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Significant rain, coupled with cool weather, slows Midwest fieldwork

By **DOUG SCHMITZ**
Iowa Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Significant rain fell in parts of the Corn Belt, and, coupled with cool weather, had slowed Midwest fieldwork, according to the USDA's Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin for April 26 through May 2.

Released May 5, the report said farther west, little, if any, rain fell on the parched central and southern High Plains, maintaining major concerns for drought-stressed rangeland, pastures and winter wheat. The report added Mobridge, S.D., measured a record-setting low (22 degrees Fahrenheit) for May 1, and May 2 featured daily-record lows in Rockford, Ill. (27 degrees), and South Bend, Ind. (28 degrees).

By April 27, the report said, daily records ranged from 2 to 4 inches of rain in locations such as Springfield, Ill., (3.62 inches); Kansas City, Mo., (3.21 inches); Topeka, Kan., (2.78 inches); and Lincoln, Ill., (2.7 inches), which included some hail. On April 28, downpours spread into the South, where daily-record totals reached 3.49 inches in Memphis, Tenn., the report added.

In the USDA's May 4 Crop Progress Report, U.S. corn and soybean planting was ahead of the five-year average, with 38 percent of corn, and 33 percent of soybeans planted. Winter wheat is 49 percent headed, and at 31 percent, good/excellent; 32 percent fair; and 37 percent poor/very poor. Spring wheat is at 32 percent planted, while oat planting is at 63 percent planted.

Justin Glisan, State of Iowa Climatologist at the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, told Farm World drier soils have allowed for quicker planting progress across

the southern and eastern parts of the Corn Belt.

"Early- to mid-April wetness slowed some progress in Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin," he said. "Overall, planting delays are not a major concern yet. Recent temperatures have been cooler than average across much of the Corn Belt. Apart from parts of the eastern Corn Belt, rainfall totals have been below normal over the last week (ending May 2)."

In Indiana, the progress report said corn planted was at 42 percent and emerged at 19 percent. Soybeans planted was at 44 percent and emerged at 20 percent. Winter wheat headed at 14 percent, and winter wheat condition was 2 percent very poor to 13 percent excellent.

In Illinois, corn planted was at 38 percent and emerged at 24 percent. Soybeans planted was at 46 percent, and emerged at 26 percent. Winter wheat headed at 56 percent, and winter wheat condition was 67 percent.

In Michigan, corn planted was at 5 percent and had not yet emerged. Soybeans planted was at 3 percent and had not yet emerged. Sugar beets planted at 10 percent, and winter wheat had not yet headed. Winter wheat condition was at 1 percent very poor to 10 percent excellent.

In Ohio, corn planted was at 33 percent and emerged at 12 percent. Soybeans planted was at 30 percent and emerged at 10 percent. Winter wheat headed at 1 percent, and winter wheat condition was at 53 percent.

In Kentucky, corn planted was at 77 percent and emerged at 45 percent. Soybeans planted was at 61 percent and emerged at 30 percent. In Tennessee, corn planted was at 87 percent and emerged at 70 percent. Soybeans planted was at 69 percent and emerged at 42 percent. Cotton planted was at 25 percent.

In Iowa, corn planted was at 42 percent complete and emerged at 2 percent. Soybean planted was at 27 percent and emerged at 1 percent. Oats planted was at 88 percent and emerged at 58 percent.

Glisan said outlooks through the end of May indicated an increased likelihood of warmer temperatures from the western Corn Belt to the Appalachians: "Wetter conditions are also more likely from western Iowa to the western Corn Belt, while a drier pattern is expected from the eastern Corn Belt to the Appalachians."



Above: This cow appears to be babysitting a group of calves in Hendricks County, Ind. Photo by Abby Prather Mullis.

Indiana's net farm income projected to drop more than \$1 billion this year

By **Michele F. Mihaljevich**
Indiana Correspondent

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – Net farm income (NFI) in the Hoosier state is expected to drop more than \$1 billion in 2026 from last year, according to a report released in April in collaboration with Purdue University. In 2027, Indiana's NFI is projected to drop 16 percent.

Net farm income is projected to be \$3.15 billion this year, down from nearly \$4.4 billion last year, the report said. The decline is primarily due to a significant reduction in livestock cash receipts (down 21 percent) in 2026, while crop receipts are projected to remain steady, the report noted.

The report was compiled by the University of Missouri's Rural & Farm Finance Policy Analysis Center (RaFF).

"The expected loss in livestock receipts and higher production costs would be partially offset by a \$592 million increase (or 73 percent) in direct government payments, totaling \$1.4 billion, primarily from Title 1 commodity and ad hoc programs," the report explained. "The projected 28 percent decline in Indiana's NFI is larger than the 1.5 percent projected decrease in U.S. NFI for 2026 by the Food and Agricultural Policy Institute at the University of Missouri."

Egg prices are projected to fall 61 percent, the RaFF report said. Production expenses are expected to increase 2 percent, mainly due to higher fuel and fertilizer costs stemming from supply chain disruptions, the report said. Crop insurance indemnities are projected to drop 10 percent from last year.

Corn and soybean receipts are each expected to dip 1 percent. Wheat receipts are projected to increase 25 percent. For livestock, cattle and calves receipts are projected to increase 13 percent, while turkey receipts will increase 5 percent. Dairy receipts are expected to fall 11 percent, and hog receipts are projected to

remain steady, the report said.

Fuel and oil expenses are expected to jump 28 percent, the report noted, and fertilizer expenses are expected to be up 5 percent.

The RaFF report highlights worsening financial stress for Indiana grain farmers, forecasting further profitability declines this year and next, said Todd Davis, Indiana Farm Bureau chief economist.


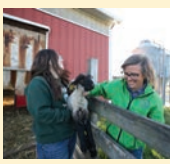
"Row crop farmers face ongoing margin squeezes as production costs rise, while cash receipts are expected to hold steady," he told Farm World. "The report underscores the critical role of farm program safety nets, especially the Price Loss Coverage Title 1 program and ad hoc economic payments. Without these government payments, Indiana grain farmers face even greater financial problems."

As for any potential bright spots, Davis said that depends on when farmers priced their inputs and on the farm's cost structure. The state's grain farmers were already anticipating another year of negative margins unless they achieved yields and prices greater than those assumed in Purdue's Crop Enterprise Budgets for this year, he said. Those budgets were prepared before the conflict with Iran, which has priced in a risk premium that has increased nitrogen fertilizers and farm diesel prices, Davis pointed out.

"Those farmers who were waiting for lower prices are still waiting," he said. "Instead of finding lower prices, the farmers experienced sticker shock and higher input costs, which are increasing the break-even price they need from the market."

The conflict has also spurred December 2026 and November 2026 corn and soybean futures prices to move higher since the end of February, Davis said.

(See Indiana income on page 2)

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Farmland values, sales and rents are holding strong in Illinois

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

JACKSONVILLE, Ill. - Cash rents on farmland remained strong through the first quarter of 2026 and are anticipated to maintain strength into 2027. This is according to the Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers (ISPFMRA) 2026 Illinois Land Values Report, issued in April. The 31st annual report includes statewide farmland trends, regional differences, recreational and transitional land movement and other key takeaways from over 70 industry surveys on cash rents and leasing expectations.

"As far as state averages go, Class A land was down 3 percent and the average price was \$15,900 (per acre), rounding a little," said Luke Worrell, of Worrell Land Services in Jacksonville, who is chair of ISPFMRA's land values reports and annual conference. "Class B (farmland) was pretty much even (from the previous year) and Class C and Class D were up

marginally. Recreational land was up, like 11 percent, which I think was one of the most interesting things we found."

Though the average value for Class A farmland in Illinois has fallen by 6 percent over the past two years, according to 2024-2026 ISPFMRA data, it is still much more valuable than in the last decade. "Even if you take that 6 percent slide into account, since 2020 Class A farmland is still up 50 percent," Worrell said. "I think people - myself included - expected a little steeper decline, but that's where we're at right now."

West central Illinois Region 7 saw a steeper decrease and more volatility than other areas of the state. While some acreage is still fetching \$19,000 to \$20,000 per acre in 2026, sales have been erratic, according to Worrell. "We've seen some 10 percent, 12 percent decreases," he said.

According to an analysis of the report by the University of Illinois farmdoc-DAILY team, results from the ISPFMRA survey indicate a stable farmland leasing

environment in Illinois. "While landlord net returns under cash rent agreements experienced slight compression from 2024 to 2025, reported 2026 cash rents remained resilient with marginal increases observed on highly productive land," according to the summary by Tsay, J. and G. Schnitkey. "2026 Illinois Farmland Price Expectations: Navigating a Stable Yet Softening Market."

Another article from the University of Illinois farmdoc team notes that farmland turnover in Illinois remained structurally low throughout the period of 2003-2025, averaging 1.77 percent of total farmland from 2003-2011 and 1.45 percent from 2012-2025 (the latter may rise slightly upon final reporting).

"Turnover exceeded 2.0 percent only in 2003 and 2004, coinciding with strong price appreciation. Turnover (was) again more than 2 percent in 2021, following a period of improved crop margins, historically low borrowing costs and pandemic-era government support. These factors strengthened farm balance sheets and provided the robust liquidity needed for acquisitions," stated Juo-Han Tsay and Bruce Sherrick, Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics, University of Illinois, the authors of the

April 22 farmdocDAILY article "Illinois Farmland Turnover Rates: 2003-2025."

A glimpse at a county map reveals substantial geographic diversity in farmland turnover, the authors continued: "Urban fringe counties near Chicago show minimal agricultural turnover due to limited farmland and continuous development pressure; agricultural sales here are a tiny fraction of land market activity. In contrast, northern and central Illinois exhibit higher turnover, particularly west of the Illinois River and northeast of St. Louis."

"Even through multiple economic cycles including commodity expansions, margin compression, financial market stress, and the recent inflation surge, the volume of land changing hands fluctuated within a narrow range relative to total supply," the authors noted. "However, due to the thin market, small percentage shifts still represent large variations in annual parcel sales. Given the large total value of the asset class, a relatively small turnover rate remains sufficient for accurate pricing with respect to market fundamentals, and thus should not be viewed as either a problem or a source of non-market distortions."

Indiana income

FROM PAGE 1

As of press time, December 2026 corn was trading at \$4.97 and November 2026 soybeans at \$11.87. The challenge for farmers, he said, is to use price risk management tools to mitigate harvest price risk and secure profitable prices when available.

"Farmers must know their production costs and the price needed to cover them, along with debt obligations, family living expenses, land and machinery costs," Davis said. "This price point will vary across farms, with those owning a larger share of their land base better positioned to take advantage of pricing opportunities because they have a lower cost structure."

"Younger and beginning farmers who rent a greater percentage of their land base, pay for machinery, provide for a

growing family, and pay off debt accumulated from growing their business will face greater challenges in finding pricing opportunities, given their cost structure."

For 2027, cash receipts from crops and livestock are projected to increase 2 percent each, the RaFF report said. Direct government payments are expected to decline 39 percent, and crop insurance indemnities are expected to fall 12 percent.

Davis said the effect of consecutive years of financial losses is beginning to show in data released by the Chicago Federal Reserve, which covers Indiana. The Federal Reserve surveys show that agricultural loans are being extended instead of being paid off within the original loan period, Davis said. This is a sign of liquidity and profitability stress, he added.

Chapter 12 farm bankruptcies have increased, with nine farm businesses filing last year, Davis said. No chapter 12 bankruptcies were filed in 2024.

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More countries expected to trim high-cost crops; due to input costs

The list of global grain producers that are expected to trim high-cost crops this year is expanding. We have now heard from the European Union with sources claiming corn for grain plantings this year will fall below 20 million acres for the first time in over 100 years. As with most others grain producers, high input costs are the primary cause. Any crop that is nitrogen intensive is going

to see fewer acres this year, including in the U.S. Several sources are also showing concern over the elevated handling charges for corn, especially the potential cost of grain drying next fall.

Global wheat production estimates are gaining the most market attention. Two of the most noted recently have been on Australia and Canada. Both wheat producers claim high input costs will lead to

fewer acres being planted, and a return to normal weather will temper yields as well. Australia is now predicting a 2026/27 wheat crop of 29 million metric tons, a 19 percent decline from 2025/26. Australian exports are forecast at 23.5 mmt, down 2.5 mmt from this year. Canada is predicting a 26/27 wheat crop of 36.16 mmt, down 10 percent from 25/26. Canada lowered its export forecast to 28.5 mmt for next year, down 1.2 mmt from this year.

Global weather forecasters are closely monitoring the developing El Nino weather pattern. Recent U.S. weather has shown classic El Nino signs, including drought in the U.S. Plains and Southern states. What trade is more concerned with is how the El Nino will impact Asian grain production as many of those countries see drought in these events. Australia is also seeing growth in drought conditions from the strengthening El Nino. Models indicate this year's El Nino could be similar to the 2015/16 event that was the strongest in 145 years.

Global commodity trade has shifted back to a "hand to mouth" type environment. This means importers are only covering immediate needs and not buying extra to build reserves. One of the main reasons for this is commodity cost

and currency valuations. Importers are also not booking any additional freight as transit costs are rising as well. Recent changes to money policy also means it costs more for an importer to hold purchases for an extended period. Clouded consumer demand outlooks are also tempering global commodity trade and may for some time.

The most commodity trade we are seeing right now is

on grains. Several small, private grain sales were announced recently, including South Korea buying feed corn from the U.S. Feed wheat demand is also on the rise, with global importers turning to Australia for needs. Most of these sales are destined for the Asian market where weather remains less than ideal for current crops. This includes China where rain is preventing spring crops from being seeded.

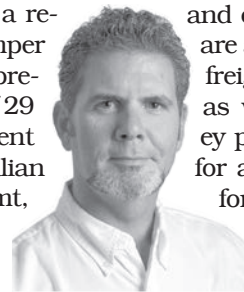
The U.S. cash markets remain strong, even with elevated futures. This is especially the case for soybeans with some Western Corn Belt soy crushers already showing concern over long-term supplies. Some crushers are already locking in needs for the remainder of the year, especially where crush margins are the strongest. Crush margins on soybeans are running at all-time highs near \$3.40 per bushel and processors want to capture as much of this as possible. Ethanol returns are also above average right now, ranging from 30 to 40 cents per gallon in recent weeks.

The Federal Reserve released its April interest rate decision, and by a vote of 8 to 4 decided to leave interest rates unchanged in a range from 3.5-3.75 percent. This was the most dissenting votes in a decision since Oct. 6, 1992. One vote wanted the range lowered, while three supported holding rates steady but wanted languages removed that indicate easing rates in the future. This was actually more of a negative indicator for the future of the U.S. economy. Statements indicate the U.S. economy has been expanding at a decent pace, and that inflation has been driven upward by energy costs. The Fed also noted job gains remain slow and jobless claims have been little changed.

Fundamentals continue to conflict with livestock technicals, and fundamentals are winning. The number of active New World Screwworm cases in Mexico had risen to 1,647, with 144 cases in bordering states. It is unlikely we will see a build in the U.S. cattle herd or beef supply until this situation is remedied. This continues to draw in managed money buying.

