers. For these professionals, the Expo is not a weekend event - it is a year-round job that involves recruitment, vetting and strategic marketing. Behind every high-selling bull is a manager who spent the winter looking for high-quality cattle.

Craig Reiter, of PrimeTime AgriMarketing Network Inc., who has managed the Maine-Anjou sale for 24 years, noted that a lot of administrative work happens between January and March, but the quality search is ongoing.

"It's really a year-round process as far as recruiting cattle to the event," Reiter said. "I've got a committed core of breeders that make that sale part of their annual marketing plan. That lets me know I've got a base to build around every year."

That base requires constant cultivation and a discerning eye. Managers act as monitors, assessing the cattle to ensure they meet the pragmatic production standards that buyers have come to trust. Roger Hunker, of Breeders World, who

handled the Aberdeen Angus and Miniature Hereford sales, describes his role in assembling high-quality seedstock.

"Your job then is you're trying to get people to consign," Hunker said. "It's about vetting the cattle and making sure the quality is there to represent the breed. You have to ensure that when a buyer steps into that ring, they are seeing the best of what Ohio and the surrounding regions have to offer."

The behind-the-scenes work also includes marketing the sale. Catalogs, digital advertising, and social media outreach are all aimed at a single goal: getting "butts in the seats." Jeff Winkle, breeds chairman and president of the Ohio Shorthorn Association, noted that the catalog remains the largest single expense for many associations, often costing upward of \$10,000. However, as the 2026 numbers show, that investment is returning dividends.

The Simmental sale was the volume leader this spring, successfully moving 86 lots. Along with the high volume, the breed maintained a \$6,515 average, a testament to the demand for the breed in both commercial and seedstock operations.

The Angus was a high-volume leader as well, moving 41 lots with an average of \$5,984. A highlight for the breed was the top-selling bull from Rains Angus, which commanded \$14,000.

The Maine-Anjou sale achieved an \$8,716 average, accounting for over 34

percent of the entire Expo's total gross. The headline price of the entire event was the \$58,000 (50 percent interest) paid for Moonshine 59N, a bull consigned by Schaeffer Tice and Tolle.

The breed's success is anchored by a "committed core" of approximately 12 breeders who treat the Ohio Beef Expo as a primary annual marketing event. This ensures that the quality remains high and reliable year after year, which builds buyer confidence. In 2026, the Maine-Anjou sale featured 27 total consignors, nearly half of whom were part of this consistent, high-quality core.

"People are making decisions based on value and quality," Reiter said of the high-end bull market. "When the bulls average \$9,000, it's not really a price-driven situation. It's about value. You can use a bull for 4 or 5 years, take him to the sale barn, and get \$4,000 or \$5,000 out of him... the balance is still very much in favor of the buyer."

For breeds like the Miniature Herefords and Aberdeen Angus, success is measured by attracting new interest to the industry. Hunker pointed out how this sale pushed the breed into multiple locations outside of Ohio.

"In the minis, it's cattle sold in seven different states. Aberdeen sold into nine," Hunker said. "It's other breeders or folks that are interested in getting into those breeds."

The Hereford sale saw a balanced demand for both bulls and females, resulting in a consistent \$5,075 average.

Jeff Winkle, breeds chairman and president of the Ohio Shorthorn Association, highlighted how a strategic shift helped the Shorthorn sale reinvigorate its numbers. By moving the sale to a Friday night and adding a social hour, the Shorthorn gross jumped from \$92,000 in 2022 to over \$259,000 in 2026, with 50 lots selling at a \$4,756 average.

This strategic shift helped maintain momentum even as producers' input costs continued to rise. Winkle emphasizes that the Expo serves as a "premium" outlet where producers expect more than just market price - they expect a return on their genetic investment.

"We had to turn our organization around and get it to where it paid," Winkle said. "The easiest way to have a great sale is to have great stuff to sell... If you can get your gross up, your expenses stay down around 10-11 percent."

Ultimately, whether a sale moves 14 lots or 86, the goal of the Ohio Beef Expo remains the same: proving that the OCA event is the premier destination for the Midwest.

"I think the sales at the Ohio Beef Expo are just going to keep getting better," Winkle said. "There's one reason people come to the Expo and bring their stuff. It pays."



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# A bet on meat quality led to new owners for Honey Creek Legacy

By DOUG SCHMITZ  
Iowa Correspondent

FAIRMOUNT, Ind. - The former Honey Creek Legacy of Fairmount, Ind., has been officially launched and renamed Legacy Maker Farms after being acquired April 2 by an investor group led by entrepreneur and Evansville, Ind., native Steven Hershberger, officials announced.

"With this acquisition, we can deliver the quality experience of Legacy Maker products to a much larger customer base," said Hershberger, who will serve as president and CEO. "At Legacy Maker Farms, we pledge to see ourselves as generational stewards of the land, the knife and the plate, and our commitment to the craft extends beyond remarkably good beef.

"Through the cultivation of abso-

lute trust, a culture of care, the premium experience and enduring relationships, Legacy Maker Farms is set to bring a more intelligent, empathetic and innovative approach to serving our customers. There's a traditional way of understanding the consumer. But we're taking a different approach," he added.

According to an April 2 media statement, Legacy Maker Farms owns and operates Legacy Maker Meats, a premium beef brand producing "USDA Prime, all-natural beef through one of the most distinctive agricultural operations in the country."

Ian Baer, founder and CEO at Sooth & Alchemy, a New York City-based strategic marketing company, which represents Legacy Maker Farms, will serve as Legacy Maker Farms chief marketing officer, and also as an advi-

sor to its Board of Directors.

He told Farm World that Hershberger acquired Legacy Maker Farms because "the dry-aged prime beef was simply the best he'd ever tasted, and virtually no one outside Indiana knew it existed.

"With his background in consumer products and technology, Steve knew that, with the right team and brand, a 150-year-old, regeneratively-farmed Indiana operation could reach the restaurant, retail, and consumer customers it deserves, nationally," he said.

Hershberger told Farm World a friend introduced him to one of the previous owners of Honey Creek Legacy who was looking to bring on a new investor, and wanted him to see the operation.

In fact, Hershberger said the previous owner would write him a \$1,000 check and fill his truck with product if he came up, tried it, and did not agree that it was the finest beef he'd ever had in his life: "I've had beef in Argentina, Japan, across Europe, and in Texas at the Steak Cookoff Championships in Hico. I've paid \$200 a pound for Japanese Wagyu. So, his claim was bold.

"I went to collect my \$1,000 and truck full of beef," he said. "At that table, sampling four products from hamburgers to tri-tips to a Bavette to a Ribeye, I indeed had the finest tasting beef I had ever had." Tri-tips are tender, triangular-shaped cuts of beef from the bottom sirloin, often called the 'California cut.'

Hershberger said he then asked the previous owner why he wanted to sell: "He explained that the company had struggled to find any degree of success. He told me, 'We are cattlemen, not food experts. We don't know CPG (consumer-packaged goods), we don't know retail, we don't know data,' he said.

"We don't know manufacturing, and we don't know how to scale a business. We don't understand brands. You do," Hershberger added. "That is how it all began. I know how to build, so it resonated deeply. I also like to make tangible things that bring people together."

Baer said the rebrand reflects what the product truly is: heritage cattle, carbon-negative production, "and a level of craft the commercial beef industry abandoned decades ago. Legacy Maker Farms says it all. Our mission is to set a new standard for American premium beef, one that is good for the land, honest about how it's made, and worth every dollar it costs."

He added the new beef brand (Legacy Maker Meats) is also a platform for delivering a message essential to Hershberger: How Legacy Maker Farms can use the rituals and experiences surrounding food to rediscover the value and importance of an analog human-to-human connection and communication.

"That's why one of the brand's core values is the importance of embracing balanced, healthier approaches across all aspects of life, including nutrition," he said. An analog is a person or thing seen as comparable to another.

He said Legacy Maker Farms has partnered with Sooth and their award-winning proprietary AI (artificial intelligence) system, Emotional Logic Interface (ELI), to integrate customer insights directly into product development, production, and brand experience: "Rather than guessing what our customers want, ELI gives us assurance that we know exactly what they need and expect from us every time.

"Our partnership with Steve and the Legacy Maker team illustrates why I started Sooth, and why we built ELI," he said in the media statement. "Most companies develop products first, then position them as best they can, working from limited, often inaccurate data and hoping for the best. That's a bad bet, and why most product marketing and new brand launches fail. ELI flips the model."

He said every product and marketing decision Legacy Maker makes will be grounded in "verified, predictive intelligence about what customers actually respond to. When a brand's entire experience, from product to packaging and marketing, is built on that foundation, it works for the customer, not the other way around. We're honored to be part of this launch."

Hershberger said, "ELI sits at the nexus between consumers' hearts and wallets, providing powerful insight into their needs, wants and purchasing decisions. With our marketing, product and broader growth strategy all guided by ELI and Sooth, our goal is to reshape what it means to be a food and beverage company that serves both commercial and consumer customers."

As far as how his new venture all relates to farmers, he also told Farm World, "We have much to learn from farmers, and that is a key part of our message, and our commitment to the land and the work we do at Legacy Maker Farms. Farmers know how to do the hard work. They're creative by necessity. Patient by nature. There's no instant gratification in farming, and that builds something in a person that's increasingly rare."

Citing a quote from an unknown author, he said, "A man asked a farmer why his crops grew so beautifully. The farmer said, 'I don't force them to grow. I simply remove what stops them.' That's the philosophy we're bringing to Legacy Maker Farms. The product is already exceptional. Our job is to remove what's been stopping it from reaching the people who deserve to experience it."

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# Farm equipment moved quickly at Dick Coulter liquidation auction

By William Flood  
Ohio Correspondent

NORTH BRANCH, Mich. - On March 31, Miedema Auctioneering held a retirement liquidation auction for agricultural equipment dealer Dick Coulter Inc. Founded in 1969 and owned since 1978 by Roger Blumerich and Thomas Bates, the dealership has served area farmers for more than 50 years. A total of 441 items were offered online through the Orbitbid platform, including tractors, combines, planting and harvesting equipment, and parts and accessories.

A dozen modern-era tractors, most equipped with loaders, were offered at the auction. Leading the lineup was a 2021 Massey Ferguson 941X 4WD loader tractor in good operating condition with 957 hours that brought \$60,750. It featured an 82-inch bucket, manual quick attach, 540 PTO, 2-point lift arms, two hydraulic remotes, joystick loader controls, dual side cab doors, heat, A/C, AM/FM stereo, buddy seat, 340/85R24 front tires, and 420/85R34 rears.

Next in line was a 2019 New Holland Work Master 105 4WD, with 763.7 hours. It was outfitted with a 632TL loader, 80-inch bucket, manual quick attach, 540 PTO, 2-point lift, three hydraulic remotes, joystick loader controls, dual side cab doors, buddy seat, heat, A/C, stereo, 3.6-24 front tires, and 16.9-34 rears with four 110-pound rear wheel weights. It hammered at \$46,000.

Among the other tractors was a 2023 Massey Ferguson GC1723 4WD in good operating condition, showing only 9.4 hours on its digital meter, grabbed for \$13,400. It was equipped with a 48-inch bucket, 3-point hitch, ROPS, hydrostatic transmission, and 5-foot mowing deck. Another loader, an operating 2003 John Deere 5420 4WD with undisclosed hours due to a broken display, changed hands for \$16,800. It had a 73-inch bucket, 540 PTO, self-leveling, joystick controls, and two hydraulic remotes. Later, a diesel Ford 6640 Power Star SLE 4WD with 4,222 hours on the mechanical meter and 332 on a digital meter went for \$9,150. While requiring some work - including needing a new door and hydraulics refurbishment - it was nicely outfitted with items like a Quicke Q40 bucket attachment, pusher bar, 3-point hitch, hydraulic controls, hydrostatic transmission, front wiper, manual opening rear window, and AM/FM stereo in the cab.

A selection of antique and vintage tractors, all for parts or restoration, drew their share of attention. They were led by a late 1950s-early 60s Allis-Chalmers D14 2WD that reached \$1,025. It had a 4-cylinder gas engine, 540 PTO, one hydraulic remote, 2-point lift arms, and 13.6-26 rear tires. Another Allis-Chalmers - an antique crank-start 4-cylinder gas tractor with 42-inch solid rear wheels with rubber pads and 30-inch steel front wheels - bid to \$850. It offered a 540 PTO and rear hitch. A bid of \$505 scored a 1920s-30s-era crank-start Fordson 4-cylinder gas antique tractor with 42-inch steel rear wheels and 30-inch steel front wheels.

Seven combines were available. Leading the category was a good-running 2009 Allis-Chalmers AGCO Gleaner A-76 4WD with 1,790 engine hours and 1,245 separator hours, and a dual chaff spreader, which landed \$40,750. An

Allis-Chalmers Gleaner M3 4WD rig with 5,474 engine hours and undisclosed separator hours hit \$5,250. It was equipped with a straw chopper, cab heat/AC, 30.5L-32 front tires, and 14.9-24 rears. Two salvage units rounded out the category: an Allis-Chalmers/Gleaner corn-soybean special combine with 18.4-30 front tires and damaged 11L-16 rear tires, and an AGCO/Gleaner R-52, sold for \$470 and \$225, respectively.

There were dozens of lots with assorted agricultural machinery and attachments. Among them were more than a dozen balers. They ranged from parts machines like a Vicon RP1210 round baler with a 56-inch pickup head that went for \$115, to a 2015 New Holland Roll Belt 450 silage special round baler with net and twine wrap, a 76-inch pickup head, and monitor, that rose to \$22,400.

Other machinery included a like-new Landoll/Brillion XL28-XL series cultipacker that realized \$25,700. It was outfitted with 28-foot optional width rollers, 13-foot main pulverizer, crank-style landing gear, hydraulic operation, pin-style hitch, 11L-15SL tires, and 20-inch notched wheels with scrapers. Coming close at \$22,300 was a 2022 New Holland 210 pull-type Discbine with 10-foot wide cut and rubber roller hay conditioners. Bids hit \$18,300 on a 2014 Gleaner 9250 35-foot grain head with shaft drive and an Advanced AWS-2000 wind reel. It was in working order but had some broken teeth and did not include the header cart.

At the other end of the bidding spectrum were items like a good-condition Gleaner 8000 25-foot grain head, which went for \$1,550, a new Land Pride 4-foot, 4-tine box scraper with 3-point

(Liquid Auction continued on page 11)



Above: Dozens of lots of tractor and machinery tires were available, including this set of 10-bolt Firestone 520/85R42 combine front duals, which reached \$6,150.





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**Above:** The auction's high of \$60,750 went for a well-equipped 2021 Massey Ferguson 5711 4WD loader tractor.

## Liquidation Auction

FROM PAGE 10

hitch for \$710, and a parts/repair Allis-Chalmers 315 14-foot grain head with steel and plastic teeth (some broken) for \$150.

There were also hundreds of lots containing various parts and accessories. Tire offerings were numerous, with plenty selling in the \$5-\$10 range, including a pair of used Firestone 18.4-34 clamp-on duals, weather-checked, one showing a sidewall slice, but both mounted on solid rims. Taking the higher end

was a set of Firestone 520/85R42 combine front duals with 10-bolt rims that sold for an impressive \$6,150.

Other parts and accessories included a new-old-stock 18-inch auger with a 2-inch hex-head adapter, which left for \$825. A new but opened 9-by-17-foot gravity wagon tarp, fitting Killbros 1065, Unverferth 630, and Parker 605 wagons, went for \$420, and a set of used 17.5-by-82-inch skid steer tracks brought a modest \$5.

For information on upcoming Miedema auctions, visit: [www.miedemauctioneering.com](http://www.miedemauctioneering.com)

**Below:** One of several antique and vintage tractors was this crank-start Allis-Chalmers model, which sold for \$850.



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# Mobile ag classroom helps students learn how plants grow

By DOUG SCHMITZ  
Iowa Correspondent

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa - A large mobile classroom - hosted by the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation - has been traveling for the past nine weeks, bringing agricultural education on wheels to an estimated 4,200 students in 45 Iowa schools in 14 of the state's 99 counties at no cost.

"Agriculture provides real-world context for science and other core subjects students are learning in the classroom," said Kelly Foss, the foundation's executive director in West Des Moines, in a March 27 media statement. "When students step inside the Seed Survivor classroom, science comes to life. They see how Iowa agriculture impacts their daily lives while building curiosity about plant science and future careers."

The 36-foot Nutrien Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom - a truck and trailer unit, which is handicap accessible and includes an entry and exit door - gives elementary and middle school students a chance to learn how plants grow and how agriculture connects to the food they eat each day, teaching students about plant science through several hands-on learning stations.

These include stations with interactive displays, seed planting tables, and virtual reality games that help students understand how plants grow, officials added. Students also learn how agriculture is connected to their daily lives through food and other products. A maximum of 30 students can participate in the display at one time, and it takes 20 minutes to one hour to complete the activities and presentation, depending on grade level.

Katelyn Maass, Nutrien senior manager of downstream communications, North America Global Communications, headquartered in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, told Farm World Nutrien created Seed Survivor to educate the next generation about the importance of agriculture.

"Nutrien wanted to give back to communities where they operated, and to share their knowledge about what we do best - growing healthy plants," she said. "Nutrien has partnered for many years with agriculture education programs across the U.S., including Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation, united by a shared mission to bring agriculture education into classrooms."

In 2026, Iowa, Tennessee and California became the only three states chosen to host Nutrien's Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom. The program reaches nearly 100,000 students across North America each year, said Megan Lecky, Nutrien program adviser.

Foss told Farm World the Nutrien Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom is one of several foundation projects dedicated to enhancing agricultural literacy in Iowa's classrooms: "For the second year, the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation is partnering with Nutrien to bring this innovative traveling classroom to schools across the state.

"The program is designed for 3rd and 4th grade students and offers a dynamic introduction to plant science and agriculture, connecting classroom learning to the real world in a fun and hands-on way," she said.

She said the name "Seed Survivor" truly captures the spirit of the program: helping students discover what plants need to thrive and survive.

"The curriculum is rich with interactive experiences: inside the mobile classroom, students rotate through stations that include multimedia games, virtual reality, and talking walls, all focused on plant nutrients and crop growth," she said. "Each student also plants a sunflower seed to take home, continuing their learning experience beyond the classroom."

She said all the resources, materials and curriculum for the Seed Survivor tour



**Above:** The Nutrien Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom program (pictured inside) reaches up to 100,000 students across North America each year, according to Megan Lecky, Nutrien program adviser. (courtesy of Nutrien)

across Iowa are provided free to schools, thanks to the foundation's agriculture literacy partnership with Nutrien.

"In addition to the Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom program, the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation offers free year-round programs, resources and support to K-12 educators, inspiring the teaching

of science, math, social studies, language arts, nutrition, and career and technical education through the lens of agriculture," she said.

She added the Iowa Agriculture Literacy Foundation was developed in 2014 and reaches all corners of the state, with a coalition of supporters and agricultural

stakeholders, including Iowa Agriculture in the Classroom, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, the Iowa Corn Growers Association, the Iowa Soybean Association, the Iowa Pork Producers Association, the Iowa Beef Industry Council and others committed to "strengthening agricultural literacy across Iowa."

"After the 2026 nine-week tour wraps up, we'll evaluate its impact, and explore possibilities for future tours in 2027, and beyond," she said.

In Tennessee, the Nutrien Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom program is promoted internally through local Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation Women's Leadership Committees and Young Farmer & Ranchers, according to Chris Fleming, Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation associate director of special programs and Tennessee Agriculture in the Classroom program leader.

"It is a challenge offering a program statewide with only one unit," he told Farm World. "The process also limits the advertising and promoting the trailer to Nutrien retail store service areas, first. The Tennessee Farm Bureau's Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom hosts the 'Seed Survivor,' along with Nutrien."

"This year, we concentrated on counties mainly in the eastern part of our

**(Mobile Ag Classrooms continued on page 13)**

<b>2004 Gehl DL10L-44</b> , EROPS w/Heat, Missing Upper Door, JD Dsl. 4 Spd., PS, 10K Capacity, 44" Reach, Foam Filled Tires, 48" Forks, Work Rdy... \$26,500	<b>2015 Sunflower 5056-45 Field Cultivator</b> , 45' VG 9" Sweeps, 3 Bar Spike, Drag w/Baskets, Shank Protectors, Very Nice... \$39,500	2008 Case IH ADX 2230, Cart Fill Auger, Stored Inside, Good Condition... \$7,450	McFarlane 45' Drag Cart, 8 Bar, Hyd. Fold, Good Spikes... \$6,450	2013 Case IH Magnum 290, CAH, PS, 3 Pt., PTO, 2200 Hrs., Very Nice, 1 Owner Tractor, Has Been Deleted... \$134,500
2014 CASE IH 1255, 24-30 Bulk Fill, Clean Sweeps, 20/20 Gen 2 Monitor, Cable Drives w/ Elec. Shutoffs, Insecticide, Completely Rebuilt, Field Ready, Local Farmer... \$49,500	<b>2015 EZ-LOAD 4B</b> , 4 Box Tender, Tandem Axle, Lo-Pro, Honda Engine, Good Condition... \$12,500	DMI 50' Crumbler, Very Good Condition, Hydraulic Fold... \$6,950	2005 JD 1790, 16/32 No-Till Bulk Fill, 20/20 Mon., Yetter Twister Closing Wheels, Press Wheels, Pneumatic Down Pressure, CCS Seed Delivery, Vac, Metering Markers, Good Cond., Field Rdy... \$36,500	<b>2014 New Holland T6-110</b> , CAH, Diamond 3 Blade Boom, 2158 Hrs., 3 Pt., PTO, 2 Rem., 18.4x34 Tires, Low Hrs., Extra Set New Blades, Work Ready... \$44,500
<b>Massey Ferguson 175 Loader Tractor</b> , Gas, WF, 3 Pt., PTO, New 18.4x30 Tires... \$4,950	2012 Case IH Tigermate 200, 50' 5-Bar Harrow, New Sweeps, Paint Slightly Faded, No Welds, Work Ready... \$24,500	<b>2016 Landoll 7832-35</b> , High Speed Disc, 3 Section Single Fold Frame, 24" Fronts, 21.5" Rears, Wing Gauge Wheels, Drawbar Hitch, Steel Spring Roller On Rear, Field Ready \$57,500	Case IH 110 45' Crumbler, Good Condition, Field Ready... \$7,450	Case 870 Diesel, WF, 3 Pt. PTO, Runs and Drives, All Original... \$5,450
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2011 JD 9330 5956 Mi., CAH, PS, PTO, 4 Rem., 480/50 Michelin Tires w/Duals, Very Nice, 2 Owner Tractor... \$128,500	<b>2011 CIH 1250, 24-30 Planter</b> , Open Center Gauge Wheels, LG 1000 PTO, Pump, 6" Closing Discs, Bulk Fill, New Seed Delivery Hoses Being Installed, Field Ready... \$24,500	CIH 5500 Drill, 30' Wide, 15" Spring, Front Fold, Fold Control Box, Press Wheels, Markers, Requires 3 Set of Remotes, Nice Original, Field Ready... \$14,500	<b>2016 John Deere 8345RT</b> CAH, IVT, 3 Pt., 4 Remotes, New 18" Tracks, Very Nice... \$99,500	<b>1950 John Deere A</b> NF, Gas, Draw Bar, Very Sharp... \$3,450



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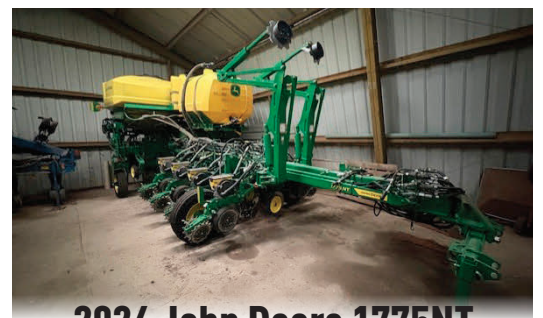
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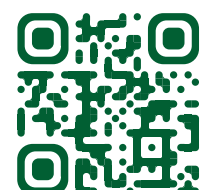
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# Antitrust lawsuit filed against some U.S. fertilizer companies citing price issues

By **DOUG SCHMITZ**  
Iowa Correspondent

NEW YORK CITY - An antitrust class action lawsuit was recently filed against several major U.S. fertilizer companies, alleging these companies conspired to fix, raise and maintain prices for critical agricultural fertilizers, forcing U.S. farmers to pay artificially inflated prices, according to the complaint.