At the same time, there is more debate on what China will set for a sow capacity level. China has culled enough sows to reach the government's 39 million head target. Even so, pork prices in China remain stressed and consumer demand is poor. There are several reports the Chinese government may lower the sow cap to 36.5 million head, indicating more culling is likely.

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By Karl Setzer



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FFA members use their version of 'Flat Stanley' to connect with others

By Michele F. Mihaljevich
Indiana Correspondent

JENKS, Okla. - A childhood memory of sending a "Flat Stanley" to her family led the Jenks FFA chapter adviser to encourage her agricultural communications class to do something similar in hopes of connecting with other chapters across the country.

"I remember when I was a kid and sending a 'Flat Stanley' to my family in other states," Chelsea Shelton recalled. "I mailed him along with a letter asking them to take him around with them on adventures and document it, then mail it back to me. It was so exciting getting it back in the mail and seeing all the new and cool things he experienced."

"I had a memory pop up of this moment and that's when I had the idea that it would be a fun project for my ag communications class. We were in the middle of our unit on journalism, so the timing was perfect. After further investigation, I found a few other ag teachers who had already done something similar in their chapters. They asked for other ag teachers to volunteer to complete this project with them."

Shelton said she had her students research chapters in all 50 states, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico that the students thought might be interesting to connect with because of the area they lived in or the things they've accomplished. The students created "Flat FFA Members," wrote a letter explaining the purpose, and sent some pictures or examples of a Jenks FFA Flat Member, she said.

Right: Jenks, Okla., chapter members received responses to their letters - which contained Flat FFA Members - from several chapters. (photo provided)

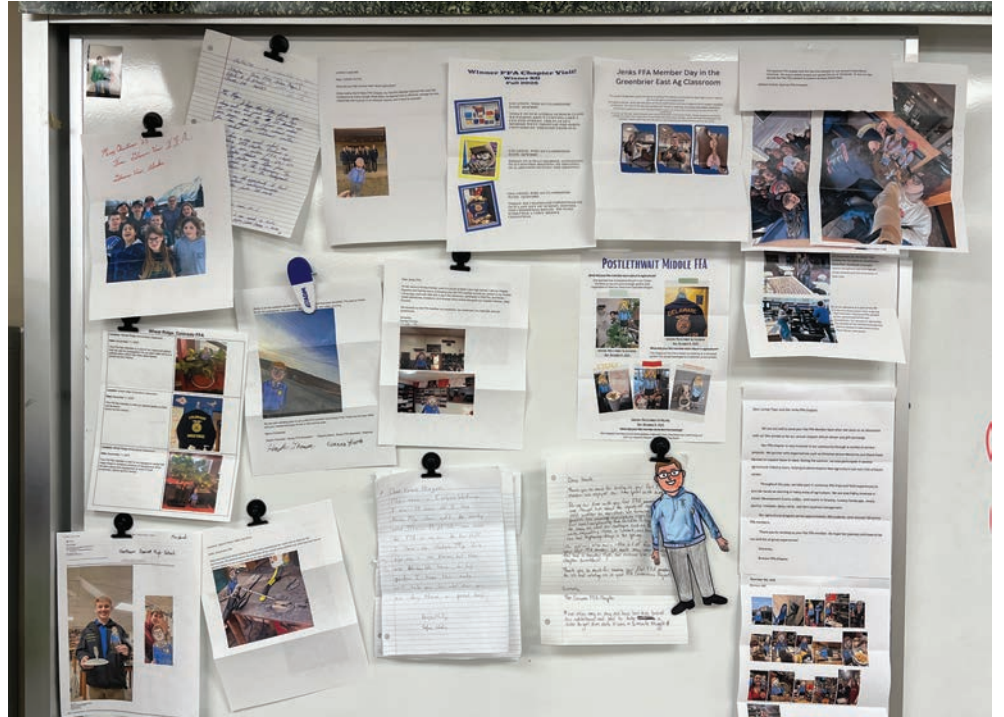
The Flat Stanley children's books were introduced in 1964. In 1995, the Flat Stanley Project was created. The activity features paper cut-outs that are mailed to friends, relatives, or students at another school. The purpose is to promote literacy skills by sharing Flat Stanley's adventures with others.

After the students mailed off the letters and Flat FFA Members, they anxiously anticipated their return, Shelton said.

"We did not get responses from every chapter," she noted. "It felt like at first we were not going to get any. Then when we did, it was so exciting. We got responses back from 15 different chapters."

"My main hope with sending the Flat FFA Member and not just the letter was so that we would receive pictures back. Pictures tell a much bigger story. It's fun to bring the little Flat FFA Member around with you to normal daily activities and it helps share the story."

A chapter in Pennsylvania shared how they baked 1,500 cookies for an event at a state park, Shelton said. Greenbrier East High School members took the Flat FFA Member to their modern livestock



class and he tagged along to their school barn in the afternoon to help break frozen water in animal troughs. The Alaska FFA chapter consists of 10 members and their letter said they have a beautiful glacier behind their school and that their ag teacher is from a neighboring town to Jenks, Shelton said.

"I hoped for my students to learn about agriculture and FFA programs,"

she explained. "See the cool differences even from neighboring states. Not all of us practice agriculture the same way and vary in the strength we have in our ag education programs. I believe my students saw this and in the process, made some friends."

The class plans to send out more letters to end the school year, she said.

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Kentucky farmer moves from tobacco to Dappled Boer goats

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

GARRISON, Ky. - Like so many southern farmers his age, Joe Bentley of Lewis County in Kentucky transitioned from growing tobacco to another venture in order to make ends meet.

For Bentley, the transition from tobacco to goats was a brilliant move. He purchased seven Boer goats in 2005 and has been reinvesting in the herd ever since. Today, his Dappled Boer goats are coveted across the globe.

"I never dreamed I would be doing this," said Bentley, whose farm is located along the south shore of the Ohio River near Garrison, Ky. "I took advantage of a cost-share program and started my herd with just seven Dappled Boer goats. My first big doe I paid \$300 for. The following year, I found a nice buck in Henry County. I've been reinvesting into our herd for more than 20 years."

When Bentley gave up tobacco farming, the goat business became his part-time job. He soon obtained his teaching license and became a teacher, currently at Garrison Elementary School.

"I took an opportunity to be on the same schedule as my children," Bentley said. "I was able to teach two of



Above: Joe Bentley of Lewis County in Kentucky wears many hats: father, teacher, goat owner. (photo submitted)

Right: Dappled Boer goats are known for their friendly and social personalities, making them suitable for small farms, 4-H and FFA programs. (photo submitted)

them and take all three to school. My wife is a teacher, my mom retired from teaching from Garrison Elementary, and I have two aunts who were also teachers."



His teaching at school allows him plenty of time to tend to the goats before and after school, not to mention the summers off.

Goats on four continents can trace their lineage Bentley's herd. Bentley's farm ships breeding stock overseas, to Jamaica (a five-year contract to supply 1,500 breeding animals) as well as to Canada, Bahamas, Philippines, Thailand and St. Lucia for live goats. Semen is distributed in Australia, Brazil, the United Kingdom and the European Union.

"What's neat is those animals are from Kentucky, raised in our hills and

hollers," Bentley said. "And, because we are small, we raise only 10 percent of what we export. We have a lot of nice producers around the state helping us out." He works with producers in Boone, Campbell, Carter, Lewis, Morgan, Perry and Taylor to fulfill contracts.

But why Dappled Boers? According to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (and something Bentley researched at the onset) the Dappled Boer goat is a distinctive breed with

(Dappled Boer Goats continued on page 9)

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JD 4020 diesel, console, WF, original
JD 4430, powershift, restored, must see
JD 8570, 4x4, 24 spd., 3 hyd., 5620 hrs., 18.4x42
JD 4640, quad range, 2 hyd., 1000 PTO, local trade, 6945 hrs.
Case IH 7220, 2WD, 5358 hrs., 3 hyd., 540/1000 PTO, from estate

PLANTERS

Kinze 4900 16-30, finger pickup, liquid fert., NT
IH 800 16-15" custom made soybean planter
Case IH 900 8-36" folding tool bar
White 8531, 32-15", bulk fill
JD 1560 15' 7.5" drill, dolly wheels, markers
IH 510 drill, grass seed
JD FB-B drill, grass seed
Landpride APS 1586, 86" all purpose seeder, like new!
Kinze 2600 & 3600 16-31

SPRAYERS

Bestway Field Pro II, Raven, 1000 gal., 60'
Schaben 1000 gal., 90' boom, JD rate control

COMBINES

JD 9450 Case IH 1688 Case IH 1440
Case IH 2366 Case IH 1640

HAY EQUIPMENT

New Diamond 2560 bale wrapper, 4x4 or 4 & 5 round bales
New HLA silage bale squeeze
23' Massey 1393, 13' disc mower conditioner
New Vermeer 7050, 9'2" 3 pt. disc mower
Hesston 4590 twine, small square
New Holland 311 twine, small square
New Holland 57, 256, 258 and 260 hay rakes
New Enrossi 2 basket tedders
New Hayliner 37' and 42' GN self unloading hay trailers
New Ogden metal works 8, 10 & 12 wheel hayrakes
New Vermeer VR820 8 wheel rake
New Vermeer TE1710 tedder
New Vermeer TD190 tedder
New Enocossi 8 wheel V-rake


NEW FARMCO FEEDERS
(semi load just in!)

10' fenceline
16' fenceline
20' fenceline
24' fenceline
6608 feeders
7x12 feeders
900 lb. capacity creep feeders
7x20 pull type feeder wagon
(2) 4832 feeders w/19" legs
Several heavy duty round bale rings


MISCELLANEOUS

John Deere H480 loader, 8' bucket, like new!
New Unverferth 3755XL seed tender
New Holland tandem rake hitch
New Danuser SM40 post driver (SS mount)
New Danuser Intimidators (SS mount)
New Legend skid steer bale spears
New Legend skid steer pallet forks
Bush Hog BH16 & Sq172 6' 3 pt. rotary mowers
John Deere 148 loader
New Command 7" skid steer & 3 pt. hitch grading scrapers
24' freestanding cattle panels w/o & w/gate
New Rhino 7' 3 pt. rotary mowers
New Rhino 15' 2150 rotary mower
John Deere 317G skid steer, 2387 hrs., cab, air, heat, pilot control
Kuhn Knight VSL150, vertical mixer, 1000 RPM
Artsway LS1200, 12' pull type blade, unused
(3) New Burchland GSX 130, 13" hyd. drive over grain hoppers
DMI 3250, 13 knife NH3 toolbar, shedded, w/ controller
Grain-O-Vator tandem axle feed cart, 540 PTO
Artsway PM20 grinder mixer, screens, folding auger
New Holland 130 PTO manure spreader, single beater
Ford 8' & JD 10' 3 pt. disc
John Deere HX15, 15', 1000 RPM, 8 tire, rotary cutter
Bobcat 6' hyd. sweeper attachment
New Legend 82" HD skid steer rock bucket
New AGI Botco 1539 FX4 hyd. drive field loader
New AGI Batco 1539 FX4 elec. drive field loader
New AGI Westfield, 13x74, 10x83, 10x73 swing away augers
New AGI Westfield 8x61 elec. drive auger
Vermeer 48", 51", 64" & 67" netwrap IN STOCK
Tyrite 9600/170 square baler twine IN STOCK


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MARKETS

Blue Grass Stockyards Lexington, KY

Livestock Weighted Average Report for 5/4/2026 - Final AUCTION

	This Week	Last Reported 4/27/2026	Last Year
Total Receipts:	824	944	1,006
Feeder Cattle:	748(90.8%)	808(85.6%)	920(91.5%)
Slaughter Cattle:	62(7.5%)	125(13.2%)	77(7.7%)
Replacement Cattle:	14(1.7%)	11(1.2%)	9(0.9%)

Compared to last Monday the feeder market was mostly stronger, but spotty at times with an average quality offering. Feeder steers 450 lbs and under were sharply higher, while the 500-550 lbs steers were mostly steady with a good supply and good demand. Yearling steers appeared 6.00 to 8.00 higher with a good supply and strong demand. Feeder heifers 600 lbs and under were steady to 8.00 higher or greater in spots with a good supply and good demand. Slaughter cows were steady to 2.00 higher with a good supply and slaughter bulls were 3.00 to 5.00 higher with good demand. Supply included: 91% Feeder Cattle (34% Steers, 1% Dairy Steers, 51% Heifers, 14% Bulls); 8% Slaughter Cattle (77% Cows, 23% Bulls); 2% Replacement Cattle (37% Stock Cows, 37% Bred Cows, 16% Bred Heifers, 11% Cow-Calf Pairs). Feeder cattle supply over 600 lbs was 43%.

Groups of 20 Head or More.

STEERS

21 Hd Char/FEWBLK	472 lbs	473.00
61 Hd Black/FEWCHR	647 lbs	404.00
69 Hd Black/BWF	772 lbs	353.75

FEEDER CATTLE

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
27	300-320	304	555.00-595.00	575.89
3	336	336	635.00	635.00 Fancy
13	350-398	373	522.50-565.00	549.87
12	360	360	609.00	609.00 Fancy
4	410-445	425	537.50-547.50	544.28
11	405	405	579.00	579.00 Fancy
7	465-487	474	510.00-522.50	515.63
15	456-476	465	527.50-537.50	530.50 Fancy
5	500-535	508	470.00-471.00	470.39
16	503-508	505	511.00-533.00	517.92 Value Added
25	555-580	571	451.00-485.00	475.88
15	551-560	558	499.00-530.00	521.94 Value Added
27	625-647	635	449.00-457.50	452.79 Value Added
5	652	652	383.00	383.00
8	666	666	427.00	427.00 Value Added
7	720-740	735	372.50-388.00	383.26
25	765-796	779	362.50-377.50	368.76
2	752	752	282.50	282.50 Fleishy
7	856-860	857	345.00-352.00	351.00
2	920-945	933	330.00-336.00	333.04
1	1035	1035	324.00	324.00
5	1135	1135	310.00	310.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
3	425-432	430	492.50-500.00	494.97
3	475-495	488	472.00-477.50	475.72
1	580	580	387.50	387.50
1	615	615	400.00	400.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
3	400-442	428	420.00-425.00	421.56
1	535	535	292.50	292.50

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	640	640	380.00	380.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	415	415	380.00	380.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
3	700-732	721	255.00-260.00	258.38
3	836	836	247.50	247.50

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	200	200	510.00	510.00
3	288	288	635.00	635.00 Fancy
2	342	342	505.00	505.00
18	300-342	330	559.00-595.00	571.63 Fancy
3	380-395	390	480.00-500.00	489.28
3	350-355	353	520.00-540.00	533.40 Fancy
2	425-445	435	460.00-470.00	465.11
20	400-447	420	485.00-499.00	494.68 Fancy
12	467-498	484	410.00-445.00	423.54
35	452-488	471	452.50-487.50	473.30 Fancy
2	497	497	393.00	393.00 Full
22	500-535	522	401.00-423.00	416.62
4	505-507	506	435.00-463.00	448.97 Value Added
16	551-597	572	390.00-407.00	400.72
15	558-573	563	415.00-431.00	423.05 Value Added
11	620-645	627	357.50-386.00	368.19
2	642	642	351.00	351.00 Full
64	611-647	645	399.00-404.00	403.78 Value Added
2	690-695	693	333.00-335.00	334.00
3	656	656	395.00	395.00 Guaranteed Open
1	745	745	340.00	340.00
7	717	717	370.00	370.00 Guaranteed Open
2	780	780	339.00	339.00
69	772	772	353.75	353.75 Value Added
1	810	810	309.00	309.00
1	935	935	295.00	295.00
1	1085	1085	264.00	264.00 Guaranteed Open