Filed in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado in March, the lawsuit, named Union Line Farms, Inc. (of Hopkinson, Iowa) v. The Mosaic Co., alleged "a coordinated scheme to restrain competition in the markets for nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (potash) fertilizers, collectively known as NPK fertilizers." The lawsuit was filed by DiCello Levitt, of New York City, along with co-counsel Olson Grimsley Kawanabe Hinchcliff & Murray, LLC, of Denver, Colo.

The lawsuit names The Mosaic Co., of Tampa, Fla.; Nutrien, Ltd., of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada; Nutrien Ag Solutions, Inc., of Loveland, Colo.; CF Industries Holdings, Inc., CF Industries, Inc. and CF Industries Nitrogen, LLC, all of Northbrook, Ill.; Koch Agronomic Services, LLC, of Wichita, Kan.; Yara International ASA, of Oslo, Norway; Yara North America, Inc., of Tampa, Fla.; and Canpotex, Ltd., of Saskatoon.

"Most people will never think about the cost of fertilizer, but American farmers live with it every day," said Greg Ascioffa, partner and chair of DiCello Levitt's Antitrust and Competition Litigation Practice, in a March 17 media statement.

"When prices for an essential input are artificially inflated, the impact falls squarely on farmers and ripples across the food system," he

added. "This case is about restoring competition in a market that is foundational to American agriculture."

According to the complaint, during the 2021-2022 price spike, "U.S. farmers paid more than 60 percent higher prices for fertilizer inputs - an increase that added an estimated \$128,000 in costs per farm in 2022 - while defendants reported record profits," the DiCello Levitt media statement said.

In addition, the lawsuit alleged that "fertilizer prices soared far beyond historical norms and remained elevated even after defendants' claimed justifications - such as global supply disruptions and increased input costs - had subsided."

While declining to specifically address the collusion allegations in the lawsuit, Veronica Nigh, chief economist with The Fertilizer Institute in Arlington, Va., told Farm World, "The Fertilizer Institute strongly supports expansion of domestic fertilizer production capacity in order to strengthen supply chain reliability and support farmers."

"Building on the recent designation of phosphate and potash as critical minerals and congressional action on important reforms to the federal permitting process, Washington can help strengthen the domestic fertilizer industry and support U.S. farmers through policy actions that meaningfully expand domestic fertilizer production, accelerate adoption of fertilizer innovations, enhance the most efficient use of fertilizer by farmers, and support U.S. food and energy security," she said.

She said recommended actions to increase U.S. fertilizer production capacity and supply chain reliability are focused on six primary areas of policy that could be achieved through a combination of both congressional

and administrative actions.

She cited the first three as streamlining federal permitting to expand domestic fertilizer production; modernizing energy policy to ensure affordable American natural gas for ammonia production; and accelerating innovation, production and adoption of advanced fertilizer technologies.

She said the last three promote a more open, fair and transparent trade and market environment; enable responsible reuse of mine waste to expand critical minerals supply; and incentivize farmer adoption of 4R nutrient stewardship and nutrient use efficiency technologies.

According to The Fertilizer Institute, 4R nutrient stewardship provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals, such as increased production, increased farmer profitability, enhanced environmental protection, and improved sustainability.

Nigh said, however, meaningful expansion of domestic fertilizer production capacity will require a significant investment of both capital and time, as well as important reforms to the federal permitting process.

"Typical fertilizer production facilities cost \$1-4 billion to build, and millions each year to operate," she added. "The global average to plan, permit and construct new phosphate mining capacity is four to five years. In the U.S., the permitting alone for the most recently developed phosphate mine required 10 years."

Ryan Drollette, Iowa State University farm management specialist, told Farm World, "It would take much deeper investigation to speak to collusion versus supply and demand, and many other things impacting the fertilizer market right now."

## Mobile Ag Classrooms

FROM PAGE 12

state: Knox, Hamilton and Blount utilized the program the most," he added. "It did schools in other counties: Coffee, Maury, Lawrence and Sumner in middle Tennessee because of previous tour success in these areas."

He said the feedback is overwhelmingly positive from students, teachers, parents and community members: "The paid presenters comment about how engaging the program is for the students. It has that wow factor that gains attention, and enough hands-on activities that allow the message to resonate."

"In order to feed a growing population, we are going to have to produce more food on diminishing, suitable, available land," he added. "This is accomplished by managing the sunlight, air, water, soil, and nutrients that plants need. We discuss what Tennessee farmers produce and whether the things Tennessee residents consume are grown locally or imported. This allows students to realize that their lives depend on a modern, healthy agriculture industry."

He said the teachers receive information prior to the visit that allows them to prepare students, and assessments and online games to continue the investigation: "Learning what it takes to grow a couple of plants that they take home is a great way to reinforce the message, and spark interest in careers in agriculture."

He said Laura Purtle, Spring Hill High School science teacher in Columbia, Tenn., is instrumental in working with Nutrien, schools, volunteer presenters, and the mobile classroom bus drivers: "There are a lot of moving parts involved in making a successful tour."

"Finding the schools in locations that have time beyond spring break and testing, local Nutrien support and available farm bureau volunteers is the reason most states are not willing, or invited to host. I am so thankful that Tennessee, Iowa and California have found a way to make this program not only survive, but thrive."

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# Analysis: Strait of Hormuz closure hardest on Brazil's farmers

By **TIM ALEXANDER**  
Illinois Correspondent

URBANA, Ill. – Concerns over global fertilizer and oil supply disruptions, along with elevated prices, continue to weigh on cropping decisions in both the U.S. and Brazil. According to analyses by university agricultural economists, the closure of the Strait of Hormuz – which, at press time, was reportedly under the control of U.S. warships – will result in differing exposure and implications for each nation in relation to the upcoming 2026-27 crop year.

“U.S. farmers face lower overall supply risk than Brazilian farmers,” according to an April 10 article credited to five University of Illinois and one Purdue University agricultural economists. “The U.S. sources a larger share of fertilizer domestically (nitrogen and phosphate) and nearby partners for potash (Canada), limiting exposure to Middle East disruptions. Moreover, much of the fertilizer for the 2026 crop was already purchased and/or applied last fall, before the conflict began.

“For the remaining spring fertilizer needs, application rates can also be adjusted. For nitrogen, optimal application rates suggest that a slight reduction in quantity applied is an option. For potassium and phosphorus, soil testing can identify fields where

reducing application rates won't result in near-term yield loss. Input decisions for the 2027 crop are still a few months away, providing U.S. farmers with greater flexibility to monitor how markets evolve before committing expenditures.”

It's the war's effect on fertilizer purchases for the 2027 cropping season that has most farmers worried. The economists noted that for Brazilian farmers, the impact from their fertilizer decisions on the 2026-27 crop will be felt sooner than in the U.S. Planting of Brazil's first crop will begin in September, but their soybean fertilizer decisions are being made now. Because Brazil has a higher exposure to fertilizer imports than does the U.S., the conflict could not only impact fertilizer purchase decisions, but ultimately Brazil's soybean global competitiveness.

“Despite both being major fertilizer consumers, Brazil and the U.S. face different exposure to global markets. In Mato Grosso (Brazilian Center-West), soybeans are typically planted in the Southern Hemisphere spring (October-November) and harvested in the Southern Hemisphere summer (January-March). A second corn crop (known as “safrinha”) follows, where planting occurs with or right after soy harvesting. Corn is then harvested in June-July,” said the economists, explaining

that this translates into different fertilizer decision windows. “While in the U.S. Midwest, the bulk of fertilizer pricing usually happens during the fall to early spring, decisions for Brazilian farmers are usually concentrated from February to May for soybeans and July-November for corn.”

Brazil's share of consumption met by imports of nitrogen, phosphate and potash (NPK) between 2020 and 2023 was about 90 percent, peaking at about 99 percent in 2023, according to author research. In addition, the U.S. has a greater nitrogen production capacity domestically. For nitrogen, Brazil relies on urea as the main nitrogen fertilizer, primarily from Russia and China, while the U.S. has a more mixed profile, stated study authors Henrique Monaco, Gary W. Schnitkey, Nick Paulson, Andre Vieira Lobo and Joao Arromatte, all of the University of Illinois Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, and Joana Colussi, Center for Commercial Agriculture, Purdue University, in their farmdocDAILY article “The Iran Conflict and Fertilizer Markets: Why Brazil Faces Greater Near-Term Risk than the U.S.”

Certain major crop producing countries appear significantly less exposed to direct Gulf supply losses. According to Global Agriculture, an independent international media platform covering

agri-business, policy, technology and sustainability, Egypt sources only 6.4 percent of its fertilizer imports from the Gulf, while China's share is 9.1 percent.

The news source reported on April 15 that the conflict in the Gulf region is rapidly emerging as a major risk for global agriculture, with fertilizer supply disruptions now adding pressure to already fragile food systems. “While energy markets often dominate attention during geopolitical crises, the effect on fertilizer trade may prove just as significant for farmers, governments and consumers in 2026...the collapse in Gulf exports of oil, gas and fertilizers is already creating shortages and higher costs in countries that depend on the region for essential agricultural inputs. At the same time, nations economically linked to Gulf markets through food exports or labor flows are facing secondary economic stress,” Global Agriculture found.

The April 3 USDA Production Cost Report showed anhydrous ammonia prices averaging \$1,099.50 per ton (\$990-\$1,250) in Illinois, an increase of \$101.17 per ton over the previous bi-weekly report. Potash averaged \$502.50 per ton and urea was selling at around \$852.50 per ton in Illinois, according to the report.

# Protect OHIO looking to fill rural veterinarian void

By **DOUG GRAVES**  
Ohio Correspondent

COLUMBUS, Ohio – There is no shortage of small animal veterinarians in Ohio. That is, those who care for and tend to the needs of dogs, cats and other small domestic pets. There is, however, a dire need for large animal veterinarians.

For years, rural veterinarians have been in short supply in the Buckeye State. Now, Ohio is investing nearly \$30 million over the next two years to grow their presence. Ohio State University's Protect OHIO program will focus on recruiting more small-town vets to fill the gaps.

The USDA lists 10 counties in Ohio with a shortage of private practice veterinarians: Allen, Auglaize, Ashland, Athens, Fairfield, Holmes, Licking, Meigs, Richland and Tuscarawas.

Nearly one-third of Ohio's 88 counties are underserved by veterinarians. That's because the economics are difficult in small towns. Many rural areas don't have enough animal patients to sustain a full-time practice.

The few large animal veterinarians in place must zig zag across county lines to help wean calves and dole out vaccinations. Often, owners of sick livestock have to load their large animals in a trailer and travel for care, and that can be costly for families and risky for animals.

Last fall, Ohio State launched Protect OHIO, a state-funded program devoted to reversing the downward trend. Rustin Moore, dean of the university's College of Veterinary Medicine, said the state couldn't wait much longer for a solution.

“It's not a new concept or a new problem. It's been there, but it's only getting worse,” Moore said.

It's critical, Moore said, because rural veterinarians monitor disease threats in livestock. Veterinarians are the first line of defense against animal-borne illnesses, like bird flu or COVID-19, that have big implications for humans.

“If it's one of those infectious diseases that could spread to people or even wipe out a whole flock or herd of



**Above:** Young veterinarians have no trouble entering the large animal vet workforce, but what's needed to keep them in these rural areas is a volume of work to help generate an adequate income. (courtesy OSU College of Veterinary Medicine)

animals, we really need veterinarians on the ground in those communities,” Moore said.

To combat the shortages, OSU believes recruitment is key.

Protect OHIO promises to enroll 35 more students per class year in OSU's veterinary college. They are reaching out to high schools, FFA advisers and community officials to recruit students with an interest in animal care who live in small towns.

Student loans average around \$170,000 for veterinary school, and that doesn't count undergraduate costs, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Protect OHIO hopes to offset some of that debt through scholarships. Moore said they offered \$900,000 in scholarships last fall and are educating students about loan forgiveness opportunities for veterinarians who set up small-town practices.

In Moore's view, education isn't enough, adding that the program is also conducting town halls across the state to understand what support veterinarians need after they get their degree.

One such town hall-style meeting was April 7 at the university's Wooster

campus. It was the first of several gatherings planned across the state in which college officials will outline the details of Protect OHIO and receive input from producers, veterinarians, extension educators, commodity groups and other rural community partners.

Attendees at the Wooster town hall were largely supportive, although some pointed out perceived shortcomings in the plan. Moore addressed a few of those shortcomings.

“How does the community support them when they come back after graduation? Financially, do they provide a clinic for them to work out of? Do they provide the new veterinarian with an ambulatory vehicle that's stocked?” Moore said. “It doesn't matter how far you may live from a farm, investing in rural veterinarians is a statewide responsibility. We have to do this together.”

Ohio State's College of Veterinary Medicine will add more faculty to increase class sizes from 165 students to 200 students over the next three years. The curriculum will also include more trips off campus to work directly with animals.

Brad Garrison, who runs a veterinary clinic in New Pittsburg in Wayne

County, Ohio, attended the April 7 meeting, said he has to serve multiple counties in north central and northeast Ohio.

“We travel much farther than we ever used to,” Garrison said. “Most of my work used to be centered in Wayne County. Now we work in Wayne, Holmes, Knox, Stark, Lorain, Ashland and Richland counties.”

Then there comes the issue that veterinarians must be able to make a living at their practice. In the areas that are underserved, the livestock and number of farms in those areas is insufficient to support a practice. Moore admits that there must be a volume of work to generate the income a veterinarian needs to support himself. Young veterinarians seem reluctant to work in rural areas, and frequently leave jobs in small towns and sparsely populated counties.

Another attendee of the April 7 gathering was Jeff Bielek, who raises sheep on a farm five miles south of Wooster and sells some of his animals to farmers. Bielek said, “retention of veterinarians is the hardest nut to crack.”

Retention is a problem Moore and other OSU officials are working on. Protect OHIO includes collaborations with agencies such as the Ohio Department of Agriculture and nonprofits like the Farm Journal Foundation to attract and retain more students from rural Ohio communities.

In addition, the college is exploring ways to provide scholarships and other funding to students who pledge to work outside of large cities, said Alecia Naugle, chair of the Department of Veterinary Preventive Medicine at Ohio State.

“We are exploring a state and federal program available to veterinarians willing to work in underserved areas,” Naugle said. “We in Ohio have been leaving that money on the table.”

The next Protect OHIO town hall will be April 29 from 6-8 p.m. at the Kelly Center (McCoy Room) at Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio.

Another town hall gathering will be May 5 from 6-8 p.m. at The Lodge at Hocking College in Nelsonville, Ohio.

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**Above:** Blake Gerard inspects his ready-for-harvest rice field. (photo submitted)



**Above:** Blake Gerard looks down a pipe he installed in a rice field. The pipe, known as a riser, helps control the water level in his rice field. (Lylee Gibbs photo)

## Illinois farmer turned flood prone fields to his advantage with rice

By **DOUG GRAVES**  
Ohio Correspondent

CAIRO, Ill. – Living along the Mississippi River provides fertile ground for farming, but it is also prone to flooding.

Illinois farmer Blake Gerard turned this to his advantage by planting rice. Today, Gerard farms more than 2,500 acres across Alexander and Union counties. He lives in the southernmost tip of Illinois, where the Mississippi River carves its way past miles of fertile river bottom land

“People kept saying you can’t grow rice here,” Gerard said. “I had the crop growing in the field and they’re like ‘you can’t grow rice, we’re in Illinois, they grow rice in elsewhere, but not in Illinois.’”

Gerard saw what others didn’t: abundant water, fertile soil and an opportunity to turn flooding to his advantage. And what pushed Blake to pursue rice in the first place were floods in 1993, 1995 and 1997.

“We wondered what in the world we would do,” he said. “We didn’t have crop insurance back then. I

thought, this is absurd, I have to find something that will grow in water. I thought about growing fish, but it doesn’t work here. Then, the river showed me how to take something that was my nemesis and turn it into my friend.”

Gerard’s journey with rice started in 1990, when, at the age of 20, he left college at Mississippi State to take over the family farm following the death of his father. Transition wasn’t easy, as nearly a decade of floods repeatedly ravaged the family’s traditional crops.

Then, in 1999, Gerard made a bold move that stunned area farmers as well as his own family – he planted his first-ever rice crop in the flood-prone McClure bottoms. He turned to experimentation and planted his first crop of just 40 acres of rice, adding the title of one of the nation’s northernmost rice producers to his resume.

At about the same time, Gerard and his partner, Jim Crain, began growing seed rice and started their

(Rice continued on page 2B)

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**Above:** Blake Gerard looks over the shoulder of his son, Wyatt, as the two repair damaged teeth on the header of their combine. (Lylee Gibbs photo)

## Rice

FROM PAGE 1B

own seed company: River Bend Rice Seed Co., a contract seed company which now supplies rice and soybean seed across more than 10,000 acres annually.

And their key product is Cahokia Rice, a low-glycemic, high-protein strand. They named the new product Cahokia Rice because of the history of the Cahokia tribe of Native Americans who farmed in the area generations ago.

"Cahokia Rice is higher in protein than conventional rice, offering 53 percent more protein per serving," Gerard said. "It has a low glycemic index of 41, making it suitable for diabetics and those monitoring blood sugar levels."

Each growing season, the crop is rotated among the fields to increase soil fertility and support sustainability. The rice crop is harvested at just the right time each year to maximize quality and protein content. Then, rice stalks from the harvest are plowed back into the ground to act as a natural fertilizer for future crops of Cahokia.

Gerard's fields are slightly sloped to hold water about four inches deep on one side and two inches on the other. The agronomic principles are similar to other crops. They converted farm machinery to run on tracks due to the wet ground. The growing season starts around April 1, or whenever the ground reaches 50 degrees.

Harvesting rice is similar to that of corn and soybeans. Once the grains are harvested, it goes to a facility in Cairo to be dried, cleaned, packaged and shipped down the river.

"I grow several different kinds of rice. It's all long-grained rice. And the good thing for us is we can utilize surface water to irrigate our rice and that's very efficient," he said.

Agriculture is a major economic driver in Illinois and 85 percent of the Prairie State is covered in fields, most which grow corn.

"Most people assume that their rice comes from Asia, but in fact, 80 percent of the rice that Americans eat is grown right here in the U.S.," Gerard said.

His Cahokia Rice was first sold in 2018. They have one employee who markets the brand and is actively seeking a distributor to have it in grocery stores. As of today, several restaurants and schools have used his rice.

"Illinois State University and others have picked us up," Gerard said. "Universities tend to like the protein content because many students are self-conscious about what they eat, and many eat vegetarian or vegan. Chefs told me Cahokia Rice is a good fit for them because they are always looking for ways to add protein to things they are already serving. There are others selling high protein rice, but it's an additive, not part of the kernel itself, like ours."

Grown worldwide, rice is a primary staple in half the world's diet. In the U.S., six primary states lead the way in production that accounts for just 2 percent of the rice grown globally, according to the USDA. The USDA doesn't list Illinois as a production state, but Gerard is pioneering the way to make it one.

The USDA reports rice is also grown in Florida, California, Arkansas, Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Missouri, Tennessee, Florida and Oklahoma.

## Kentucky declares April goat month

By DOUG SCHMITZ  
Iowa Correspondent

FRANKFORT, Ky. - Kentucky agriculture leaders, goat producers and industry partners recently gathered at Lakeview Park in Frankfort to officially recognize April as Goat Month across the state, according to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture.

"Goats bring diversity to our agricultural landscape across Kentucky, and more and more farmers are choosing to add them to their livestock," Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Jonathan Shell said. "They add a uniqueness to farm life, but they are also an excellent source of protein and dairy products. This month, we salute all that goats add to our state's agricultural outlook."

Across the United States, goats are commonly raised for dairy and meat production, the department said. Products such as milk, cheese and yogurt remain popular, while goat meat, known as chevon, continues to gain attention among consumers.

Currently, Kentucky is home to approximately 5,800 dairy goats, supporting breeding programs, and the production of natural skin care items like soaps and lotions. The state's industry also adds more than \$3.6 million to Kentucky agricultural receipts, the department said.

Kelley Yates, executive director of the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Association in Winchester, told Farm World, "Goats are one of the most versatile animals on the planet. They provide us with meat, milk, fiber, and forage management."

"Therefore, events like KY Goat Month give us the opportunity to highlight not only their contribution to the state's agriculture economy, but the health benefits of the lean meat, nutritious cheese, luxurious fiber, and growing benefits of milk-based products like soaps and lotions," she added.

She said the association started the celebration with Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture Warren Beeler and the

Kentucky Department of Agriculture with a showmanship show for the department staff on April 1: "We are doing a lot of a Facebook promotion, as well as teaming up with local restaurants like Kentucky Millstone (Restaurant) to host goat specials."

She said the "Secrets of the Bluegrass Chefs" TV show in Louisville is also posting recipes, and the association is highlighting more recipes and facts, as well as a giveaway, on its website at: www.kysheepandgoat.org/ky-goat-month.

According to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, the popularity of goat meat is increasing each year as consumers recognize its benefits. Goat meat is lean with low levels of saturated fat and cholesterol, high levels of iron, and is packed with proteins and vitamins.

Kentucky ranks sixth in the nation for meat goat inventory with 57,000 head, a decrease of 3,000 from the previous year, the department said. Although the number represents a slight decline, Kentucky has held its nationwide ranking consistently for a decade, the department added.

Beth Johnson, DVM, president of the Kentucky Goat Producers Association, also in Winchester, said, in addition to their nutritious value, goats can increase property values. Across the world, she added, farmers use them to combat noxious weeds on their property, promote healthy forests and prevent wildfires.

"Kentucky provides an environment, abundant in grass and forage, that allows goat producers within the state to raise a nutritious meat, milk and/or fiber animal," she said in the department's media statement. "Our goat producers within the state have learned how to care and nurture their animals to overcome some of the management concerns, primarily parasite control."

"During Kentucky Goat Month, we invite everyone to learn more about the benefits and impact that our industry provides through the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Development Office," she added.



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# Strawberry Days Festival returns to Blooms and Berries Farm Market

By Celeste Baumgartner  
Ohio Correspondent

LOVELAND, Ohio – The Strawberry Days Festival returns to Blooms and Berries Farm Market May 16th and runs through the 31st. The festival features live music, train rides, a petting zoo and more. Online tickets are required.

The farm also has U-Pick strawberries available for about three weeks in May. The festival and U-Pick were temporarily halted in 2025. In 2024, a nationwide strawberry disease crippled the industry, and the family took 2025 off to figure out how to deal with the disease.