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2	302	302	481.00	481.00
1	365	365	460.00	460.00
2	470-480	475	386.00-400.00	393.07
4	500-505	502	377.50-390.00	383.01
2	565	565	380.00	380.00
7	615-630	626	330.00-350.00	345.61
1	715	715	310.00	310.00
1	1020	1020	230.00	230.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	255	255	395.00	395.00
1	340	340	325.00	325.00
1	435	435	350.00	350.00
1	540	540	281.00	281.00
1	635	635	250.00	250.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
3	290-295	292	590.00-592.50	590.84
2	317	317	665.00	665.00 Fancy
7	357-393	375	547.50-562.00	553.10
6	405-440	422	505.00-527.50	516.13
4	405-435	428	555.00-563.00	561.11 Fancy
10	452-497	474	480.00-507.50	495.95
1	455	455	545.00	545.00 Fancy
19	520-547	532	450.00-477.50	461.44
1	570	570	410.00	410.00
5	607-645	618	361.00-397.50	370.98
12	652-690	667	363.00-387.50	378.92
1	700	700	363.00	363.00
2	760-790	775	311.00-330.00	320.32
3	830	830	323.00	323.00
1	930	930	271.00	271.00
1	960	960	250.00	250.00
3	1015	1015	275.00	275.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	360	360	510.00	510.00
2	427	427	460.00	460.00
4	530-535	534	400.00-427.00	416.04
3	570-577	575	395.00	395.00
1	640	640	340.00	340.00
1	895	895	250.00	250.00

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
1	340	340	355.00	355.00
1	395	395	420.00	420.00
1	545	545	361.00	361.00

SLAUGHTER CATTLE

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
9	1370-1755	1515	167.00-181.00	178.28	Average
1	1380	1380	185.00	185.00	High

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
8	1015-1330	1205	173.00-181.00	175.42	Average
4	1140-1555	1370	184.00-186.00	184.78	High

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
5	1010-1230	1167	138.00-154.00	150.22	Average
6	995-1250	1135	164.00-175.00	169.25	High

Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price	Dressing
2	1265-2380	1823	200.00-210.00	206.53	Average
6	1165-2125	1693	219.00-238.00	230.08	High
2	1245-2045	1645	180.00-182.00	180.76	Low

REPLACEMENT CATTLE

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-8	O	7	1165-1370	1253	200.00-233.00	215.53

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
>5	T2	2	1135-1175	1155	3050.00-3700.00	3369.37
>5	T3	2	1240-1400	1320	3250.00-3950.00	3621.21

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
>5	T3	2	980-1280	1130	2500.00-2900.00	2726.55
>8	T2	1	1085	1085	1950.00	1950.00

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
<2	T2	3	900-965	927	2500.00-3000.00	2716.64

Age	Stage	Head	Wt Range	Avg Wt	Price Range	Avg Price
2-4	O	2	1335	1335	5050.00	5050.00

Please Note:
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 not 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/lpgmn
https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/
https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/2127

Weekly National Sheep Summary For Week Ending Friday, May 1, 2026

Weekly Trends: Compared to last week slaughter lambs 40 to 60 lbs sold steady with a weak undertone noted; lambs 60 to 120 lbs sold strong. Ewes sold strong.

All sheep sold per hundred weight (CWT) unless otherwise specified.

Slaughter Lambs: Choice and Prime 1-3
San Angelo: 50-60 lbs 378.00-389.00; 60 lbs 371.00.

New Holland: 40-50 lbs 345.00-425.00; 50-60 lbs 395.00-450.00; 60-70 lbs 400.00-460.00; 70-80 lbs 375.00-465.00; 80-90 lbs 375.00-465.00; 90-100 lbs 425.00-462.00; 100-110 lbs 410.00-445.00.

Billings: No test.
Ft. Collins: 60-70 lbs 395.00-410.00; 70-80 lbs 400.00-417.50; 80-90 lbs 400.00-412.50; 90-100 lbs 410-415.00; 100-110 lbs 400.00-417.50.

Mount Hope: 40-50 lbs 360.00-420.00; 50-60 lbs 360.00-425.00; 60-70 lbs 360.00-420.00; 70-80 lbs 365.00-417.50; 80-90 lbs 380.00-410.00; 90-100 lbs 412.50; 100-110 lbs 407.00-412.50.

Kalona: 40-50 lbs 375.00-410.00; 50-60 lbs 370.00-400.00; 60-70 lbs 365.00-390.00; 70-80 lbs 370.00-400.00; 80-90 lbs 380.00-395.00; 90-100 lbs 395.00.

Equity Coop: No test.
Sioux Falls: 50-60 lbs 405.00-455.00; 60-70 lbs 375.00-445.00; 70-80 lbs 370.00-430.00; 8

MARKETS

Weekly Combined Regional Shell Egg Report

Report for: 04/26/2026 - 05/02/2026

National Shell Eggs - Caged					
Delivered Warehouse, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	40.00 - 69.00	57.13	-9.75	66.88	
Large	39.00 - 59.00	50.44	-9.75	60.19	
Medium	38.00 - 58.00	48.75	-4.50	53.25	

Midwest Shell Eggs - Caged					
Delivered Warehouse, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	40.00 - 49.00	44.50	-9.00	53.50	
Large	39.00 - 48.00	43.50	-9.00	52.50	
Medium	38.00 - 47.00	42.50	-4.00	46.50	

Delivered Store Door, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	47.00 - 55.00	51.00	-9.00	60.00	
Large	45.00 - 53.00	49.00	-9.00	58.00	
Medium	44.00 - 52.00	48.00	-4.00	52.00	

Paid to Producers - FOB, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Large	21.00 - 31.00	26.00	-9.00	35.00	
Medium	20.00 - 24.00	22.00	-4.00	26.00	
Small	12.00 - 18.00	15.00	-4.00	19.00	

Northeast Shell Eggs - Caged					
Delivered Warehouse, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	51.00 - 69.00	60.00	-6.00	66.00	
Large	45.00 - 59.00	52.00	-6.00	58.00	
Medium	41.00 - 54.00	47.50	-4.00	51.50	

South Central Shell Eggs - Caged					
Delivered Warehouse, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	57.50 - 66.00	61.75	-12.00	73.75	
Large	49.50 - 58.00	53.75	-12.00	65.75	
Medium	49.50 - 58.00	53.75	-5.00	58.75	

Southeast Shell Eggs - Caged					
Delivered Warehouse, White, Cents Per Dozen					
Class	Price Range	Average Price	Price Change	Last Reported (4/24/2026)	
Extra Large	58.50 - 66.00	62.25	-12.00	74.25	
Large	49.00 - 56.00	52.50	-12.00	64.50	
Medium	47.50 - 55.00	51.25	-5.00	56.25	

Explanatory Notes: Prices to retailers, sales to volume buyers, white eggs in cartons.
 Regional Breakdown: Midwest: IA, IL, IN, KY, MI, MN, OH, NE, ND, SD, WI, WV, Western NY, and Western PA. Northeast: CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, Eastern NJ, Eastern NY, Eastern PA, RI, Northern VA, and VT. South Central: AR, AZ, CO, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, and TX. Southeast: AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, Eastern TN, and Southern VA.
 Source: USDA AMS Livestock, Poultry & Grain Market News
 General inquiries, please call: (202) 720-1990
 or email: mymarketnews@usda.gov
<https://mymarketnews.usda.gov>
<https://mymarketnews.usda.gov/viewReport/2848>
<https://www.ams.usda.gov/lpgmm>

Kentucky Daily Grain Bids

Grain Report for Thursday, May 7, 2026 - Final

FUTURE SETTLEMENTS					
Exchange	Commodity	Settlement Prices (¢/bu) as of 5/7/26	Closing		
CBOT	Corn	452.75 (May 26)	467.50 (Jul 26)	474.25	
(Sep 26)	489.50 (Dec 26)	502.75 (Mar 27)	510.00 (May 27)	513.50	
(Jul 27)					
CBOT	Soybeans	1177.00 (May 26)	1192.25 (Jul 26)	1186.75	
(Aug 26)	1167.00 (Sep 26)	1173.50 (Nov 26)	1185.50 (Jan 27)	1183.25	
(Mar 27)					
CBOT	Wheat	601.75 (May 26)	612.25 (Jul 26)	627.25	
(Sep 26)	648.25 (Dec 26)	666.50 (Mar 27)	675.25 (May 27)	675.75	
(Jul 27)					
CBOT	White Oats	325.50 (May 26)	342.50 (Jul 26)	352.00	
(Sep 26)	351.50 (Dec 26)	355.00 (Mar 27)	361.00 (May 27)	351.50	
(Jul 27)					
KCBT	Wheat	654.75 (May 26)	667.25 (Jul 26)	678.75	
(Sep 26)	693.25 (Dec 26)	704.00 (Mar 27)	708.75 (May 27)	707.25	
(Jul 27)					
MGE	Wheat	664.25 (May 26)	673.75 (Jul 26)	694.00	
(Sep 26)	712.25 (Dec 26)	726.00 (Mar 27)	728.75 (May 27)	723.00	
(Jul 27)					

US #2 WHITE CORN (BULK)

Country Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Pennyrile	75.00N to 155.00N		UNCH
5.4250-6.2250	DN 0.0100		5.8250
Pennyrile	58.00Z		UNCH
5.4750	DN 0.0050		5.4750

Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Ohio River - Lower KY	160.00N to 180.00N		UNCH
6.2750-6.4750	DN 0.0100		6.3750
Ohio River - Lower KY	65.00Z		UNCH
5.5450	DN 0.0050		5.5450
Purchase	150.00N		UNCH
6.1750	DN 0.0100		6.1750
Purchase	50.00Z		DN 10.00
5.3950	DN 0.1050		5.3950

US #2 YELLOW CORN (BULK)

Country Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Purchase	10.00N		UNCH
4.7750	DN 0.0100		4.7750
Purchase	-20.00Z		UNCH
4.6950	DN 0.0050		4.6950
Green River	25.00N		UNCH
4.9250	DN 0.0100		4.9250
Green River	-10.00Z		UNCH
4.7950	DN 0.0050		4.7950

Pennyrile	-20.00N to 25.00N	DN 5.00-UNCH	
4.4750-4.9250	DN 0.0600-DN 0.0100		4.6083
Pennyrile	-30.00Z to -12.00Z		UNCH
4.5950-4.7750	DN 0.0050		4.6750
Louisville	5.00N		UNCH
4.7250	DN 0.0100		4.7250
Louisville	5.00N		UNCH
4.7250	DN 0.0100		4.7250
Bluegrass	16.00K		UNCH
4.6875	UNCH		4.6875
Bluegrass	-25.00Z		UNCH
4.6450	DN 0.0050		4.6450

Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Ohio River - Upper KY	14.00N to 15.00N		UNCH
4.8150-4.8250	DN 0.0100		4.8200
Ohio River - Upper KY	-34.00Z to -30.00Z		UNCH
4.5550-4.5950	DN 0.0050		4.5750
Ohio River - Lower KY	14.00N to 25.00N		DN 2.00
4.8150-4.9250	DN 0.0300		4.8950
Ohio River - Lower KY	-25.00Z to -13.00Z		UP 5.00-UNCH
4.6450-4.7650	UP 0.0450-DN 0.0050		4.7050
Purchase	14.00N to 25.00N		DN 2.00-UNCH
4.8150-4.9250	DN 0.0300-DN 0.0100		4.8683
Purchase	-27.00Z to -25.00Z		UP 3.00-DN 5.00
4.6250-4.6450	UP 0.0250-DN 0.0550		4.6388

US #1 SOYBEANS (BULK)

Country Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Purchase	10.00N		UNCH
12.0225	DN 0.0250		12.0225
Purchase	-15.00X		UNCH
11.5850	DN 0.0200		11.5850
Green River	-35.00N		UNCH
11.5725	DN 0.0250		11.5725
Green River	-40.00X		UNCH
11.3350	DN 0.0200		11.3350
Pennyrile	-50.00N to 20.00N		UNCH
11.4225-12.1225	DN 0.0250		11.6054
Pennyrile	-60.00X to -17.00X		UNCH-DN 1.00
11.1350-11.5650	DN 0.0200-DN 0.0300		11.2607
Louisville	-50.00N		UNCH
11.4225	DN 0.0250		11.4225
Louisville	-50.00N		UNCH
11.4225	DN 0.0250		11.4225
Bluegrass	-10.00K		UNCH
11.6700	DN 0.0200		11.6700
Bluegrass	-75.00X		UNCH
10.9850	DN 0.0200		10.9850

Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Ohio River - Upper KY	7.00N to 10.00N		UNCH-DN 1.00
11.9925-12.0225	DN 0.0250-DN 0.0350		12.0075
Ohio River - Upper KY	-36.00X to -35.00X		UNCH
11.3750-11.3850	DN 0.0200		11.3800

Ohio River - Lower KY	19.00N to 38.00N	DN 1.00-UP 3.00
12.1125-12.3025	DN 0.0350-UP 0.0050	12.1805
Ohio River - Lower KY	-26.00X to 15.00X	UP 4.00-UNCH
11.4750-11.8850	UP 0.0200-DN 0.0200	11.6250
Purchase	10.00N to 13.00N	UNCH
12.0225-12.0525	DN 0.0250	12.0425
Purchase	-26.00X to -7.00X	UP 1.00-UNCH
11.4750-11.6650	DN 0.0100-DN 0.0200	11.5775

US #1 MILLING SOFT RED WINTER WHEAT (BULK)

Country Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Pennyrile	-10.00N		UNCH
6.0225	DN 0.0500		6.0225
Pennyrile	5.00N		UNCH
6.1725	DN 0.0500		6.1725
US #2 Soft Red Winter Wheat (Bulk)			

COUNTRY ELEVATORS - CONVENTIONAL

Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Purchase	-10.00N		UNCH
6.0225	DN 0.0500		6.0225
Green River	-75.00N		UNCH
5.3725	DN 0.0500		5.3725
Pennyrile	-55.00N to -30.00N		UNCH
5.5725-5.8225	DN 0.0500		5.6525
Pennyrile	-55.00N to -2.00N		UNCH
5.5725-6.1025	DN 0.0500		5.7608
Louisville	-12.00N		UNCH
6.0025	DN 0.0500		6.0025
Louisville	-72.00N to -12.00N		UNCH
5.4025-6.0025	DN 0.0500		5.7025
Bluegrass	-55.00N		UNCH
5.5725	DN 0.0500		5.5725

Barge Loading Elevators - Conventional			
Region/Location	Basic (¢/Bu)	Price Change	Basis Change
Ohio River - Upper KY	-33.00N		UNCH
5.7925	DN 0.0500		5.7925
Ohio River - Lower KY	-10.00N to -5.00N		UP 2.00-UNCH
6.0225-6.0725	DN 0.0300-DN 0.0500		6.0465
Purchase	-15.00N		UNCH
5.9725	DN 0.0500		5.9725
Purchase	-20.00N to 4.00N		UP 1.00-UNCH
5.9225-6.1625	DN 0.0400-DN 0.0500		6.0400

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

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Boars:	N/A		
Feeder Pigs:	1	\$60	\$60
Beef & X Veal #1:	83	\$2100	\$1817.47
Beef & X Veal #2			

Longstanding fruit farm in good hands as next generation steps up

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

DAYTON, Ohio - The second-oldest fruit farm in southwest Ohio was about to close for good, breaking the hearts of many in the Dayton area who referred to Monnin Fruit Farm as a "summer garden oasis."