Following on the heels of strawberry season will come U-Pick blueberries, blackberries, sugar-snap peas and U-Dig potatoes.

Blooms and Berries has everything a farm market can offer. This family-owned business features a garden center, market barn with a full-course kitchen, bakery items, meats and cheese, gifts, and a playground, plus special events happening year-round. Three roadside stands, one at the market and two at other locations, are open June 19 through Labor Day.

The farm market opened in 1999 when Cathy Probst and her late husband, David, came back to the family farm, fired up a 1957 tractor, and planted 5,000 strawberry plants. David passed away in 2005. When Jeff Probst graduated from college, he came back to the farm, and he and Cathy began growing the agritourism aspect. In 2021, Jeff's wife, Emily, left a corporate career, joined the farm team, and began to develop the



**Above:** Blooms and Berries is a family-owned operation. Their Strawberry Festival is coming up in May.

garden center.

This year, for the first time, the family opened a Tulip Trail in late March and ended it in early April. The trail was a half mile walk on a gravel path through stately woods with thousands of tulips of every imaginable shape and color blooming everywhere.

"We tried to do it in 2025, but got the bulbs in the ground too late," said Abby Allen, marketing manager. "We decided to do it again in 2026. Because of the warm spring, the event was a bit shorter than we had hoped."

They had been interested in doing tulips for quite some time, said Jeff Probst, AKA Farmer Jeff. But they knew that tulips had challenges. They can't be too wet; they need to be rotated out every year, and deer are fond of them. Everything tries to kill or eat a tulip.



**Above:** The Tulip Trail was a half mile walk on a gravel path through stately woods with thousands of tulips of every imaginable shape and color blooming everywhere.

They planted about 300,000 bulbs at the end of October and the beginning of November, but some were lost to deer and too much water.

Probst said he would not recommend tulips for someone just getting started in agritourism. Because of the warm spring weather, the window for selling tickets to the trail was short. Had the spring been cooler, the trail could have gone on longer. Friends in the United Kingdom have had five weekends of tulips. Next year, they might move away from the trail idea and have a field instead.

The family invested a lot of work and investment into the tulips,

Probst said. If they had gotten three solid weekends out of selling tickets, this would definitely be a win for every farm out there.

"Our first year has been an amazing experience for guests; from a financial perspective, we are not there yet," he explained. "That is what it takes sometimes when you get into these new projects. It can take a couple of years to get them going, and that's not a problem. We are just glad we were able to be open and sell some tickets. The people who came had a good time and enjoyed their visit. That's how we are measuring success right now."

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**TRACTORS:** '12 Case-IH Magnum MPWD 340, hrs: 2898, AFT Pro 700, front/rear duals, rears: 46", front/rear weights, quick hitch, hyd: 4 sets, see web for build sheet; Case-IH MX215 MFWD, hrs: 3898, rears: 46" with duals, front weights, quick hitch, hyd: 4 sets, see web for build sheet; '75 IH 1066, hrs: 2203 (believed to be ACTUAL), diff lock, 3-pt, TIGHT ORIGINAL SURVIVOR-Estate owned; '70 Farmall 1456, hrs: 9954, front/rear weights, 3-pt w/quick hitch; '74 JD 4030, hrs: 6378, factory open station, original; F 255 w/MF 236 loader, hrs: 2727, estate owned; '87 Case-IH 585, hrs: 2485; '81 JD 2940, hrs: 5870; '90 MF 231, hrs: 1125; IH 444; JD 2150, hrs: 4958

**LATE MODEL COMPACT TRACTORS:** '22 JD 1025R 4x4 tractor w/JD loader, hrs: 18 (ACTUAL), LIKE NEW; '22 Kubota MX5400 HST 4x4 tractor w/Kubota loader, hrs: 72 (ACTUAL), LIKE NEW; Kubota LX2610 HSD 4x4 tractor w/loader, hrs: 47 (ACTUAL), LIKE NEW; Kubota B2710 HST 4x4 tractor w/loader, hrs: 1528

**VINTAGE TRACTORS:** '56 Farmall 200, FH, restored; '69 IH Cub, loaded; '52 Farmall Cub, original, not running; '60 MM MS, original; MM UB, original; MM UTU LP, original

**TELEHANDLER:** '20 Manitou MLT 630-105 VCP telehandler, hrs: 1314, one-owner, farmer owned, CHA, lift: 6600, height: 20', aux hyd

**FARM/TILLAGE EQUIP:** '23 Kinze 3505 8R30 planter, acres: 53 (ACTUAL-SINCE NEW), KPM III monitor, row markers, liquid fertilizer, net soybean unit, load-ed-LIKE NEW; JD 7200 12R30 planter; '18 JD H480 front end loader (like new); NI 215 PTO manure spreader, SHARP ORIGINAL; NI 362 PTO manure spreader; JD 750 15' drill, 2-owner; JD 630F 30' header; IA 430 30' cart; GB 660 loader, off of JD 4030; '25 Odgen 12' chain harrow; Best Way Field Pro II 60' sprayer; Hardi 4000 90' sprayer; Kilbros 475 grain cart; 3-pt transplanter; Noltz plastic layer; ; 38" tires on JD Sprayer 12-bolt wheels; grain drills; gravity wagons; Chore Boy bulk bin; 9-hole pressed steel duals; discs; 3-pt equipment

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**HAY EQUIP:** '23 Case-IH LB434 LX large square baler, bales: 1441 (one-owner, LIKE NEW); '19 Vermeer 504R Prem round baler, bales: 7700, silage kit, net/twine; '02 Hesston 4790 large square bales, bales: 21K, one-owner, SHARP-well maintained, accumulator; '16 JD 946 MoCo 13' disc mower; JD 820 MoCo 10' sickle mower; Claas Linder 760 25' rotary rake; NH 256 rake; Kuhn 4-basket tedder, one-owner; JD 435 round baler; Claas 2650 8' disc mower; Gehl 454 rake; Hoelscher SS bale accumulator; (5) flatbed wagons

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# Outlook through April 28 calls for warmer temperatures, above normal precipitation

The National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center's outlook through April 28 is calling for leaning above normal temperatures but likely above normal

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

most damaging in wet years when soils are moist, temperatures are cooler and small crops are most vulnerable. One tactic for corn and soybean farmers is

outlook for precipitation. The MSU Enviroweather station at Deerfield recorded the low soil temperature at the 2-inch level for April 14 was 60.2°F, was 56.6°F on April 13, 46.5°F on April 12, and 45°F on April 11. The five-year historical rainfall at this location since March 1 has been 6.4 inches in 2026, 4.85 inches last year, 5.26 inches in 2024, 4.4 inches in 2023 and 2.73 inches in 2022. The five-year degree day totals (base 50°F) for this location since March 1 has been 195.6 GDD in 2026, 109.9 GDD last year, 112.4 GDD in 2024, 100.9 GDD in 2023, 77.7 GDD in 2022 and a five-year average of 119.3 GDD.

to do pre-plant disking or tillage, delay planting and possibly use a slug bait. If possible, avoid using an insecticide seed treatment that kills ground beetles that are slug predators (the good guys). If planting is delayed, the crops might pop up fast when the weather is warmer and crops outgrow the slugs. For anyone really wanting to know, there are three species of slugs in the eastern U.S., the gray garden slug, the marsh slug and the dusky slug.

Soil temperatures affect corn germination as Bob Nielsen of Purdue reminds everyone. Corn needs 115 growing degree days to emerge and if soil temperatures remain just about 50°F for a length of time, corn can take upward of 35 days to emerge. If soil temperatures are a daily average temperature of about 65°F, emergence can occur in seven days or less. The main goal, as former world corn yield recordholder Francis Childs once said at a meeting at Cabela's, is rapid and uniform emergence of corn plants. Once the calendar turns to May, agronomists agree that farmers should plant corn as long as the forecast is favorable and ignore soil temperatures.

Nitrogen has been a hot topic in winter discussions about the price of nitrogen (N) and the price of corn. Emerson Nafziger of Illinois says that today's higher-yielding hybrids take up more N, but this is more than met by faster-growing plants with root systems that are better at taking up N from the soil, either organic or nitrate nitrogen. He says that farmers can have confidence that even modest fertilizer rates, applied properly, will provide a safe N supply for the corn crop, with less cause for concern about whether the crop will get enough N.

Is this the Chinese "Year of the Slug?" MSU's Chris DiFonzo says slugs are fairly field specific, are nocturnal, feed at night or on cloudy days and are

All America Selections (AAS) winners for pollinator friendly gardens or landscapes this year include Zydeco zinnia, Coreopsis SunGlobe, Heliopsis Sole, Nasturtium Baby Series and Sedum Spectacular. These plants have been trialed in gardens across North America to ensure they aren't just beautiful but also withstand heat, humidity, and pests while keeping local bees and butterflies happy.

# Fear of embarrassing photos

I hate George Eastman and his darn cameras. Although French scientist Joseph Nicéphore Niépce is credited with inventing the first camera in 1826, Eastman was the person who you could say "developed" the first commercially successful camera in 1888. Some people called his invention a "roll film box" but Eastman called it Number One Kodak and its successors have tormented me my entire life.

taining the film to Rochester, N.Y., where the film was developed, prints made, the camera was loaded with new film and returned to you along with your photos. So, you can understand why the sighting of a camera back then was a rare occurrence. Fast forward to today and you can hardly turn around without having your picture taken. For an ugly guy like me who has always hated having his picture taken, you can imagine why I spit on the grave of George Eastman.



It's THE PITTS  
By Lee Pitts

To get photos from Eastman's camera, you had to send the camera con-

The eyes are everywhere. Cameras take your picture if you run through an orange/reddish light and the cops send you a ticket in the mail. A guy can't even go into Victoria's Secret to buy a birthday present for his wife without being watched by a camera. You can't even run through your own house half naked after leaving your manure-stained clothes in the mud room as you head for the shower without someone taking your picture that will appear on someone's YouTube page and get a million views.

Sure, I know that all these cameras leering at us can be used for good. I know that Ring cameras have been used to track assassins and arsonists and you can see who is stealing your Amazon packages from miles away, but I'm not sure the benefits outweigh the loss of our freedom and privacy. I've been in embarrassing predic-

(Pitts continued on page 6B)

# KCARD joins USDA's Certified Agricultural Mediation Program

By DOUG SCHMITZ  
Iowa Correspondent

ELIZABETHTOWN, Ky. - The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD) recently joined the USDA's Certified Agricultural Mediation Program, making certified mediation services available to Kentucky farm families for the first time, officials said.

Kentucky had previously been among the few states without a USDA-certified agricultural mediation center, officials added. Through this USDA program funding, KCARD can offer a variety of mediation and related services designed to help farm families resolve challenges, improve communication, and long-term planning at no cost.

Brent Lackey, KCARD executive director, said this certification reflects KCARD's commitment to meeting the needs of Kentucky agriculture, and strengthening support where it matters most: "At KCARD, we continuous-

ly evolve our services to support Kentucky farm families where they need it most. This program represents our commitment to helping producers navigate the future with confidence, and strengthen the long-term vitality of Kentucky agriculture."

According to KCARD, agricultural mediation is a voluntary and confidential process that brings involved parties together with a neutral third party. The goal is to foster productive communication, explore possible solutions, and reach mutually beneficial agreements. While mediation can support parties in reaching an agreement, it does not replace legal counsel, and mediators cannot provide legal advice or draft legal documents, the center added.

Under program guidelines, certified agricultural mediation services are available for a wide range of issues, including agricultural loans, whether made or guaranteed by the USDA, or issued by a third party, and family farm transition and succession plan-

ning, officials said.

Spencer Guinn, KCARD senior business development specialist, told Farm World KCARD has been serving Kentucky farmers for more than 25 years: "Our focus continues to be meeting farmers where they are to help them start, develop, and expand their agricultural businesses, using our one-on-one approach to business planning and financial management."

In recent years, he said, KCARD has made a focused effort to support beginning farmers, serving as mentors for the Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corp. Beginning Farmer Loan Program: "Many loan participants also utilize funding options through the Farm Service Agency, paired with KAFIC programs."

He said KCARD began looking for additional ways to serve this group of producers and found that Kentucky did not have a USDA Certified Agricultural Mediation Program: "This program gave KCARD the opportunity to serve two needs in Kentucky: providing certified mediation for USDA programs and loans, and offering succession planning services to Kentucky producers. KCARD was able to leverage funding from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board as a match and received support from

the Governor's Office to apply as the state's Certified Agricultural Mediation Center," he added.

He said KCARD has worked with USDA program and loan staff to roll out the Kentucky Agricultural Mediation Program in early 2026: "Mediation services will be offered for agricultural loans (USDA and other third parties) and USDA programs, including producers who receive adverse decision letters related to applications, current projects, or loans."

He said the Kentucky Agricultural Mediation Program will also be available for families who have disputes over farmland transition: "The Kentucky Agricultural Mediation Program will be available to individuals who wish to have further conversation about decisions made on their projects or loans, provided services are requested within the appropriate timeline.

"KCARD also launched the Kentucky AgriLegacy Solutions Program (KASP) in December 2025, offering Kentucky producers succession planning services to help transition their farm operations from one generation to the next," he added.

For more information about agricultural mediation, contact KCARD at (859) 417-2592, or e-mail: KASP@kcard.info.

## Pitts

FROM PAGE 5B

aments before and I'm sure you have too where the last thing you wanted was to have someone catch a "Kodak Moment." Like the time I got bucked off the kid's horse. They even have cameras now in the halls of hospitals and I dread being photographed by some peeping Tom while I'm wearing one of those hospital gowns with the gaping hole in the back.

How many prints do you want of you having your arm fully inserted into a cow's rectum? Or dragging a calf to the fire? Or trying to eat one of those six patty hamburgers? I was in the Farm Supply the other day trying to find a new jacket for my wife and I held a frilly one up to my chest to see how big it was and I'm quite confident someone snapped a photo of me trying on wom-

en's wear that they'll use to blackmail me.

The main thing I worry about is being caught on camera doing something that will land me in the hoosegow. I'm not talking about robbing a bank but what if I'm caught on film standing next to shady characters like my congressman, banker or a cow buyer? Will the EPA fine me if some eye in the sky takes a photo of me accidentally spilling a thimble full of diesel on the ground or peeing on an endangered tree when I'm far from the nearest facilities?

I fear the day when I'm using the Porta Potty at a bull sale and one of my traitorous traveling comrades sees the opportunity for a photo op so he opens the door and catches me with my pants down around my ankles and he says, "Say Cheese." And that photo will be on TMZ or all over the internet by nightfall.

## The Anthony Hehl ONLINE ONLY AUCTION

**TRACTORS - EQUIPMENT - ANTIQUES - WOODWORKING SHOP**  
**Bidding Ends: SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 2026 @ 7:00 PM EST**  
**Items Located at: 12827 Minx Rd., LaSalle, MI 48145**

**AUCTIONEER'S NOTE:** Longtime Monroe County tractor collector Anthony Hehl has decided it is time to downsize his collection and has commissioned Brad Neuhart Auctioneers to sell a significant portion of his well-cared-for tractors, along with related machinery, tools, and items no longer needed, via an online

only public auction. Known for his keen eye and appreciation for originality, Anthony built an impressive collection of rare tractors, making this a great opportunity for collectors and enthusiasts.

Bidding will open in mid-April, with items beginning to close on Sunday, April 26, 2026, at 7:00 PM. An in-person preview will be held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Hehl Farm in LaSalle, Michigan. Payment and pickup will take place on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at 12827 Minx Rd., LaSalle, MI 48145.

**TRACTORS:** John Deere 60; Farmall Super W4; Allis Chalmers G w/RARE 4R Planet Jr. Planter - ONE OF THE NICEST ORIGINALS YOU'LL EVER FIND!!!; IH Cub Lo-Boy w/Mower; Allis Chalmers G w/ Disk Plow; Allis Chalmers G w/Belly Mower; RARE Grand Haven CC Tractor; RARE Grand Haven BC Tractor; Gibson Tractor;

**EQUIPMENT/PARTS:** AC G 1b Plow; Land Pride 8' Hyd. Angling Blade; Liberty 3 pt. Backhoe; IH 2b Plow; JD 2b Plow; JD 14' Field Cult.; 10' Crowfoot Packer; NICE MH 8' Disk; 3 Sect. Drag; (2) Buzz Saws; Steel Wheel Wagon; AC B Rear Steel; AC WC Rear Steel; Misc. Steel Wheels; RARE Ford 2n-8n Weather Brake; Farm Truck Bumper; Oliver Sickle Bar Mower; 36' McCurdy Elevator; AC G Parts; RARE John Blue AC G Side Dresser; Howse 7' Blade; Cement Mixer; McD Corn Sheller; 3 pt. Post Hole Digger; 3" & 4" Augers; MORE.

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## AUCTION REAL ESTATE PERSONAL PROPERTY



Selling Real Estate & Personal Property of the Randy Boggs Estate  
Located at 3840 E County Road 20 N.

**NORTH VERNON, IN 47265**

**SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026, 10:00 AM**

**12:00 PM - Real Estate**

**REAL ESTATE:** 13.114 AC w/1942 sq. ft. house. House has 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, 2½ baths, living room w/fireplace, kitchen and dining room, gas furnace, full basement, 40x27 3-car attached garage, 648 sq. ft. in ground pool w/pool house. Also includes a 640 sq. ft. building previously used as a residence with kitchen, living room, 1 bedroom and 1 bath with central air. Property has an approximately 3000 sq. ft. metal building with 4 overhead doors and loft and a 20x24 metal building.

**TOOLS & MISC.:** Miller 250 Arc Welder; Excello Mill; Craftsman jig saw; Topro meat band saw; Yale 2 ton hoist; Auto crane; 2-5 ton chain hoist; Acro grease gun; floor jack; Magnum paint sprayer; concrete mixer; 3 sand blasters; engine stand; veg-diesel extruder; Master propane heater; roll around

toolbox; bolt bin; hoist trollies; Craftsman 10" table saw; log chains; Stihl 015 AV chain saw; Ryobi & Craftsman routers; Delta miter saw; Homelite trash pump; Generator; Honda pressure washer; wheelbarrows; drill press; Lynxx electric chain saw; Hilti hammer drill; pipe vise; Metal worktable; cedar shingles; lots of long handle lawn and garden tools; **HOUSEHOLD & MISC.:** Meritz mobility chair; King bed w/bookcase headboard; Whirlpool refrigerator; 4 drawer chest; 5 drawer chest; stand table; safe; 4 chair dinette; loveseat; swivel recliner; dresser base; computer desk; Char-Broil small refrigerator; 2 drawer file cabinet; folding picnic table; lawn chairs; canning jars; cast iron skillet; Kerosene lamps; full-size bed frame; pedestal fan; snow sleds; water skis; child's rocker.

**REAL ESTATE TERMS:** Final bid subject to seller's confirmation. \$10,000 down day of sale. Final closing within 30 days.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY TERMS:** Cash, check, or credit card day of sale.

**SELLER:** Randy Boggs Estate  
Eddie Reitman, Executor  
Alex Zimmerman, Attorney  
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# Illinois 'Pink Hat Farmer' gains international following through social media advocacy

By **TIM ALEXANDER**  
Illinois Correspondent

GALVA, Ill. - As the "Pink Hat Farmer," Kate Huffman of north-central Illinois is an international advocate for women, farm mental health, succession planning and more. Her advocacy, which extends to a worldwide social media presence, earned her the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award in 2025. In addition to her recognition as an Illinois Farm Bureau Young Leader, Huffman was named an Illinois Soybean Association 20 Under 40 Farmer, adding to her numerous accolades since becoming the "Pink Hat Farmer" after a 2018 chance encounter at the supermarket.



"It started as a fun nickname because I was always wearing pink hats. Somebody shouted out at a grocery store 'hey, pink hat farmer,' and it grew out of there to become a platform to promote my life as a female farmer and other female farmers," Huffman said. "I push on topics that may be difficult for most farm families to talk about, too, like succession planning, helping young and beginning farmers get started, mental health, safety on the farm...all of those things are very big passions of mine. (Pink Hat Farmer) has given me a platform that is really worldwide."

Huffman's social media pages - TikTok, Instagram and Facebook - are followed by thousands of people from the U.S. and other nations. Her website (<https://pinkhatfarmer.com>), which serves as a home base for her outreach and mission statement, is visited by thousands more.

Her international profile is extend-

**Above:** Pink Hat Farmer Kate Huffman, of Galva, Ill., has gained an international following through her social media advocacy for women in agriculture, farm mental health and other sensitive topics. She is working to convert her family's sesquicentennial farm to an agritourism destination for RV travelers affiliated with Harvest Homes.

ed through Huffman's affiliation with Harvest Hosts (<https://www.harvesthosts.com>), a network of farms, wineries and other locations aligned to offer a safe and unique RV camping experience. Huffman converted a parcel of her sixth-generation sesquicentennial farm to a small RV campground with water and electric hookups for the purpose of accommodating foreign Harvest Hosts travelers.

"People come from all over the world and stay on my farm. Our site for Harvest Hosts is on a spot where I have a grain bin mural painted in 2022 of



**Above:** Pink Hat Farmer Kate Huffman, of Galva, Ill., hired a female artist to paint her "pink hat" logo on a silo located on her Henry County farm. The mural, which presides over a Harvest Home RV campground, was created in 2022.

a pink hat. It's become a local monument, and to date we've had over 160 different guests, including from Bermuda and Canada," Huffman said.

Profits from Pink Hat Farmer merchandise, available strictly through the website, are poured back into the farm's Harvest Hosts campground. Among the plans for the campground are a storefront and area for educational programs. "I never thought I'd be this person, but I plan to bring agritourism to my home farm and just continue to share it in real-life time," Huffman said.

She purchased her family's farm outside Galva in 2024, and can trace her family's presence on the farm back

to 1867. Originally purchased from the Bishop Hill Colony, the property was the original outpost farm of Swedish immigrants who occupied the area from the 1840s. Huffman has spent much of her time since the purchase working to improve the property and outbuildings.

In her January AFBF presentation, Huffman used her 25 minutes to shed light on a trio of issues including her concern over the USDA's Farm Service Agency's "inconsistencies" regarding loan processes, along with farm mental health and carbon sequestration. She also discussed her advocacy efforts for

(Pink hat continued on page 9B)

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# 2026 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey projects average costs

By **DOUG SCHMITZ**  
Iowa Correspondent

NASHUA, Iowa - According to Iowa State University Extension, the 2026 Iowa Farm Custom Rate Survey provides projected average costs for custom farming operations - such as planting, harvesting and spraying - based on surveys from Iowa farmers and operators.

The newly released survey includes averages and ranges for common farming tasks and machinery rent in Iowa, said Ann Johanns, program specialist, farm management, at Iowa State's Borlaug Learning Center in Nashua in northeast Iowa.

"It helps set fair, current-year rates for machinery hiring, with 2026 data showing increases of up to 8.5 percent for certain operations, including new categories like drone spraying and side-dressing anhydrous ammonia," she said. "Rates are affected by factors such as fuel prices, operator skill, field size and machinery availability."

The survey also noted farm tasks range from field preparation to planting to harvest, with cost data that reflects the average, median and range for each task. Rental rates for select machinery, grain bins and hourly machinery operating wages are also included.

Conducted by Iowa State Extension and Outreach for over 50 years, the survey's 2026 results are based on 205 responses and 4,698 custom rates provided by Iowa farmers, custom operators and farm managers. The survey indicated 32 percent of respondents perform custom work, 20 percent hire work done, 47 percent indicated doing both, and 2 percent did not indicate whether they perform or hire custom work.