Monnin Fruit Farm has a rich history, dating back to its establishment in 1961 by Roger and Phyllis Monnin. The farm has been a staple in the Miami Valley, offering fresh produce and local products.

Glenn Monnin and his brother Nick became the second generation to operate the farm. Nick died in 2020, leaving all the responsibility on the shoulders of Glenn.

"I was running it by myself and it was just enough to kill me," Glenn said. "I was working every single day, 12 hours a day, you know, and after a while it just takes its toll."

The farm was just weeks from dissolving when Nick's grandsons, Layton and Logan Flatt, agreed to step up into the role as the next generation to continue the tradition and



Above: The design of the Monnin's Fruit Farm sign hasn't changed since 1961. (photo submitted)

serve the community with fresh produce and baked goods.

Layton and Logan returned home from their time in the service. This spring long-time customers can expect the same fresh produce and local products, but this time with new faces at the helm. Layton, 30, and Logan, 26, are officially taking the reins.

"It's just a natural progression," Glenn said. "You get new energy, you get new ideas, and the boys are really into it, and I think they're just going to be wonderful."

Layton said, "We've got big shoes

Left: Layton (left) and Logan Flatt are the next generation in the family to operate Monnin Fruit Farm in north Dayton. (photo submitted)



Above: The Monnin Fruit Farm covers 45 acres north of Dayton, Ohio. It first became a farm market in 1961. (photo submitted)

to fill. We're looking to make change and serve the community the best we can."

They say change is the only constant in life and sometimes it's necessary.

"It's kind of been in the works for the past couple of years," Logan said. "I think last year it was like a real thing where our uncle was like, 'OK, you handle it, because next year it's going to be your show.'"

It didn't take long for Layton and Logan to learn that running a 45-acre fruit farm is no easy task.

"I realize it's 12 months of the year, every single day," Layton said. "It involved year-round care. In the winter we're pruning all the apple trees,

getting ready for apple season, and then we uncover the strawberries in the spring."

Glenn is elated to see family members take the reins.

"I'm just glad to see the farm staying in the family, and I'm glad to see it keep going," he said. "I think mom and dad, that was their biggest thing, and so the boys, you know, it was a godsend."

In addition to the farm, the storefront offers a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables and "U-pick" option as well.

The brothers say they have no intention of changing the status quo,

(Monnin's Fruit Farm continued on page 9)

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relevant

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- 2022 CIH FARMALL 90C, CAH, MFD, LDR, 1200 HRS
- 2011 CIH FARMALL 85U, OS, 2WD, 3000 HRS
- 2017 JD 9520R, PS, BB, 2500 HRS
- 2023 JD 8R 310, IVT, ILS, 1400 HRS
- 2015 JD 8345R IVT, ILS, 3600 HRS
- 2024 JD 8R 250, PS, MFD, GUIDANCE, 600 HRS
- 2014 JD 8245R, PS, MFD, 3300 HRS
- 2005 NH TG285, PS, MFD, 3700 HRS

HEADS

- 2018 MAC DON FD130 30FT DRAPER HEAD, JOHN DEERE HOOK-UP
- 2015 MAC DON FD75 30FT DRAPER, CNH SINGLE POINT HOOK-UP
- 2014 MAC DON FD75 35FT DRAPER, CNH SINGLE POINT HOOK-UP
- 2015 CASE IH 3020 35FT & 30FT GRAIN HEAD
- 2002 JD 920F GRAIN HEAD
- 2014 CIH 4406, KR, HD, HH, CNH SINGLE POINT
- 2013 CIH 3406, KR, HD, HH, CNH SINGLE POINT
- 2015 JD 608C, KR, HD, HH, RS
- 2007 JD 693, RR, HD, HH

PLANTERS

- JD 1760 12R30 CORN PLANTER, VAC, LIQ FERT
- JD 1750 4R, DRY FERT
- JD 1530 15FT DRILL W/ CADDY
- BRILLION SL12 PULL-TYPE SEEDER

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- J&M 750 GRAIN CART, TARP, SCALES, LIGHTS
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- KONGSKILDE SUC1000 GRAIN VAC

COMBINES

- 2023 CIH 8250, RWA, TRACKS, AUTOMATION, GUIDANCE, 1018/754 HRS
- 2019 CIH 8250, 2WD, TRACKS, LT, RT, CHPPR, POWER TOP, GUIDANCE, 2279/1696 HRS
- 1998 JD 9510, RWA, LL, 3487/2512 HRS



Dappled Boer Goats

FROM PAGE 5

a unique coat pattern, distinguished by irregular-shaped splotches of color, known as dapples, which can include combinations of red, black, cocoa and white. These patterns are genetic throwbacks, meaning they are recessive traits that may not appear in every generation, and first-generation dapples are relatively rare.

Beyond their coat, Dappled Boers maintain the muscular build, size, and conformation typical of the Boer breed, making them suitable for both meat production and show purposes.

Bentley's goats are bred for meat and milk, too, not just for their genetic value in improving other herds worldwide.

Bentley uses social media to share the farm's work, with a Facebook page of more than 243,000 followers, many from other countries.

"You think everybody wants to see your big bucks, but the whole world wants to see your baby goats," Bentley said. "Social media is the door to the world. When I look at the people who follow the page, you'll see a guy in Georgia with 'Trump 2024' as his profile picture, then the guy beside him has the Iranian president as his profile picture. Goats are a common lan-



Above: When not tending to his own goats you'll find Joe Bentley helping others with their goat projects. (photo submitted)

guage all over the globe. Every culture has an appreciation for the goat."

Bentley says Dappled Boer goats are known for their friendly and social personalities, making them suitable for small farms, 4-H and FFA programs.

"Dappled Boer goats are prized for their aesthetic appeal, making them popular in show exhibitions," he said. "They are also excellent for meat production, as they retain the



Above: The Dappled Boer goat will stand out among others at any fair or festival. These goats are distinguished by irregular-shaped splotches of color, known as dapples, which can include combinations of red, black, cocoa and white. (photo submitted)

breed's characteristic muscle mass and growth rate."

Breeders often select for dappling over multiple generations to enhance the coat pattern while maintaining strong body conformation and health. Dappled bucks are particularly valued for producing offspring with color, and careful selections ensures that desirable traits like length, height and chest width are passed on.

Monnin's Fruit Farm

FROM PAGE 8

but that they knew it was time to step up.

"We want to continue the tradition, continue growing and serving the people the best we can," Layton said. "We're going to continue to strive for that and do the best we can."

Added Logan, "I can't wait to just see the people in the store again. The nice days, the sunshine, the warm weather, and then just watching the community pull in the parking lot and come get the stuff that we picked, boxed and put on the shelves."

Monnin Fruit Farm is at 8201 Frederick Pike in Dayton, just south of Vandalia.

H. Wampler Fruit Farms on Shiloh Springs Road was founded in 1950 and is the oldest fruit farm in the Dayton area.



Above: Logan Flatt (left) and Layton Flatt (right) have agreed to keep the Monnin Fruit Farm afloat, and that was good news for their great uncle Glenn Monnin (center). (photo submitted)

<p>2004 Gehl DL10L-44, EROPS w/Heat, Missing Upper Door, JD Dsl. 4 Spd., PS, 10K Capacity, 44' Reach, Foam Filled Tires, 48" Forks, Work Rdy... \$24,500</p>	<p>2015 Sunflower 5056-45 Field Cultivator, 45' VG 9" Sweeps, 3 Bar Spike, Drag w/Baskets, Shank Protectors, Very Nice... \$37,500</p>	<p>2008 Case IH ADX 2230, Cart Fill Auger, Stored Inside, Good Condition... \$5,450</p>	<p>McFarlane 45' Drag Cart, 8 Bar, Hyd. Fold, Good Spikes... \$4,950</p>	<p>2013 Case IH Magnum 290, CAH, PS, 3 Pt., PTO, 3330 Hrs., Very Nice, 1 Owner Tractor, Has Been Deleted... \$122,500</p>
<p>Gehl CTL60 OROPS, Yanmar Dsl., Pilot Controls, Aux Hyds., 72" Bkt, VG Tracks, 3500 Hrs... \$15,500</p>	<p>2020 EZ-LOAD 4B, 4 Box Tender, Tandem Axle, Lo-Pro, Honda Engine, Good Condition... \$11,500</p>	<p>DMI 50' Crumbler, Very Good Condition, Hydraulic Fold... \$6,450</p>	<p>2005 JD 1790, 16/32 No-Till Bulk Fill, 2020 Mon., Yetter Twister Closing Wheels, Press Wheels, Pneumatic Down Pressure, CCS Seed Delivery, Vac, Metering Markers, Good Cond., Field Rdy... \$32,500</p>	<p>1981 Allis-Chalmers 7020, 6636 Hrs., CAH, Power Director, 3 Pt PTO, 18.4x38, Stadium Lights, Original Seat... \$12,500</p>
<p>NH 565 Small Square Baler, 540PTO, Rear Bale Chute, Good Cond., Field Ready... \$6,750</p>	<p>2012 Bobcat S175 EROPS, Kubota Dsl., Foot Controls, Aux. Hyds., Q Tach, 2340 Hrs... \$14,500</p>	<p>Hesston 8200 Cummins 3.9 Hydro, 12' Cut, 21.5L-16.1 Tires, 1785 Hrs... \$10,500</p>	<p>2012 New Holland 195, Tandem Axle, Double Beater, Slop Gate, Double Chain, Needs TLC But Works Good... \$10,500</p>	<p>Case 870 Diesel, WF, 3 Pt. PTO, Runs and Drives, All Original... \$5,450</p>
<p>Easiloat 3 Box Tender, Tandem Axle, Honda Engine, Good Cond... \$9,500</p>	<p>AgChem 544 Cummins Dsl., Hydro, 90' Boom, 4900 Hrs., Farmer Owned... \$12,500</p>	<p>Gehl 175 Manure Spreader, Single Axle, Slop Gate, Single Beater, 540 PTO... \$4,250</p>	<p>John Deere 750 10' No-Till Drill, 7.5" Spacing, Draw Bar Pull, Good Condition... \$12,500</p>	<p>2024 John Deere FC20R, 20' Batwing, Like New, 1000 PTO, Stump Jumpers, Work Ready... \$29,500</p>
<p>Case 2390 CAH, PS, 3 Pt. PTO, 2 Remotes, 5300 Orig. Hrs., Local Farmer Retirement, Sharp... \$17,500</p>	<p>2015 H&S 3127 Manure Spreader, 540PTO, 270 Bu., Slop Gate, Like New, Only Done 5 Loads of Saw Dust, No Manure... \$16,500</p>	<p>2003 JD 726 33'9" Hyd. Disc., Gang 5 Bar Spike Drag, VG Knock On Sweeps, Field Ready... \$17,500</p>	<p>Case 930 Dsl, WF, 3 Pt., 540 PTO, 2 Remotes, 5421 Hrs., Local All Orig. Farmer Retirement... \$7,450</p>	<p>2008 John Deere 1790, 12/23, Bulk Fill, No Till, Coulters, Pneumatic Down Pressure, Rear Fill Auger, Very Nice, Farmer Retirement... \$38,500</p>

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Alvin C. York ag students raise pheasants for hunt

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

JAMESTOWN, Tenn. - Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute (YAI) is a public high school in Jamestown with 477 students in grades 9-12. The school is known for its strong focus on agricultural education, offering hands-on learning experiences alongside traditional academics.

Students at the school have been engaged in many student-run tasks at the farm at York. They started a heifer program, raised turkeys for people to buy at Thanksgiving, and several other events. Three years ago, Sawbriar Lodge in Allardt, Tenn., contacted the school and asked if the students could raise pheasants for the lodge's annual hunt in October. The students didn't hesitate, nor did their adviser.

This event is in its fourth year and is called the Feather to Fork program. It is an innovative agriculture and outdoor education initiative that pairs high school students with a hunting preserve to raise and harvest birds, combining classroom learning with hands-on outdoor experience.

"The Feather to Fork program is giving students a diversified agriculture opportunity, but raising pheasants is something kids don't normally think of when they think about ag," said Marissa Wright, agriculture teacher and FFA adviser at YAI.

"When the lodge called and asked if I'd be interested in students raising birds for their hunts I started thinking about how we could raise the ag school some money while allowing students to raise the birds. Taking on this opportunity allows



Above: Students at Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute (YAI) in Tennessee have raised pheasants for hunting purposes the past four years. (photo submitted)

them to see other avenues in agriculture they may be interested in and helping them see they can do this in their own backyard."

The inaugural Feather to Fork hunt in 2023 was a huge success, with sponsors like Quail Forever, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Tennessee Tech University, University of Tennessee Knoxville, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and local banks pitching in.

According to Wright, the students raised 300 pheasants the first few years and are raising 500 pheasants this year. The venture starts when one-day-old chicks are delivered to the school in April, which will be intended for the annual upland bird

hunt in October.

Sawbriar Lodge is situated in the Upper Cumberland Plateau near the scenic Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. It's been a bird hunting preserve since 2007. Lodge owner Fred Moody is a YAI graduate and saw a unique opportunity to partner with York students in 2022.

Moody and his wife, Rhonda, came up with the idea for the Feather to Fork program. In spring 2023, students launched the project with a \$15,000 donation from Eye Centers of Tennessee. Money from the Eye Centers of Tennessee allowed them to build a fly pen to house the pheasants and helped purchase the chicks and other necessities.



Above: The school's Feather to Fork program allows students at YAI to learn about skeet, fly fishing and archery. (photo submitted)

"Our first year in 2023 we had about 150 students participating in the Feather to Fork program," Wright said.

In April 2024, 500 one-day-old were delivered to the school. The same number was delivered this year.

"It's an exciting time, everybody loves the baby chicks," Wright said. "Our students are fully responsible for the care and nutrition for the chicks during the week, and our farm manager, Sam Brown, takes care of them on weekends."

While growing, the pheasants wear

(Alvin C. York Ag Students continued on page 11)

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Used Turbo Max \$46,500	'23 Case IH MD83, 8' disc mower, like new \$9,500	New VT1100, 25' Turbo-Max CALL	(2) Used 24' Turbo Max, in stock \$59,500

Alvin C. York Ag Students

FROM PAGE 10

blindners to reduce the incidence of the birds injuring one another.