According to William Edwards, a retired Iowa State Extension economist, custom work is an agricultural arrangement where a landowner hires a contractor (the custom operator) to perform specific field operations - such as tillage, planting or harvesting - for a set fee, usually per acre or hour.

"The landowner retains ownership of the crop, pays all input costs (i.e., seed, fertilizer), and manages the market risks, while the operator provides machinery, labor and expertise," he said.

Johanns said, "This survey report is heavily used by Iowans and across the Midwest, as the 116,000 downloads in the past year show. The 2026 survey report shows increases across all categories of operations surveyed, ranging from 0.3 percent for bin and machinery rental rates, to 8.5 percent for pre-harvest operations, which include tillage, spraying, fertilizer application and planting."

She added the custom rate survey is intended to serve as a guide. Actual custom rates may vary according to the availability of machinery in each area, timeliness, operator skill, field size and shape, crop conditions, and the performance characteristics of the machine being used.

She told Farm World the survey's focus is to provide clarity and a starting point for custom rate discussions, for those hiring custom work done, and those performing custom work: "The survey shines a light on the range of costs for various operations, and encourages awareness in how important it is to know individual costs as they likely fall somewhere within the ranges shown in the survey, but to what end is going to depend on the situation."

She said the cost of machinery in-

cludes ownership (fixed) costs that are incurred regardless of how much the machinery is used (factoring in depreciation, interest, insurance and housing); and operating (variable) costs such as fuel, repairs and maintenance, and labor that are directly tied to acres, or hours the equipment is used.

"Operator skill and field size could also impact those costs, considering it could

directly impact repair costs, or time in the field, as examples," she said. "Custom rates need to account for these costs because if a custom rate isn't covering the cost of the machinery and operator, that custom operator is losing money."

She added, "The survey provides transparency and a starting point, but it is imperative to know your own machinery costs."

## Pink Hat

FROM PAGE 8B

agriculture as Pink Hat Farmer at the local, state, national and international levels.

"It was an incredible opportunity to not only share my passions again, but also to get my voice out on a national level and do interviews like these where we can touch on these topics that maybe a lot of people don't want to talk about," Huffman said.

While her social media posts and public-facing advocacy may seem to primarily target farmers, Huffman's true target audience is the consumer base, she told Farm World. "As farmers we are 1 percent of the population trying to feed the rest of the world, and there are a lot of people out there that think we are poisoning the land, poisoning the food that we are growing, and that's not the case at all. So just really giving the consumer a boots-on-the-ground view, easing those concerns and having those conversations is my primary reach," she said.

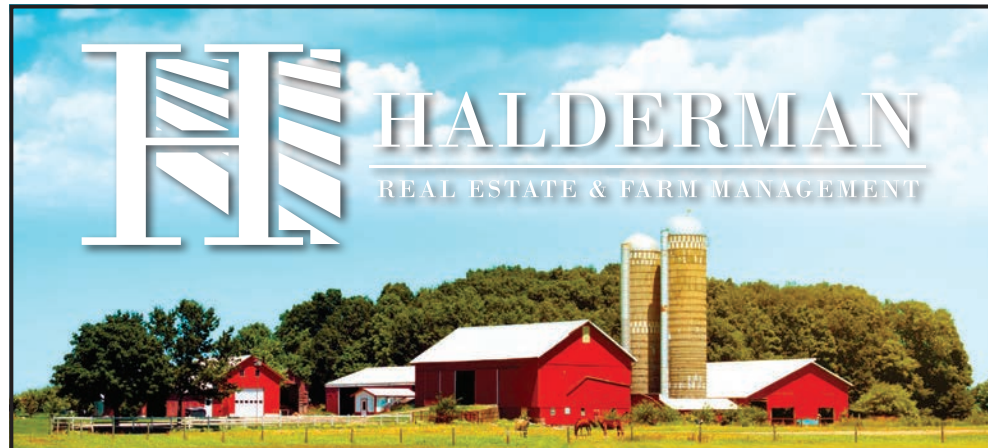
Huffman's social media platform has recently allowed her to share her perspective on the war in Iran and its effects on fuel and fertilizer costs at the farm gate. Though she's tackling tough, sensitive topics, the Pink Hat



**Above:** Pink Hat Farmer Kate Huffman, a Henry County, Illinois, farmer, is pictured with her parents on their Galva farm property.

Farmer plans to continue to speak her mind when it comes to issues affecting the farm community.

"I think this is a great opportunity. I think the pros outweigh the cons when it comes to being a social media influencer, if you will, promoting agriculture," she said. "I'm honored and blessed to have this role."



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## DIRR NURSERY/CHRISTMAS TREE FARM RETIREMENT AUCTION

**When: SATURDAY, MAY 2ND, 2026 @ 10:00 AM**

**Where: 6066 Goshen Rd., GOSHEN, OH 45122**

**TRACTORS, SKID STEER, ATTACHMENTS, & EQUIPMENT:** Kubota L 3750 tractor, 4wd w/1460 hrs. & loader; John Deere 420 high crop tractor, newer tires, front weights, 3 pt. hitch; Allis Chalmers 5040 tractor, 2wd, newer tires, diesel, runs, w/3967 hrs.; (2) Bungartz tractors, 2wd, diesel, 1 runs/1parts; Farmall Cub tractor; Lg. Hefty Hi-G boy tractor; Gravelly tractor; Case 1737 Skid Steer; 6 ft. heavy-duty grader blade; carry all; pull type trailer mounted hyd. tree spade; 5 ft. bush hog; 3 pt. post hole digger; skid steer tracks; hay wagon; 2 bottom plows; (2) 6 ft. tillers 3 pt.; plant setter; Levco stump grinder 3 pt. PTO; backhoe attachment for skid steer; skid of suitcase weights; 6 ft. Ford disc; tree spade for skid steer; still more.

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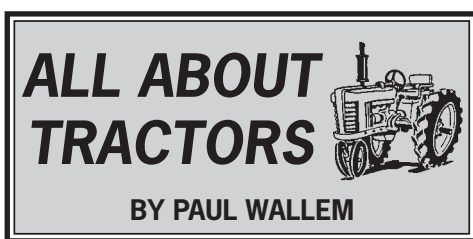
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# New machinery options from Claas, Kubota, JCB, Bobcat, Fendt

This column emphasizes tractors – their history and their use in modern farming. When I heard that Argentina and Brazil (two of our largest export competitors) use a larger percentage of smaller horsepower tractors than we do, I turned to a good friend for answers as to why. Dale Simpson retired as International CNH senior marketing specialist, then began representing a Brazilian ag manufacturer and spent considerable time in Brazil.

Dale explained that different cultures, labor, distances from dealerships, and the used market define the use of smaller tractors and equipment in these South American markets. Plenty of labor allows three or four planters with 100 HP tractors instead of the U.S. use of a



250 HP tractor pulling a 36-row planter. The smaller, simpler equipment allows repairs in the field because dealer service is a long distance away. Also, the market for used trade-ins is entirely small tractors which the smaller farmers can afford. There are no used buyers for large HP equipment.

There is a big split between huge corporate farms (some 500,000 acres) and small operators in Argentina and Brazil.



Above: Pedal tractors pulling contests are increasing.

It's interesting that the largest practices of no-till farming are in these same three countries.

### Claas

New models from several brands have reached the market recently. Claas announced their new Arion 600 series. It's available in 165 and 205 HP with a continuously variable CMAT-IC transmission. Maximum transport speed is 31 MPH. A 4-point suspension claims to provide a smoother ride. Front PTO is offered.

### Kubota

The Grand L70 compact tractor includes three model options for premium, deluxe and cold weather. The multi-function loader joystick allows operators to set cruise control, adjust drive modes, and fine-tune transmission settings, all while completing loader tasks such as moving brush or stocking hay bales.

### JCB

JCB Fastrac 6000 series includes a fully integrated tire inflation management system providing quick access to optimal field and road pressure.

An optional satellite guidance installation comprises two receivers for quicker and more precise line acquisition, more accurate tracking over undulating field surfaces.

### Bobcat

The Bobcat 4500 platform tractor is for feeding livestock, clearing snow, handling materials, grading, backfilling and other tasks. The CT4545 is 45 HP. The CT4558 is 55 HP.

### Fendt

Fendt 800 Vario Gen 5 uses the AGCO Power Core 8,0-liter engine and VarioGrip tight inflation.

### Do your own repairs?

A friend chose to build a heated shop so he could do a better job of maintaining his equipment. He had always called on his dealer to perform repairs.

He started attempting to do those repairs himself, found that he could do more than he thought by studying manuals. He was also doing a much better job of maintenance due to the heated interior. Now he believes the shop will pay for itself.

### Pedal tractor pulls

The Official Pedal Tractor Towing Association of Nebraska is open to children ages 4-12 for a chance to compete for the state championship. Top finishers at the state event qualify to compete at the national championship.

Tractors and sleds are provided by the pull operator. The sled is designed to increase the load while moving forward. The competitor that moves the sled farthest with the heaviest load wins.

Pulls are conducted in other states as well. Nebraska is the largest with 835 entries in 2024 and 791 in 2025. Iowa pulls have the same age requirements requiring age proof for entrants aged 4-12. Ohio features the Buckeye State pedal tractor pull.

Please let me know of other state pulling contests, and I will list them in future issues.

Paul Wallem was raised on an Illinois dairy farm. He spent 13 years with corporate IH on domestic and foreign assignments. He resigned to own and operate two IH dealerships. He is the author of THE BREAKUP of IH and SUCSESSES & INDUSTRY FIRSTS of IH. See all his books on www.PaulWallem.com. Email your comments to pwallem9@gmail.com.

## ABSOLUTE REAL ESTATE AUCTION

**THURSDAY, APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2026 @ 10:00 AM**

**2 FARMS - FARM 1: 2811 COUNTY ROAD 1110, FANCY FARM, KY**  
**FARM 2: 425 OLD DUBLIN HILL ROAD, FANCY FARM, KY**

**2 Farms - 184± Acres**  
**in 12 Tracts & Combinations**

**Farm 1: Carlisle Co. -130.02 Acres in 11 Tracts - 100.82- Tillable**  
**The Fancy Farm Community**

**Auction Held On Farm 1 - Public Preview Date: Sunday, April 19th - 12-1 PM**

**Well-maintained 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath brick home** offering spacious living, beautiful surroundings, and outstanding versatility. Features include a large kitchen with custom cabinetry and island, open living and dining areas with fireplace, and a comfortable primary suite with en-suite bath. Enjoy additional living space with a bright sunroom, a dedicated laundry area enhances convenience, plus a peaceful setting with mature trees and a covered front porch. A standout feature is the detached garage/recreation building overlooking a pond, complete with deck, covered area, and private dock. Multiple outbuildings, shops, barns, and grain storage provide excellent space for equipment, hobbies, or agricultural use. Additional tract offers even more buildings and functionality.