"Pleasants are aggressive toward one another and have been known to peck each other to death," Wright said. "Once they get big enough, we catch them and put blinders on them so that when we release them in the fly pen, we don't have any injuries."

The blinders are removed before the birds are released at the hunting preserve.

All this leads up to the single-day Feather to Fork hunt at the lodge, with sponsors playing between \$250 and \$1,000 to take part in the hunt. Students help prepare and serve a farm-to-table lunch for sponsors and hunters.

"Our overall goal is to raise money

for the school's agriculture program, but there are three main objectives," Moody said. "First, students experience an alternative agriculture produce like game birds and see that not every farmer raises corn or cattle. Second, they learn about the conservation side of agriculture. And third, they see the hospitality aspect of the hunting business and how we take care of our customers. Students help them sign up and show them around."

YAI is the largest public high school campus by acreage in the U.S., spanning 400 acres.

"The school farm has been underutilized the past 40 years, but we currently have a working farm with 16 species of animals," said John Bush, YAI director of schools. "In summer and fall, we have more than 1,000 animals, the majority of which are turkeys, chickens, pheasants

and quail we will either process or use in our Feather to Fork program."

The proceeds earned from the program will continue to support the school's farm as it grows in the future.

"We plan to hold the Feather to Fork hunt annually, and it could grow into a two- or three-day event for sporting enthusiasts," Moody said. "Agriculture is important for everyone because you couldn't eat if you didn't have a farmer out there. The school is doing a great job teaching kids about that, and I want to support their efforts."

Last fall, senior agriculture students got to accompany hunters in the field.

"We allowed three shooters in the field at a time, so two of the hunters took a student out with them so students could experience the bird hunt with adults," Moody said. "My goal is to give them the experience of bird hunting because it has died in the Southeast with the drop in bird numbers. They also got to see the bird dogs working in the field."

"And there is more. Students got to practice shooting clay targets, and Orvis out of Knoxville came and taught about fly casting as a form of fishing. We had drone demos, too. A lot of cool stuff went on that day, and the students are anxious to do it again."



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Above: Sam Brown, CTE director and farm manager, and Marissa Wright, ag educator, assist students in feeding and caring for pheasants in the Feather to Fork program. (Jeff Adkins photo)

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Researchers determine chick sex, mortality in eggs before hatching

URBANA, Ill. - Eggs and poultry provide important sources of protein globally, driving a major industry with large economic impacts. Challenges to hatchery operations include embryo mortality, fertility, sex determination and eggshell characteristics. These features have a substantial impact on production, but they are difficult and time-consuming to estimate.

A University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign research team has conducted multiple studies using near infrared (NIR) and hyperspectral imagery (HSI) to evaluate chicken eggs, potentially leading to more efficient, safe and humane production methods. They discuss their findings in a series of publications.

Their most recent study uses HSI and machine learning to predict chick embryo mortality. Previous research has shown that embryo mortality rates in hatcheries can reach more than 10 percent, which impacts economic viability, production efficiency and animal welfare.

"If there is a genetic disorder or other inherent issue, some eggs don't produce healthy chicks, and the embryo dies. This poses a health hazard, as dead embryos can harbor bacteria. If we can detect and remove them early in the incubation period, we can avoid biosecurity issues," said lead author Md. Wadud Ahmed, a doctoral student in the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering (ABE), part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and The Grainger College of Engineering at U. of I. when the research was conducted.

Hatcheries can test for mortality by shining a bright light through the egg, but this method requires time and resources.

The researchers obtained 300 chick-

en eggs from the U. of I. poultry farm and placed them in a commercial incubator. They used a hyperspectral camera system to acquire images before incubation and after four days in the incubator.

After incubation, the researchers could identify spectral wavelength patterns from the images of dead and alive embryos. They used those images to build machine learning models that could interpret each egg's status based on spectral images in early incubation. They found the best performing model reached up to 97 percent accuracy on day four.

In another study, they focused on determining the sex of the embryo. Currently, hatcheries cull male chicks after incubation, but early identification could prevent this.

"Male chicks are considered a by-product because they don't lay eggs and they are not economically feasible for meat production. Around 6 billion male chicks are culled annually in the U.S., which raises serious animal welfare, economic and biosecurity issues for the hatchery. If we can identify the embryos early, we can avoid the culling of males and use the eggs for table eggs or in food production," Ahmed said.

Some European countries have banned the culling of male chicks, and the U.S. poultry industry is searching for technology solutions that would enable early identification of male embryos.

For this study, the researchers also obtained eggs from the U. of I. poultry farm and placed them in a commercial incubator, acquiring HSI images before and during incubation.

"For each egg, we have the hyperspectral images and we have the reference parameter, which is whether the egg produced a male or female chick.

With this information, we can create a library of images and reference parameters, and we can use machine learning and explainable AI to process this information and train the model," Ahmed said. "Then you can select an unknown egg; the system scans the egg, and the model reads the pattern based on previous experience to predict if the egg will yield a male or female chick."

The researchers obtained 75 percent accuracy at day 0 (early incubation) in classifying male and female embryos.

In additional studies, they looked at other egg characteristics, including fertility, shell strength, shell thickness and yolk ratio.

"Conventional testing methods are destructive; for example, to measure the shell strength, you need to break the eggs. Our primary focus is to develop non-destructive, cost-effective methods. With NIR and HSI, we do not need to destroy the eggs. We just need to scan them and the machine learning model will determine the desired parameter," said Mohammed Kamruzzaman, assistant professor in ABE and corresponding author on the papers.

While regular cameras record light in three channels (red, green and blue) to capture visible images, NIR captures bands beyond visible light to detect chemical composition. HSI records

hundreds of bands across the light spectrum to yield molecular information.

To determine shell characteristics, the researchers used NIR spectroscopy, which is less expensive than HSI, but does not capture the complex molecular information required for sex and mortality determination.

If these techniques are to be implemented by the hatchery industry, the process needs to be automated, Kamruzzaman noted.

"We are working on developing a system with a robotic arm that can separate the eggs. For example, after the machine learning model identifies an egg as male or female, the arm can remove the male eggs," he said.

"NIR and HSI technology have applications in agriculture, food, environment and biomedicine. It's new for the poultry industry, but the results we obtained in our research are very promising, so I think implementing it could be very useful for the industry's processing or farm side."

The researchers have published their NIR datasets on shell strength, shell thickness and yolk ratio, making them freely available for other researchers to use. They plan to publish their HSI image data sets as well.





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USDA debuts America First Trade Promotion Program

By DOUG SCHMITZ
Iowa Correspondent

CHESTERFIELD, Mo. – The USDA on April 16 announced additional support for American farmers and producers through its new initiative, the America First Trade Promotion Program, to help expand export markets for U.S. food and agricultural products.

Under the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, starting in fiscal year 2027, the USDA will have an additional \$285 million annually in supplemental funding that it will use to support flagship USDA Foreign Agricultural Service market development programs like the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program.

The USDA Foreign Agricultural Service will provide funding to 55 nonprofit organizations and cooperatives through the America First Trade Promotion Program, the agency said.

For example, the American Soybean Association (ASA), the U.S. Soybean Export Council and the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health will be working together to use their \$14 million in USDA Foreign Agricultural Service allocated funding they collectively received to increase international interest in U.S. soy.

The program will focus on giving buyers the tools and knowledge needed to source and promote soy products of U.S. origin, the agency said. The initiative will include training programs for food companies, feed producers, and local processors in growing and emerging markets.

Jim Sutter, CEO of the U.S. Soybean Export Council in Chesterfield, Mo., told Farm World, “We’re pleased that U.S. soy has received America First Trade Promotion Program funding as we work jointly with the American Soybean Association and the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health to grow global demand for U.S. soy.”

“We’re focused on turning trade agreements into growing demand, or to quote USDA Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Luke Lindberg ‘to turn market access into market share,’” he said. “We will do this by equipping buyers with the tools and technical knowledge so that customers understand the economic value that U.S. soy can bring to them.”

He said this includes targeted engagement with high-value buyers and strong in-market support, placing technical experts alongside customers to deliver tailored solutions: “These efforts are designed

to accelerate buyer conversion and generate near-term sales, while reinforcing U.S. soy as a strategic, long-term choice.

“We are building local industry expertise, highlighting U.S. soy’s sustainability credentials, and advancing environmental solutions that align with customer priorities,” he added.

By strengthening trade relationships, enhancing technical servicing and supporting improved market access, he said the U.S. Soybean Export Council “ensures buyers have the confidence, capability and support needed to choose, source and promote U.S. soy in global markets.”

Morey Hill, World Initiative for Soy in Human Health chair and Perry, Iowa farmer, said the program funding supports the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health and U.S. soy to capitalize on years of market development efforts in developing and emerging markets: “This funding will allow the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health to launch new and innovative programs with partners who are eager to try U.S. soy.”

Scott Metzger, ASA president and Williamsport, Ohio, farmer, said, “For soybean farmers, demand is everything. This funding helps strengthen long-term market access and ensures U.S. soy remains competitive in a global marketplace, keeping American farmers at the forefront of growing global demand.”

In an April 28 statement to Farm World, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture said the association will use the \$2,250,000 in funding allocated to them to strengthen state-led international trade efforts that expand market opportunities for U.S. agriculture.

“Funding will support activities such as inbound trade missions,

collaboration with government and industry partners and targeted efforts to address non-tariff barriers, and resolve trade challenges in priority markets,” the association said.

“These initiatives will help state departments of agriculture connect technical expertise, regulatory understanding and global engagement to better position U.S. farmers in the international marketplace,” the association added.

Moreover, association officials said this investment will help farmers and agricultural businesses by expanding reliable access to global markets, increasing export opportunities, and strengthening the competitiveness of U.S. agricultural products abroad.

“By building relationships with international buyers, addressing regulatory and non-tariff barriers and opening new market channels, the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture’s work helps producers connect with more buyers, broaden market access, and expand sales, while diversifying revenue streams. Over time, this supports more stable export demand, and positions U.S. producers for long-term growth and resilience.”

Dan Halstrom, president and CEO of the U.S. Meat Export Federation, which received \$12.5 million in program funding, said when global opportunities expand for U.S. red meat, this translates to higher returns for farmers and ranchers, and the entire U.S. supply chain.

“The U.S. Meat Export Federation looks forward to continued collaboration with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service to ensure successful implementation of the America First Trade Promotion Program, which is an excellent addition to the USDA’s lineup of foreign market development programs,” he added.



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Hill Heritage Farm is start to finish with fiber on only 8 acres

By Celeste Baumgartner
Ohio Correspondent

HAMILTON, Ohio - At Hill Heritage Farm and ShayDay Fiber Arts, Shay and Jamie Hill have a flock of fiber sheep and alpacas, plus assorted other critters. They raise and shear the sheep and alpacas, carefully process the fiber, and turn it into works of art. And they help others to do that.

"We are a little more than a hobby farm," Shay said. "It is not a hobby for us. It is a life and a lifestyle. We are Home-grown and Handmade. That is our motto. Even though we are only 8 acres, we are start-to-finish."

The Heritage part of the farm name comes from their backgrounds. Shay's family is from Appalachia, Jamie's from Pennsylvania. They were all farmers and homesteaders.

"We went back to our roots," Shay said.



Above: Shay and Jamie Hill have a flock of fiber sheep and alpacas, plus assorted other critters. They raise and shear the sheep and alpacas, carefully process the fiber, and turn it into works of art.

Right: Jamie Hill could save money by feeding her animals lower-quality feed, but her job as a shepherd is to give them good care. Which she does.

"Jamie is a carpenter. We can do anything. There is nothing we cannot achieve with our hands and our hearts. That is how I have been raised."

There is nothing she can't do, she reiterated, so she learned how to shear the alpacas. They are big animals and it can be challenging but she learned the techniques and special skills. While there are shearers who travel the country visiting big farms, Shay and her son, Jaydin, travel and service small farms.

"My son and I go out all week long during this time of year, when it is time to take the wool off, and we shear them," Shay said. "So, what do you do with all



that fiber? Spinning. I love weaving, and I am a spinner."

One wall of their barn-converted-to-a-house is lined with spinning wheels. Every year, she teaches a class to Miami University students. It's a knitting club; they came one year for a field trip and were hooked.

"I am their Fiber Mom, and we have adopted them as they have adopted us,"

she explained. "They come once a year for the whole day. They choose their topic, not that we stick to it. This year, they chose spinning, so their main topic was to learn how to dropspin."

A dropspindle is a tool used for spinning fibers into yarn. Jamie makes them, but with 23 students coming and not enough time, they had to source some from a local company. Once the students mastered dropspindling, no small feat, they moved on to spinning wheels.

Last year the students' topic was dyeing. Shay uses acid or natural dyes. She has a dye garden, and grows plants that can be used to dye naturally like indigo, several berries, and spinach, which she said dyes beautifully.

Next week, Shay will travel to Lexington

(Hill Heritage Farm
continued on page 18)



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(200) Holstein steers, just weaned, dehorned, castrated, well vaccinated. 606-806-7746 Flemingsburg, KY.

(3) reg. yearling purebred Angus bulls near Logansport, IN. OCC Anchor grandsons. Call for price 765-432-5153.

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Tubeline bale wrapper model TL5500AX2 (newer Honda engine), \$24,000; Jay Miller single bale wrapper model RSB1009 w/Honda eng. & hyd. unit, \$9800. 269-758-4055 Dowling, MI.

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'12 Brent 1082 w/ Tarps, Scales (G1490), 1250/65R32 Tires.....	\$ 47,000
'22 Bush Hog BCSS90 90' Skid Steer Mower.....	\$ 14,900
Brent 472 w/ Tarps, and 23.1X26 Diamond Tires.....	\$ 7,500
'22 Schulte XH1500 S5, 1000 RPM, 8 Laminated Tires.....	\$ CALL
Unverferth GC5000 w/ Tarps and 23.1X26 Diamond Tires.....	\$ 7,500
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Hill Heritage Farm

FROM PAGE 14

to teach a class on washing, sorting and drying the fiber properly, all of which takes skill. She also teaches felting classes.

"I was a nurse, but the love of this and these animals, it is a 'sheep hole' I have gone down, and I truly enjoy it," Shay said. "When you do this, it is easier to go to work."

All those sheep and alpacas, along with the animals they shear for other farms, created a surplus of fiber. Last year, Jamie found a solution for that.

"We had a lot of waste wool around the farm, and we have always tried to find ways to use it," Jamie said. "We finally discovered that you can pelletize it. So, we decided to turn one of the barns into a pellet mill. Now we have zero waste."

The fibers from older animals whose fleece can't be turned into quality yarns, and any other excess they have, they now pelletize. The pellets can be used as a fertilizer in the garden or for house plants, Jamie said. It is a natural source of nitrogen that breaks down, provides nitrogen, absorbs moisture, and then slowly releases that moisture back into the soil. It also helps to aerate the soil.

"You can put it on top like a mulch and let it soak down through, or you can put it underneath, and the roots will go down to it," Jamie explained. "It is also a slug repellent, so if you use it as a mulch on top, the slugs won't crawl over it to get to the plants."

They market the pellets, Shay's fiber creations, and other local artists' products at a shop on their farm, open by appointment. They also host several farm days each year.

"We invite other home-grown people," Shay said. "It is kind of like a little community, and they can come and share their talent. We try to support each other."



Above: Jamie Hill found a way to pelletize the fibers from older animals that can't be turned into quality yarns. It can be used as a fertilizer in the garden or for house plants.

"I do everything I can to avoid box stores," she said. "I do everything I can to reuse, recycle, shop local, to support my community even when it may cost more. I personally scavenge and look for things that have history, have meaning, and were made for the hands to the heart. That is what we do."

Not that what they do is cheap, she said. She could shop at box stores; she could feed her animals lower-quality food, but her job as a shepherd is to give them good care. Shay and Jamie admit that people who homestead work harder than people with a 9-to-5 job. Their family has not had a vacation in a long time.

"I really would love a vacation, but it is not worth it to me, because this is the life we have chosen."

For information, visit hillheritagefarm.com.

64 Holstein calves stolen from Ohio barn between May 2 and 3

By Stan Maddux
Indiana Correspondent

COLDWATER, Ohio - Police in Ohio are investigating the theft of 64 Holstein calves worth about \$2,000 apiece from a barn.

Mercer County Sheriff Doug Timmerman said people working at livestock auction houses within a few hundred miles from where the thefts occurred are asked to report any similar-looking calves that might seem out of place or suspicious in some other fashion.

"We are receiving tips but we just haven't had any solid success yet," Timmerman said.

Timmerman said more than one person was likely involved in the thefts due to the number of animals taken and work involved in the theft. He said whoever's responsible must be experienced at handling animals.

He said officers responding to the theft at Selhorst Farms discovered cattle gates left positioned to form a runway inside the barn for leading the 250-pound calves from their pens into a possible trailer outside with room to hold all the animals.

"It's obvious that somebody has moved cattle before," he said.

The thefts occurred sometime between 10 p.m. on May 2 and 6 a.m. on May 3 at a farm near Coldwater about two hours north of Cincinnati.

The farm raises calves from bottle feeding until they're ready for delivery to another operation for finishing.

Timmerman said all the stolen calves were scheduled to go to another farm about 15 minutes away for finishing about a week after the thefts.

They had already been weaned off the bottle and were eating grain.

Timmerman said the stolen calves, along with nearly 200 others similar in size, shared the barn with an unknown number of bottle-fed calves. They're inside an old turkey barn converted at some point into a facility for housing calves.

Timmerman said the barn on the outside still looks like it's made for turkeys, so, whoever stole them must have known there were calves inside.

"Who would have had knowledge that the calves were there and have the ability to get them out? Those are the things we're running down," he said.

Timmerman said other possibilities being looked at include taking the calves to sell quickly below market value to the owner of another finishing operation looking to rebuild their herd at a much lower cost.

He strongly believes any black-market sale in exchange for the calves happened a good distance from the close-knit community heavily into agriculture.

"You're not going to put them in a barn near Mercer County. Everybody is going to know they're not yours because all of the farmers around here know everybody," he said.

Making the investigation more challenging is lack of evidence from any of the surveillance videos captured near the scene of the crime. There were also no distinguishable tire tracks on the ground outside the barn due to vehicle and/or foot traffic disturbing the surface prior to the arrival of officers.

"Our detectives are working on a lot of different angles to try to come up with suspects. It's going to take us getting a good break," he said.

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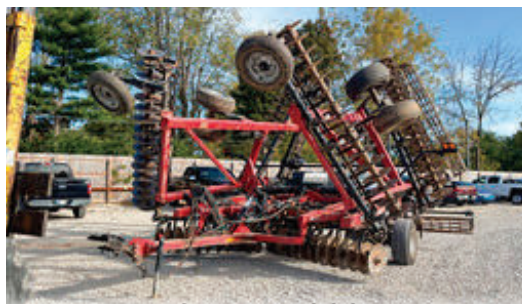
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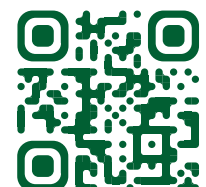
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Mounted archery takes aim at Rising Glory Farm

By **DOUG GRAVES**
Ohio Correspondent

LEWISBURG, Tenn. – Rising Glory Farm, with its wooded trails, winding creek, green hayfields and livestock, sits in the heart of Marshall County. And in the center of this 84-acre farm sits a track designed specifically for mounted archery.

Mounted archery is one of the



Above: Elizabeth Tinnan demonstrates to students the form needed to compete in mounted archery. (courtesy Running Rivers Photography)

fastest-growing equine sports in the United States and has found a home at Rising Glory Farm. Established in 2000 by Chris Carlough and his late wife, Ida Marie, Rising Glory Farm first specialized in breeding and training Tennessee Walking Horses for pleasure riding. Eventually they turned to agritourism and raising cattle, chickens, pigs, quail and boarding horses. Now, mounted archery is the latest attraction. The farm is home to Chattanooga Horse Archers and Tennessee Valley Archery.

It was Ida's idea to host mounted archery on the farm and she reached out to mounter archer Elizabeth Tinnan, founder of Chattanooga Horse Archers.

"I was contacted by Chris and Ida, saying they had this facility and wanted me to put this mounted archery together, for them" Tinnan said. "Ida knew I loved mounted archery and reached out to me. I wouldn't have imagined myself moving to the middle of Tennessee, but here I am."

Tinnan brought her experiences and the sport to Rising Glory Farm. Today, it is the only farm in Tennessee offering lessons by Tinnan, a top-ranked archer. She is a world class competitor who competes nationally and internationally.

"As a self-taught rider, I rode horses every chance I could," said Tinnan, who started riding horses at age 15. "But I hadn't found the equine



Above: Riders can adjust their horse's speed to the distance between targets in each competition. (photo submitted)

discipline that suited me until I tried mounted archery. It's a sport that requires talent, skill and precision."

The Georgia native was introduced to the sport in 2014. And this pastime quickly turned into her profession.

"I dabbled in a few different things," Tinnan said. "I once worked in a factory where I did welding, worked as a volunteer firefighter, even went to college thinking I wanted to become a veterinarian. Then somehow, I kinda fell into mounted archery and it was

everything that I never knew I needed. It completely altered the entire course of my life in a very positive way."

Like Tinnan, students typically try mounted archery following other equine disciplines, though others come with traditional archery experience.

"People with archery backgrounds usually have to re-learn the process

(Archery continued on page 2B)



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Archery

FROM PAGE 1B

because equipment and shooting techniques are different," Tinnan said. "What works on the ground doesn't necessarily work on the horse, whereas what works on the horse works both ways."

Mounted archers use traditional, recurve bows that don't have sights, pulleys or a shelf to enhance performance. Also, the height and mobility of the horse must be factored in for timing.

"The faster the horse goes, the more the arrow drifts off the target," Tinnan said.

Tinnan's lessons begin stationary on foot, showing her students how to carry and use gear. She demonstrates three shooting styles and helps students mount with equipment, load, draw and shoot. Eventually, students will shoot upon their horse, but at walking speed.

"We take our time going step by step because archers must confidently let go of the reins to execute," Tinnan said, adding that it's a challenge to twist and turn in the saddle while steadying aim.

Once they have confidence, riders can compete where they are judged on speed and accuracy. Competitions are scored with cumulative grading from multiple runs, some faster than others.

"Some courses require that you move a little faster and shoot a little faster, while other courses allow you to ride slower," Tinnan said. "Some rules require you to carry arrows in your quiver, others require you to carry them in your hand."

Whether experienced or a first tim-



Above: Elizabeth Tinnan spends time with her horse after mounted archery practice at Rising Glory Farm. (Jeff Adkins photo)

er, Tinnan is open to helping people engage in the sport.

"Whether it's an eventer who's already very comfortable cantering a horse or someone who watched a cool movie that had a mounted archer in it and they wanna do it because it's cool, I support every level of participant as long as they are willing to put in the work and do the training," Tinnan said.

"My client base is so broad and vast that it's eclectic. It's like when you get into someone's car and it goes from one music channel to the next, bouncing from country music to heavy metal. It's anybody and everyone who has ever had an interest in doing this."

Tinnan is tops in her sport, but her love of interacting with people overshadows the trophies and ribbons she wins.

"I am not a highly competitive person. I really enjoy the atmosphere, people and horses more than the winning aspect," she said. "But competing helps me enhance how I can train students and engage more people in the sport."



Above: The archer shown here reaches back into her quiver for another arrow. A rope keeps the rider and horse on the trail and targets are set 25 meters apart. (photo submitted)

Featured farmers named for Indiana State Fair

INDIANAPOLIS — the 2026 Featured Farmers who will be honored during this year's Indiana State Fair have been announced. The program continues to highlight the people behind Indiana agriculture and give fairgoers the chance to meet the Hoosier farmers and producers who power the state's agricultural industry across a wide range of products.

Now in its 11th year, the Featured Farmers program recognizes 15 farm families from across Indiana. Each operation represents a different region of the state and a wide range of agricultural products. Throughout the 15-day Indiana State Fair, August 7 - 23, with the Fair closed on Mondays, each farm family will be highlighted and will share their story with visitors.

"The Indiana State Fair exists to celebrate Indiana agriculture and the people who make it possible," said Ray Allison, Executive Director of the Indiana State Fair Commission. "Our Featured Farmers program allows guests to connect directly with Hoosier farm families and learn more about the dedication it takes to grow the food we rely on every day. We are proud to continue this tradition and grateful for Corteva's partnership in helping tell these stories."

Fairgoers can attend a daily live chat in the Glass Barn with the Featured Farmer of the day. Guests will also have opportunities throughout the fair to meet the farm families, learn about their operations, and ask questions about the work they do. More information about each farm family is available at IndianaStateFair.com.

Here are the 2026 Featured Farmers, their farm products, and their home counties:

- Friday, August 7 - Maplewood Farms LLC (Maple Syrup, Timber, Maple Sugar, Maple Craft Soda, Maple Gifts), Union County
- Saturday, August 8 - Greer Farms (Soybeans, Produce, Watermelons), Gibson County
- Sunday, August 9 - Fischer Farms (Beef, Pork, Poultry), Dubois County
- Tuesday, August 11 - Chism Family Farm (Corn, Soybeans, Sweet Corn), Howard County
- Wednesday, August 12 - Hasting Plants (Annual and Perennial Flowers and Plants), Posey County
- Thursday, August 13 - Schoettmer Prime Pork Farm (Pork), Tipton County
- Friday, August 14 - P.E. Brocksmith and Son Farm (Corn, Soybeans), Knox County
- Saturday, August 15 - Sennett Cattle (Beef, Corn, Soybeans), Montgomery County
- Sunday, August 16 - Promise Keeper Farms (Lavendar and Lavendar Products), Noble County
- Tuesday, August 18 - The Seedlings Flower Farm (Flower Farm, U-pick, Flower Truck, Air BnB) Monroe County
- Wednesday, August 19 - Yellow Tree Farm LLC (Custom Pork, Pumpkins, Drone Spraying), Rush County
- Thursday, August 20 - Stuckwish Family Farms (Watermelon, Cantaloupe, Tomatoes, Sweet Corn, Peppers, Pumpkins, Gourds, Flowers), Jackson County
- Friday, August 21 - Dague Dairy Farm (Dairy), Fulton County
- Saturday, August 22 - Morning Harvest Produce (Lettuce, Leafy Greens, Herbs, Salad Kits), Washington County
- Sunday, August 23 - Ault Farms Inc. (Row Crops, Beef) Fulton County

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Seminar looks at ways to create additional farm revenue

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A panel of United Soybean Board (USB) farmers-directors joined Agri-Pulse founder and editor Sara Wyant to discuss ways to create additional farm revenue streams such as high oleic soybean premiums, new cost share programs for cover crops and the burgeoning energy market. The discussion also touched on tools to improve on-farm resilience.

"In this economically challenging farm environment, growers are looking at ways to maximize productivity and revenue, while keeping costs as low as possible," said Wyant, who introduced a three-person panel of soybean board directors with the question of whether farmers will continue to support conservation on their farms after facing successive years of financial challenges.

According to Michigan farmer and USB director Laurie Isley, environmental sustainability is a longstanding tenet of her operation and a hedge against lower commodity prices and margins. She detailed a new USB cost-share program for cover crops in conjunction with the National Corn Growers Association and Pork Checkoff program that can return

additional revenue to the farm.

"We utilized cover crops for many, many years but a couple of years ago had to make a very tough decision because it was an extra \$35 an acre," Isley said. "We've been in some of the government cover crop programs before, and they are limited in terms of how long you are eligible. With the Farmers for Soil Health (FFSH) project through the National Pork Producers (Council) and the USB, available in 20 states, it offers cost-share and technical assistance for planting cover crops. This can offer farmers a way to get involved and see the long-term benefits (of cover crops)."

New in 2026, the FFSH program offers "no look-back" enrollment that welcomes growers who have attempted cover cropping (though not under federal government-based cost share programs) in the past. It offers producers open-ended, one-year contracts that can be renewed annually as long as the FFSH is funded. It pays farmers a premium of \$35 for growing cover crops.

"You can enroll up to 2,000 acres. Signup started May 1, so if you go to the FFSH website (<https://farmersforsoilhealth.com/>) you can enroll through there and find out who your technical advisor will be," said Isley.

From there, the conversation turned to premiums farmers can enjoy from cultivating high oleic soybeans, which are a genetically modified strain of soybeans that contain 70 percent or greater oleic acid. High oleic soybean oil is lower in saturated fat and higher in monounsaturated fat and is often labeled as heart-healthy. It is also regarded as more stable for industrial use than standard soybean oil.

The Soybean Checkoff has invested over \$10 million in developing the high oleic soybean industry. Currently, 21 varieties are available to farmers. Demand for high oleic beans is creating an additional premium available to those willing to grow high oleic brands for industry customers, noted Matt Chapman, Indiana farmer and USB director. Indiana and Ohio are the top producing states for high oleic soybeans, he said, with growers earning premiums ranging from 75 cents to \$1.25 per bushel in the 2025 season.

"Certain end users who buy our products offer incentives whether it's an ethanol plant or a soy processor for doing new practices," said Chapman, who recently planted his fourth annual high-oleic soybean crop. "High oleic-brand soybeans have been a home run for our industry in terms of return on investment. There is more demand than we can currently produce, and that puts us in a good position."

Starting with around 20 percent of his crop planted in high oleic beans, the Indiana farmer has gradually increased that share to 100 percent of his bean plantings. It is estimated that U.S. farmers currently have around 1.5 million acres of soybeans planted in high-oleic varieties, with intentions to expand their acreage in 2027, Chapman stated.

Recently, Indiana-based Beck's introduced a high oleic soybean seed variety,

according to Chapman. He noted that the USB estimated that by 2027 half of oleic beans produced by U.S. farmers will be utilized by the dairy industry. Industry markets for high oleic soybeans include food oil, dairy feed (utilizing roasted soybeans; a recent discovery), asphalt, bioplastics, fire-resistant hydraulic oil for mining operations, and more.