**A RARE COMBINATION OF COMFORT, WATERFRONT APPEAL, AND USABILITY.**

**PROPERTY HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Spacious home with open living, dining & kitchen layout
- Custom wood cabinetry, large island & ample counter space
- Cozy fireplace and inviting main living areas
- Primary suite with en-suite bath
- Walk-in shower, walk-in tub & large vanity
- Sunroom/enclosed patio with great natural light

**IMMEDIATE PLANTING PRIVILEGES**

**Farm 2: Graves Co.**  
**53.45 Acres in 1 Tract**  
**37.07- Tillable**  
**The Dublin Community**

**WATERFRONT & RECREATION FEATURES:**

- Detached garage/recreation building near pond
- Covered outdoor area & deck overlooking water
- Private dock for fishing and enjoyment

**OUTBUILDINGS & FARM IMPROVEMENTS:**

- Multiple shops and storage buildings
- Detached garage with office/workspace
- Outbuilding w/kitchen area (multi-use potential)
- Barns, grain bin & silo for agricultural use
- Additional tract (Tract 12)
- (Farm 2) 53.45 acres - 37.07 tillable In Dublin, Kentucky - Graves County

The auction shall be conducted in two farms: Farm 1: Tracts 1-11. Farm 2: Tract 12. No combinations between these farms will be combined. The property will be sold in the manner resulting in the highest total sale price. A 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to the final bid and included in the deed transaction sale price. 15% as down payment on the day of the auction with balance in cash at closing on or before 45 days. The down payment may be in the form of cashier's check, personal check, or corporate check. YOUR BIDDING IS NOT CONDITIONAL UPON FINANCING. SO BE SURE YOU HAVE ARRANGED FINANCING, IF NEEDED, AND ARE CAPABLE OF PAYING CASH AT CLOSING. Closing shall take place on or before 30 days from auction date. All 2026 ad valorem taxes will be prorated at closing. SURVEYS: The 4 properties will be sold by a new survey. Buyer will be responsible for 50% of the survey cost. LEAD BASED PAINT: Buyer will be required to sign a lead based paint disclosure waiving the opportunity to conduct a 10 day post sale inspections. Make all inspections prior to the day of sale. IMMEDIATE PLANTING PRIVILEGES.

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# Grade A nonfat dry milk sets record at Chicago Mercantile Exchange

Grade A nonfat dry milk remained the shining star this week at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange after setting a record high last Friday at \$2.1150 per pound. It kept climbing this week and hit \$2.1825 Thursday, another record, and a whopping \$1.01 per pound above a year ago.

Correcting my report from last week, the previous high was \$2.11 per pound on Dec. 27, 2013, and also occurred for 20 consecutive weeks in 2007. High-Ground Dairy says, "The 2026 record feels very different than those markets, as fundamentals were much different. Although production is increasing year-on-year according to Dairy Market News, spot loads are extremely difficult to find, keeping spot prices elevated. Futures remain discounted to CME spot prices, suggesting the market anticipates prices will ease as the product mix changes."

Needless to say, these prices will keep U.S. powder on shore. StoneX broker Dave Kurzawski says the market has "boggled minds so far in 2026. The last third of a bull market is nearly impossible to forecast. But it appears as though the structural issues that helped to tighten the NFDN this year remain in place here in mid-April. The spot market trading at a significant premium to the futures markets is signaling anyone to clear inventories and bring product to market. The rub is there is no incentive to build inventories precisely at the time we need them most. Said another way, we've got to get to the place where the bid for powder dries up."

Cash block Cheddar traded Thursday at \$1.57 per pound, 26.50 cents below this week a year ago. It closed Friday at \$1.5775. The barrels were holding at Friday's close of \$1.5750, 26.50 cents below a year ago.

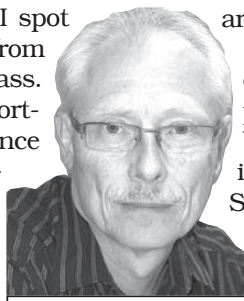
Dairy Market News says milk output is strong in the Central region and spot vol-

umes are plentiful. Class III spot prices ranged mid-week from \$8-under to \$2-under Class. A few cheesemakers reported downtime for maintenance this week and in the coming weeks and were offering spot milk below-Class prices. Cheese production is strong overall however, as some processors ran additional production on the weekends to work through the available volumes of milk. Domestic cheese demand was unchanged and contacts say export interest is steady to higher.

Milk production is plentiful enough in the West to keep cheese production stable and cheese manufacturing is filling contractual orders in steady fashion. But, spot load availability tightened this week. Sellers note quieter domestic sales with an industry conference taking place this week. Demand from international buyers was stronger. Contacts reported neither bearish nor bullish market tones for the week, according to DMN.

Cash butter traded Thursday at \$1.7375 per pound, 60.50 cents below a year ago, and down a penny from its Friday close.

Cream production was unchanged this week in the Mid-west, according to DMN, and contacts said spot loads were becoming more available, but inventories remain somewhat snug. Spot demand from Class II and III processors was steady, but churning interest remains lighter. Butter makers continue to use cream from within their network or contract purchases to run busy schedules. Contacts report softening retail demand but food service sales are steady. Export demand is strong, as U.S. product is competitively priced. Spot purchasers say loads are available, but inventories



**MIELKE MARKET WEEKLY**  
By Lee Mielke

are not excessive, according to DMN.

Western reports say milk and cream production continue to supply more than ample volumes for butter manufacturers and plant intakes are meeting expectations. Spot cream is available, but more dairy commodity manufacturers are pulling on the supply. Class II production is strong, particularly cottage cheese. Churns continue to be active seven days a week. Domestic butter demand varies from steady to strong. Demand from international buyers is strong, but transportation costs are holding some sales activity back, says DMN.

Dry whey closed Thursday at 68 cents per pound, 19.75 cents above a year ago, after closing Friday at 70.50 cents per pound.

Fluid milk sales were down again but the slippage was not as great as the month before. The USDA's latest data showed packaged February sales at 3.360 billion pounds, off 0.4 percent from Feb. 2025, and followed a 2.3 percent drop in January.

Conventional product sales totaled 3.1 billion pounds, down 0.5 percent from a year ago. Organic sales, at 242 million, were up 0.4 percent from a year ago, and represented a typical 7.2 percent of total milk sales in the month.

Whole milk sales totaled 1.2 billion pounds, up 2.9 percent from a year ago, and up 2.2 percent for the two month period. Whole milk represented a typical 36.7 percent of total sales for the month.

Skim milk sales, at 128 million pounds, were down 10.3 percent from a year ago and year to date.

Packaged fluid sales in the 2 month period totaled 7.1 billion pounds, down 1.4 percent from 2025. Conventional product sales totaled 6.6 billion, down 1.3 percent from a year ago. Organic

products, at 503 billion pounds, were down 2.7 percent, but represented 7.1 percent of total milk sales for the year so far.

The figures represent consumption in Federal market orders which account for about 92 percent of total fluid sales in the U.S. About 7.5 percent U.S. fluid sales are consumed in schools.

The USDA's monthly Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlook, issued April 15, mirrored milk price and production projections in the April 9 World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates report.

It stated, "Recent data on dairy cow inventories and weaker-than-expected slaughter support an increase in the expected average number of milk cows in 2026. The dairy herd is projected to peak in the second quarter at 9.615 million head," according to the Outlook, "And gradually decline in the second half of the year. The herd is forecast to average 9.610 million head in 2026, 40,000 more than last month's projection. However, the 2026 forecast for milk per cow was decreased by 35 pounds to 24,485 pounds.

"Domestic butter and cheese are expected to remain price competitive in international markets throughout 2026. With strong export gains across most dairy products in February, forecasts for dairy product exports were revised upward. Higher export volumes are projected for cheese, butter, and dry whole milk.

"Dairy domestic use forecasts were revised downward. On a milk-fat basis, domestic use was forecast at 222.2 billion pounds, 1.2 billion pounds lower than the previous month's projections. On a skim solids basis, domestic disappearance was forecast at 192.1 billion pounds, a 500-million-pound reduction from last month's projections.



## SPRING CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

### SATURDAY MAY 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2026 @ 9:30 AM

RECEIVING EQUIPMENT DAILY 9:00 A.M-6:00 P.M.

MONDAY APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> - WEDNESDAY MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>

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**(3) 2019 FREIGHTLINER CASCADIA DET DD13 450HP ALLISON AUTOMATIC 4000HS TRANS AIR RIDE SUSP P/S A/C 3:70 RATIO 182WB 11X22.5 ALUM BUDDS 74,772 80,627 86,825 MILES . . . . . \$62,500 EACH**



**2016 FREIGHTLINER M2 112 CREW CAB DETROIT DD13 410HP EATON-FULLER FRO 14210C 10SPD TRANSMISSION AIR RIDE SUSPENSION P/S A/C 3:55 RATIO 208WB 11X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS NEW CAPS REAR 192,157 MILES . . . . . \$74,500**



**2016 FREIGHTLINER CORONADO CUMMINS ISX15 485HP 10SPD TRANSMISSION 46,000 AIR RIDE SUSPENSION 14,600 FRONT AXLE P/S A/C POWER WINDOWS & LOCKS ENGINE BRAKE DOUBLE FRAME DUAL STACKS & BREATHERS 180WB 11X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS 559,125 MILES GOOD SPEC'S \$49,500**



**2016 FREIGHTLINER 108 CUMMINS L9 350HP ALLISON 3000HS TRANSMISSION AIR RIDE SUSPENSION P/S A/C 5:29 RATIO 186WB 11X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS FRONT STEEL REAR 325,222 ALLISON AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION . \$45,500**



**2 2015 INTERNATIONAL PROSTAR CUMMINS ISX15 400HP ENGINE BRAKE 10SPD AIR RIDE SUSPENSION P/S A/C POWER WINDOWS & LOCKS HEATED/POWER MIRRORS 175WB 8 NEW CAPS REAR 11X22.5 ALUMINUM WHEELS FRONT 408,922 & 429,835 MILES . \$24,500 EACH**



**2015 FRT M2 CREW CAB CUM ISB 280HP ALLISON 2500RDS AUTOMATIC TRANS AIR RIDE SUSP P/S A/C 250WB 22' FLATBED LIFTGATE 11X22.5 118,976 MILES . . . . . \$49,500**



**2016 FREIGHTLINER M2 112 DETROIT DD13 410HP EATON-FULLER FRO-16210C 10SPD MANUAL TRANSMISSION 46,000 AIR RIDE SUSPENSION 18,000 FRONT AXLE P/S A/C LIFT AXLE 3:73 RATIO 272WB 315X22.5 ALUMINUM FRONT TIRES AND LIFT AXLE 11X22.5 ALUMINUM REAR TIRES 322,913 MILES . . . . . \$64,500**



**2017 FREIGHTLINER 114SD DETROIT DD13 450HP EATON FULLER FRO-15210C TRANSMISSION 46,000 TUFTRAC SUSPENSION 18,000 FRONT AXLE P/S A/C FULL LOCKERS DOUBLE FRAME 4:11 RATIO 288 WHEEL BASE 315X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS FRONT 11X22.5 STEEL BUDDS REAR 388,803 MILES SOUTHERN TRUCK . . . . . \$59,500**



**2 2016 & 1 2019 FREIGHTLINER 108SD CUMMINS ISL 370HP ALLISON 3000RDS TUFTRAC SUSPENSION 20,000 FRT AXLE P/S A/C LIFT AXLE 25' FLATBED 315X22.5 ALUM BUDDS FRT 11X22.5 REAR MILEAGE REAR MILEAGE . . . . . 2016 303,251 \$84,500 . . . . . 2016 210,029 \$88,500 2019 120,159 \$104,500**



**(2) 2017 FREIGHTLINER M2 106 CUMMINS 350HP ALLISON 3000RDS TRANSMISSION 44,000 AIR RIDE SUSPENSION 16,000 FRONT AXLE P/S A/C 5:86 RATIO 270WB 24' FLATBED/DUMP 315X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS FRONT TIRES 11X22.5 ALUMINUM/STEEL REAR TIRES . . . . . 189,573 MILES \$89,500 212,824 MILES \$88,500**



**2018 FREIGHTLINER M2 CREW CAB CUMMINS L9 270HP ALLISON 3000HS TRANSMISSION P/S A/C 5:29 RATIO 290WB 24' FLATBED LIFTGATE 133,350 MILES . . . . . \$89,500**



**2020 FREIGHTLINER M2 106 EXTEND CAB CUMMINS L9 350HP ALLISON 3000RDS TRANSMISSION AIR RIDE SUSPENSION 16,000 FRONT AXLE P/S A/C 5:86 RATIO 2 LIFT AXLE 274 WHEEL 28' FLATBED 315X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS FRONT 11X22.5 ALUMINUM BUDDS OUTSIDE REAR . . . . . \$79,500**