"Indiana has been really aggressive in promoting high oleic soybean oil," Chapman said. "We're blessed to have Frito Lay and Nestle as our first purchasers here in the state. As USB expands the market into other states, we're trying to help move the pile for everybody."

Renewable diesel offers another premium opportunity for soybean growers when nearby infrastructure exists, according to Kansas farmer and USB director Charles Atkinson. He said efforts to increase renewable diesel infrastructure and productivity remain a top priority of the USB. "If we can continue developing and producing more renewable diesel we are going to see more of an economic upturn on the prices we get," Atkinson said.

USB's 2026 priorities include expanding soy's biofuel footprint through research demonstrating soy's low carbon intensity and lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, investments will increase the overall renewable fuels market through new market development, with soy-based biofuels playing an important role in biodiesel, renewable diesel, Bioheat®, and the marine, air and rail markets.

The panel discussion, "How Sustainable Production and Economic Viability Can Coexist," was held on Thursday, May 7 as a free webinar and is archived through Agri-Pulse's website.

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River city mayors, Corn Belt Ports offer maritime employment program

By **TIM ALEXANDER**
Illinois Correspondent

PEORIA, Ill. - Over 260,000 jobs and \$17 billion in personal income were tied to Illinois rivers in 2021, according to the National Waterways Foundation. In April, the Corn Belt Ports Rural Logistics and Maritime Training and Education Consortium was formed to assist regional workforce development professionals serving river-dependent businesses and industries. According to Robert Sinkler, executive director and founder of Corn Belt Ports, workforce training and development is important to ensure the U.S.' multimodal transportation system and supply chain can function at full capacity in order for the Corn Belt to maintain its global competitiveness.

"The Corn Belt Ports Rural Logistics and Maritime Training and Education Consortium is...an essential part of our ground game to attract more badly needed infrastructure investment into our region," Sinkler said. "Maritime workforce security is national security."

The first annual meeting of the Illinois River Cities and Towns Initiative (IRCTI) in Peoria last November brought together the mayors of 11 Illinois river communities for the first time. During the meeting, the consortium was established. In partnership with We Work the Waterways and Western Illinois University (WIU), the consortium brought together a broad network of higher education institutions and industry from Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin in cities located along the upper Mississippi and Illinois rivers.

The consortium's goal is to expand workforce training, develop clear career pathways and better align educational programs with employer needs across inland waterways, ports, logistics and maritime-related industries. Its launch comes at a pivotal moment,

as federal efforts intensify to strengthen the nation's maritime industry and workforce infrastructure. This will produce more opportunities for rural workers to secure good-paying, reliable jobs in the maritime industry, according to Pam Maxwell, director of programs and operations for We Work the Waterways.

"This partnership represents a meaningful step forward in strengthening the maritime workforce by expanding awareness and opportunity into rural communities that have long been connected to our inland waterways. By collaborating with universities across multiple states, we're building a broader, more inclusive pipeline of talent for the industry," Maxwell said.

J.F. Brennan Inc., Lawson Marine and Rigging, Riverview Tug Service, Inc. and Alter Logistics are among the river-related companies that have signed letters of support for the consortium, which will seek to leverage regional partnerships and educational expertise to position the Midwest as a leader in developing a skilled maritime industry workforce, according to Dr. Honey Zimmerman, assistant professor of supply chain management, WIU School of Accounting and Business Administration.

"At its core, this initiative is about people - creating accessible pathways into maritime and logistics careers. At WIU, we are focused on aligning education with real workforce needs and building clear, stackable pathways into high-demand careers that support the nation's inland waterway system and broader supply chains," she said.

In addition to WIU, higher education institutions aligned with the consortium are Black Hawk College, Carl Sandburg College, CulverStockton College, Eastern Iowa Community Colleges, Illinois Central College, John Wood Community College, Northeast Iowa Community College, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and West-



Above: Robert Sinkler, executive director and founder of Corn Belt Ports, is pictured with Anshu Singh of Corn Belt Ports, at last November's initial meeting of the Illinois Rivers Cities and Towns Coalition. In the background are Peoria, Illinois Mayor Rita Ali and Councilman Andre Allen, among others. During the weekend-long meeting the Corn Belt Ports Rural Logistics and Maritime Training and Education Consortium was also established. (T. Alexander photo)

ern Technical College.

"Corn Belt Ports is proud to partner with WIU to strengthen maritime workforce pathways across the region. This consortium builds durable regional partnerships, enhances river-based sector collaboration, expands training and education, supports rural economic development, and connects more people to afloat and ashore careers - further strengthened through our collaboration with We Work the Waterways," said Chris Smith, director of operations for the Corn Belt Ports and executive director of the consortium.

Look for more information on the consortium's activities as they develop the program on the website www.cornbeltports.com.



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Pseudorabies confirmed for first time since 2004 in swine herd

By DOUG SCHMITZ
Iowa Correspondent

DES MOINES, Iowa – Pseudorabies has been confirmed at an Iowa commercial swine facility.

It is the first time since 2004 that a case has been confirmed in domestic

swine.

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) National Veterinary Services Laboratories confirmed pseudorabies at the facility on April 30.

Pseudorabies is a contagious, infectious and often fatal herpes virus

primarily affecting swine, which are the only natural hosts, according to APHIS. While eradicated from U.S. commercial herds in 2004, the virus persists in feral swine, causing reproductive failure, respiratory issues, high mortality in piglets, and remains a potential threat of exposure for domestic pigs.

Officials said the Iowa infection was traced to a Texas facility where swine were housed outdoors where they could have had contact with feral hogs. Swine from the Texas herd also tested positive for pseudorabies.

APHIS, located at Iowa State University in Ames, is working closely with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in Des Moines, and the Texas Animal Health Commission in Austin, to conduct traceback efforts to better understand the detection, prevent further spread, and identify any additional potential exposures.

The Iowa facility had fewer than 100 pigs. It received five boars from the Texas facility. While the five boars tested positive, the remaining pigs on the Iowa site tested negative.

Iowa Agriculture Secretary Mike Naig said he and other state animal health officials are "moving decisively" to eliminate the disease: "The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land

Stewardship has spent years preparing for these types of animal health events, and we have a strong, capable team in place to respond.

Naig and Iowa's State Veterinarian Jeff Kaisand, DVM, said in a May 1 online news conference that about 100 pigs in the facility were destroyed to prevent further spread of the virus according to the guidelines of the American Veterinary Medical Association, with disposal taking place onsite, followed by disinfection.

Naig said the virus was detected through routine surveillance and only the five boars that came from Texas tested positive for pseudorabies: "We did not have any other additional positive tests outside of the five that were originally shipped from Texas, which gives us a strong indication that, given that there was no spread within the facility, there was no spread outside of the facility, either."

Kaisand said testing would be done on all swine operations within a five-mile radius of the affected facility, with additional testing for those within a two-mile radius 30 days after clean-up is completed. While the virus was eradicated originally through vaccination, he said it is not appropriate to vaccinate herds now because the incident is isolated and contained.

Pat McGonegle, Iowa Pork Producers Association CEO, said state and federal officials expected the testing and related monitoring would involve 20 to 30 farms surrounding the affected area.

Anna Forseth, DVM, director of animal health at the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) in Urbandale, Iowa, said, "The surveillance program was in place, the diagnostic laboratory reported timely results, the state veterinarian was notified and took swift action in conjunction with the state's Department of Agriculture and the USDA, and traceability allowed for communication with the state of Texas, initiating a fast response there."

"While it is never ideal to have a case occur, the focus here should be that there is a known risk, and industry measures in place to swiftly coordinate and address that risk," she added.

While the threat from feral swine remains a constant reality, APHIS said the combination of "robust diagnostic systems and proactive farm-level biosecurity provide a strong defense for the U.S. pork supply. Vigilance and strong biosecurity protocols ensure herds stay protected, and the export market remains secure."

Naig said, "Iowa's hardworking farmers lead the nation in pork production. It's important for people to know that pseudorabies is not a food safety concern, and this virus does not pose a risk to consumers. The United States' pork supply remains safe and secure, and we are committed to protecting animal health."

Bryan Humphreys, NPPC CEO, said, "The officials in Iowa and Texas are administering the safety response protocols that we've talked about and put in place the last 22 years to ensure a rapid, effective disease response plan."

Because pseudorabies is a reportable disease, APHIS said it has notified international trading partners, but the impact is expected to be minimal: "There is always a potential for trade disruption, which is why we moved so swiftly," Naig said. "We anticipate minimal, if any, short-term trade disruptions." APHIS added, however, there may be limited, short-term impacts on exports of U.S. swine and swine genetics.

Officials said they are not considering any restrictions on livestock exhibitions at this time.

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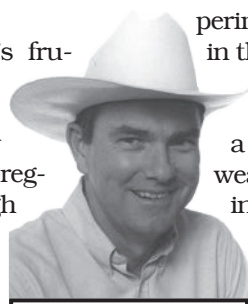
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Cheaper options to determine if cows are pregnant don't always work

My idol in the cattle business was Henry Miller. At one time in the 19th century, Miller controlled 14 million acres all over the West and it was said that he could ride in his buckboard from Baja California to British Columbia and sleep in a Miller and Lux bunkhouse and eat his own beef every night. Although I have reservations about that claim. I don't doubt he could sleep in a Miller and Lux bunkhouse every night, but I do doubt he ate his own beef every night. Having heard all the stories about Henry's stingy nature there's no way he'd eat his own beef... it would be that of his neighbors!

We're talking about a man who fired a cook because his potato peelings were too thick and a carpenter who used new lumber to make a wire gate. Being a sub-optimal spender myself, you can see how I stand in awe of Henry Miller. After all, I'm guilty of recycling deformed paper clips, making change out of the plate in church and using toilet paper that was previously hanging from trees the day

after Halloween. Hoping to follow in Henry's frugal footsteps, I tried to eliminate any expense. One of the costs that gnawed at me every year was paying the vet to preg-check my cows, even though my vet had never been wrong and was so good he could tell me the sex of the unborn calf about 50 percent of the time. Still, I tried to come up with a cheaper option. I could have gone to a school to learn how to preg-check but then I'd be stuck with a hotel bill, plane ticket and the cost of the school. So, I started researching other ways to find out if a cow was infected with progeny. An old cowpoke once told me about "bumping" a cow. At what you think would be the fifth or sixth month of pregnancy you're supposed to lay your hand on a cow's flank and jab her in an inward and upward trajectory. If the cow is pregnant, you should feel the fetus rebounding back against your hand. I ex-



It's THE PITTS
By Lee Pitts

perimented with a cow I knew was in the family way and all I felt was a quick kick in the knee.

Next, I read that if you take a little milk from a cow who just weaned her calf and put that milk in a glass of water you could tell her pregnancy status. If the drop of milk goes all the way to the bottom of the glass and does not diffuse, the cow is definitely pregnant. If the molecules of milk go their separate ways, the cow is open. Once again, I experimented with a cow who'd just weaned her calf but not only was she dry as a bone I got another nasty kick, this time in the groin.

In a spark of genius I applied a more scientific approach and came up with a theory that the cows who stayed around the weaning pen the longest bawling for their calves were the best mothers and therefore were also my best fertile Myrtles. So, I wrote down the ear tags of all the cows, figuring that the cows

only bawled for a day or two and then left to go graze were bound to be open. This made a lot of sense to me, but I had not tested my thesis and therefore I had to pay the vet to preg-check once again which caused great discomfort in the wallet area.

You can imagine my surprise when the ear tag numbers did not correlate with the vet's pregnancy prophecy. In fact, the vet came up with exactly opposite results and the old toothless cows that stayed around the weaning pen bawling for seven days were open. As were some shelly old cows that looked like they'd been on Ozempic®. I refused to admit that my theory was wrong and to prove it I kept those cows the vet called open and eventually I had to admit that either they were 15 months pregnant or my theory was no good.

Asking myself what Henry Miller would do in a similar situation, I decided to fire the crazy fool who came up with the idiotic theory in the first place.

In average years, corn is up, soybean planting underway in Midwest

Summer winds is sniffin' round the bloomin' locus' trees;

And the clover in the pasture is a big day fer the bees,

And they been a-swiggin' honey, above board and on the sly,

Tel they stutter in their buzzin' and stagger as they fly. - James Whitcomb Riley

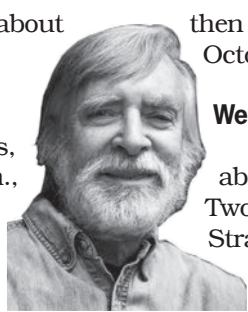
The Sun

The sun is within six degrees of its highest position in the sky, and the progress to summer slows from approximately 5 percent per week, to about half that. By May 15th, the sun reaches a declina-

tion of 18 degrees, 50 minutes, about 87 percent of the way to solstice.

The Stars

As Leo, with its bright Regulus, moves off to the west by 10 p.m., the likelihood of frost diminishes sharply, and tender bedding plants, tomatoes and peppers can be set out - as long as you are prepared to protect them on cooler nights. When Leo has moved well into the southwest, and Arcuturus is almost in the center of the sky, lanky Hercules behind it, and the Milky Way fills the southeast,



POOR WILL'S ALMANACK
By Bill Felker

then frost should stay away until October.

Weather Trends

May 21 is in the 70s or 80s about 85 percent of the time. Two years out of three, the Strawberry Rains let up on May 21, and this date records just a 35 percent chance of showers. Skies are at least partly cloudy 70 percent of the time.

Natural Calendar

The center of Late Spring is already

closing the canopy. Sycamores, Osage, cottonwoods and oaks are leafing out, and white mulberries and buckeyes blossom. Along the sidewalks, iris, poppies, sweet William and floescence of bridal wreath spirea and snowball viburnum have appeared. The delicate Korean lilacs take over from the fading standard lilac varieties, and bright rhododendrons replace the azaleas. Serviceberry trees have small green berries now. In the alleys, scarlet pimpernel comes in beside the thyme-leaved speedwell.

Columbine is open on the cliffs, and

(Poor Will continued on page 10B)

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United States dairy exports hit a record high in March

You'll recall March milk production was up 2.3 percent from a year ago. That kept U.S. churns, vats and dryers busy, according to USDA's latest Dairy Products report.

Cheese output totaled 1.259 billion pounds, up 8.1 percent from February, and 1.2 percent above March 2025. Output for the three-month period hit 3.7 billion pounds, up 3.1 percent from 2025.

Wisconsin produced 311.9 million pounds of the March total, up 9.9 percent from February, and 1.2 percent above a year ago. California produced 185.5 million pounds, down 0.2 percent from February, and down 15.2 percent from a year ago. Idaho produced 86.2 million, up 8.4 percent from February, and 1.4 percent more than a year ago.

Mozzarella production totaled 421.6 million pounds, up 0.5 percent from a year ago. Year to date, 1.2 billion pounds had been produced, up 2.8 percent from 2025.

American cheese came in at 488.3 million pounds, up 7.4 percent from February, but 2.3 percent below a year ago. YTD, 1.4 billion pounds had been produced, up 1.2 percent.

Italian style cheeses totaled 542.3 million pounds, up 6.6 percent from February, and 2.3 percent above a year ago, with YTD hitting 1.6 billion pounds, up 5.1 percent.

Cheddar output jumped to 341.8 million pounds, up 25.2 million or 8.0 percent from February's level, which was revised up 1.9 million pounds from last month's report. But output was down 7.1 million pounds or 2.0 percent from a year ago.

Butter production climbed to 231.5 million pounds, up 9.1 million pounds or 4.1 percent from February's level, which was revised up 1.2 million pounds. Output was up 2.7 million pounds or 1.2 percent from a year ago. YTD, 694.8 million pounds were produced, up 7.1 percent from a year ago.

Yogurt production totaled 490.3 million pounds, up 6.5 percent from a year ago, with YTD output at 1.4 billion pounds, up 6.5 percent.

Hard ice cream climbed 62.8 million pounds, up 5.1 percent from 2025, with YTD output hitting 176.7 million pounds, up 1.6 percent.

The additional cheese production re-

sulted in plenty of whey. Dry whey output hit 78.7 million pounds, up 11.4 million pounds or 16.8 percent from February, and up 2.7 million pounds or 3.6 percent from a year ago. YTD whey hit 223.6 million pounds, up 4.7 percent. Whey stocks grew to 64 million pounds, up 3.9 million or 6.3 percent from February, and down 200,000 pounds, off 0.5 percent from 2025.

Nonfat dry milk output shot up to 175.3 million pounds, up 23.4 million or 15.4 percent from February, and up 15.8 million or 9.9 percent from a year ago. YTD output, at 478.6 million pounds, was up 5.1 percent. Stocks grew to 235.7 million pounds, up 15.3 million or 6.9 percent from February, but down 27.1 million or 10.3 percent from a year ago.

Skim milk powder production climbed to 37.4 million pounds, up 9.7 million pounds or 35.2 percent from February, and up 3.4 million or 10.1 percent from a year ago. YTD skim milk powder stood at 112.2 million pounds, up 13 percent from a year ago.

Thankfully, U.S. exports are strong and soared to a record 568.3 million pounds in March, according to the USDA's latest data. HighGround Dairy credited especially strong shipments to Mexico, South Korea and New Zealand.

Cheese sailings totaled 139.9 million pounds, up 28.7 percent from March 2025, and were a major part of the uptick in exports to Mexico, says HighGround, adding that the increase was not a surprise considering U.S. prices compared to other global exporters.

Butter exports hit 25 million pounds, up 85.5 percent from a year ago, with year-to-date shipments up 109.9 percent. Again, the price was right.

Whey shipments totaled 54 million, up 37.1 percent, and up 35.6 percent year to date.

Nonfat-skim milk powder totaled 131.2 million pounds, down 7.8 percent, from a year ago, first year over year decline since Sept. 2025, according to HighGround, but year-to-date exports were up 5.0 percent. Demand from Mexico softened in March, along with Southeast Asia and South America, but powder remains tight here at home, evidenced by

the record prices, which will surely curve exports.

Speaking of exports, the National Milk Producers Federation reports that NEXT member cooperatives secured 58 contracts in April, adding 16 million pounds of product in NEXT-assisted sales in 2026. These products will go to customers in Asia, North America, Oceania, Middle East-North Africa, South America, Central America and the Caribbean from

April through November, says NMPF.

Powder reversed the Global Dairy Trade's direction this week. The weighted average rose 1.5 percent, following a 2.7 percent decline on April 21 and a 3.4 percent drop on April 7. Volume fell to 30.3 million pounds, down from 33.1 million on April 21. The average metric ton price was \$4,127 U.S., down from \$4,143 on April 7.

The gains were led by buttermilk powder, up 9.0 percent. Skim milk powder was up 3.0 percent, following a 3.2 percent rise on April 21. Whole milk powder was up 2.2 percent after slipping 0.6 percent last time. Anhydrous milkfat advanced 1.1 percent after plunging 9.6 percent last time.

Butter was down 2.6 percent after leading the declines the past two events, dropping 7.9 percent Tuesday. Cheddar was down 3.6 percent, following a 1.1 percent gain last time, while GDT Mozzarella was up 4.7 percent, following a 3.1 percent decline.

StoneX says the GDT 80 percent butterfat butter price equates to \$2.4451 U.S. per pound, down from \$2.5233 on April 21. Cheddar equated to \$2.0916, down from \$2.1765 last time. GDT

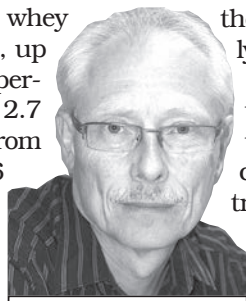
skim milk powder averaged \$1.6091 per pound, up from \$1.5641, while whole milk powder averaged \$1.6968, up from \$1.6629.

"North Asia purchases decreased significantly from the last event and has remained well-below average for months now," StoneX concludes. "SE Asia and Oceania purchases increased from the last event, but it is also below average purchasing volumes. The Middle East also dropped off purchases, leaving only Central America and Europe at purchase volumes near historical average."

Dairy culling remains above year ago numbers. USDA says 48,500 dairy cows were sent to slaughter the week ending April 18, up 3,100 or 6.8 percent from a year ago. Year to date 886,300 had been culled, up 50,700 or 6.1 percent from a year ago.

There is good reason culling running so strong. The Daily Dairy Report's Sarina Sharp wrote in the May 1 Milk Producer Council newsletter "Live cattle futures set fresh all-time highs this week, easily besting the once unthinkable prices logged in October. Dairy producers are cashing substantially higher cull cow and beef calf checks than they did a year ago, when beef-related revenues were already astoundingly high. Newborn crossbred calves are selling for \$700 or \$800 more than they did at this time last year, while cull cows are \$200 to \$300 higher than they were in late-April 2025.

"It all adds up to a lot of non-milk revenue," says Sharp. "When lower milk prices arrive, dairy producers will be somewhat shielded from the market signal to produce more milk. For now, they're poised to enjoy record-shattering beef incomes and decent milk revenues to boot. They'll likely continue to add cows."



MIELKE MARKET WEEKLY
By Lee Mielke

HIGH QUALITY TILLABLE FARMLAND
GRANT CO, IN

ONLINE at halderman.com

AUCTION

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3RD | 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM ET

PROPERTY LOCATION: 2 miles southwest of Jonesboro, IN on the south side of CR 600 S a half mile east of SR 9 in Mill Twp, Grant Co.

AJ Jordan: 317.697.3086 | Larry Jordan: 765.473.5849
Brandon Stroble: 765.499.1170 | Emma Barr: 260.494.0992

60+/- ACRES: 59+/- Tillable | 1.0+/- Roads/Other

HALDERMAN REAL ESTATE & FARM MANAGEMENT
800.424.2324 | halderman.com

Auctioneer: Russell D. Harmeyer IN Auct. Lic. #AU1000277, HRES IN Auct. Lic. #AC69200019, Farm: Craig, HLS#AJJ-13219

1,341.658+/- ACRES | 16 TRACTS | CLINTON COUNTY, OH
MOSTLY ALL TILLABLE | (2) HOMES | OUTBUILDINGS

THURSDAY, JUNE 11TH, 6:00 PM ET

AUCTION

CLINTON CO FAIRGROUNDS EXPO HALL
268 NELSON AVENUE
WILMINGTON, OH 45177

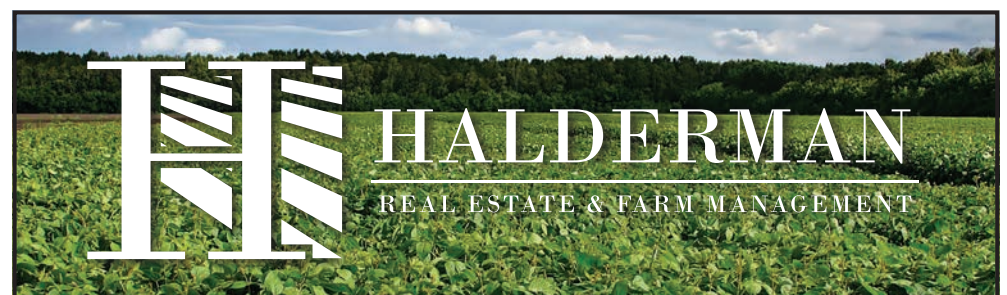
OPEN HOUSES: Saturday, May 16 | 10am - 12pm AND Thursday, May 21 | 5pm - 7pm ET

PROPERTY LOCATION: Southwestern Clinton County, Ohio in Marion, Jefferson and Clark Townships.

Emily Wildermuth: 937.631.5047 | Robert McNamara: 614.309.6551

HALDERMAN REAL ESTATE & FARM MANAGEMENT
800.424.2324 | halderman.com

Auctioneer: Russell D. Harmeyer, Seller: David T. Taylor Estate, HLS#EAE-13216



UPCOMING AUCTIONS

CLINTON CO, IN: MAY 20 (ONLINE) 4.749+/- Acres

Rare Wooded Retreat • Located Near Frankfort, IN

Contact: Sam Clark: 317.442.0251 or Jim Clark: 317.627.6928

GRANT CO, IN: JUNE 3 (ONLINE) 60+/- Acres • 1 Tract

High Quality Tillable Farmland Contact: AJ Jordan: 317.697.3086, Larry

Jordan: 765.473.5849, Brandon Stroble: 765.499.1170 or Emma Barr: 260.494.0992

PULASKI CO, IN: JUNE 8 (ONLINE) 107.5+/- Acres • 4 Tracts

Rural Residence • Barns • Tillable Contact: AJ Jordan: 317.697.3086,

Larry Jordan: 765.473.5849 or Josh Wagenbach: 219.863.0870

NEW! OWEN CO, IN: JUNE 10 (ONLINE) 27+/- Acres • Woods

Potential Building Site • Timber and Hunting Opportunities

Contact: Todd Litten: 812.327.2466

NEW! CLINTON CO, OH: JUNE 11 (LIVE) 1,341.658+/- Acres

16 Tracts • Mostly All Tillable • (2) Homes • Outbuildings

AUCTION LOCATION: Clinton County Fairgrounds: Expo Hall

Contact: Emily Wildermuth: 937.631.5047 or Robert McNamara: 614.309.6551

PRIVATE SALES

TIPPECANOE CO, IN: 22.691+/- Acres • 3 Tracts

Potential Home Site Contact: Sam Clark: 317.442.0251

LAPORTE CO, IN: 8.9+/- Acres • Multi-Use Estate Parcel • Woods

Homesite Potential • Recreational Seclusion • Wildlife Contact:

Nolan Sampson: 219.575.1486 or Abigail Heaps (MTM Realty Group) 219.393.8149

NEWTON CO, IN: 173.36+/- Acres • Tillable Farmland

Pole Building Contact: John Bechman: 765.404.0396

800.424.2324 | halderman.com

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Auctioneer: RUSSELL D. HARMAYER, IN Auct. Lic. #AC69200019, IL Lic. #417.013288 MI Lic. #6505264076. AUCTIONEER: RUSSELL D. HARMAYER, IN Auct. Lic. #AU1000277, IL Auct. Lic. #441.002337 & OH Auct. Lic. #2001014575

Southeast Michigan records wettest spring since 1893

The National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center's outlook through May 19 is finally calling for moderating temperatures, though just a near normal

outlook for now, and perhaps drying out a bit, with an outlook for just leaning above normal precipitation. Eric Snodgrass has a chart that confirms that our area of southeast Michigan has had the wettest spring in 134 years of data, since 1893, followed closely by northwest Ohio and northeast Indiana.

Agriculture Awareness Days or Rural Education Days (Project RED) to educate youth (and their parents) about agriculture and where their food comes from are common in schools at this time of the year. For grains, rice is the most consumed grain, eaten by over 4 billion people every day. Wheat is number two in the world, with tributes given to Norman Borlaug, considered the "Father of the Green Revolution." He is credited with saving over one billion people from starvation through new wheat varieties and adaptive techniques. Wheat is considered the "staff of life" and could be eaten perhaps three times a day by many Americans and others. Corn, or maize, is the number three grain in the world and was grown from South American to Canada by the time Christopher Columbus came to America. The potato is the number four food eaten in the world, but is not a grain, so that distinction goes to soybeans, partly due to its dominant role in animal feed and oil production.

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

Winter wheat will be heading out very soon, so scouting now remains important. The flag and flag -1 leaves generate 80-plus percent of the yield potential

and need to be protected from diseases. Once the heads come out, using the Penn State Fusarium Head Blight Prediction Model will be useful for predicting and hopefully helping farmers prevent head scab and possibly vomitoxin.

Nematodes and weeds are a dangerous combination. Soybean cyst nematodes (SCN) populations will increase with the infestations of weeds in no till or fields too wet for tillage and weeds have had the chance to grow. Winter annual weeds such as henbit, penny-cress and purple deadnettle allow for increases in SCN, while yellow rocket does not. For fields going into soybeans next year, a soil test for SCN this fall will help with soybean variety selection and weed management decisions.

Gardening is good for you, said Dr. Deborah Benzil, of the Cleveland Clinic, providing mental health, brain and physical health benefits, relieves stress, improves mood, fosters social connections and offers the benefit of sunshine and vitamin D. A big benefit is eating good, healthy food that we enjoyed planting and then harvesting. Gardening can be done by almost anyone and is an adaptable activity for those with limited mobility using raised beds and those with limited space, using containers.



Above: The 2026 Louisville Farm Show Tractor Pull

The Gambler in our Midst

In 1981, I wrote this column for Rocky Mountain Journal, at a time when agriculture was under a great deal of stress. High interest rates, the grain embargo and other factors had resulted in dark days for ag.

Recently, I looked at this old column again. What amazed me is how little has changed in the past 45 years. So I'm reprinting it, and you can make some comparisons. One thing seems obvious: farming has not become easier.

Written in 1981:

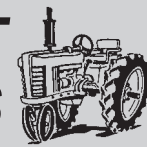
Today, there are fewer farmers than ever before because of the huge investment required. At the same time, our population has grown to the point where each farmer must feed over 50 people.

How has the American farmer kept up with the increased demand? By producing more per acre on fewer acres.

Our American farmer has accomplished these increases even though he has absolutely no control over the price he receives for his product. He takes what he can get for his corn, soybeans, milk; in fact, the prices he is getting right now are well below what he was getting at this time last year. Yet he is paying more for his machinery, fertilizer, seed and other items needed to grow a crop.

Now add one more "cloud" in the

ALL ABOUT TRACTORS
BY PAUL WALLEM



sky. On top of everything else, the farmer is at the mercy of the weather. If a wet year comes along and he can't plant at the proper time, he ends

up with a poorer crop.

So where do America's big stake gamblers really live? Las Vegas or Reno?

No, they are right here in our country and call themselves farmers. And all they are doing is feeding us better than any country in the world. At the same time, they are overproducing enough so we can export a fourth of our total production to pay for overpriced oil from other countries.

The next time you buy a loaf of bread, it might help to know that the farmer has no control over the price of wheat in that bread. He gets less than 15 per-cent. The rest goes for baking, trucking, processing, packaging, advertising, taxes, etc.

However, our gambler/farmer will keep on feeding us well even though the odds are stacked against him. He's done it since the Indians taught him to use fish for fertilizer. He'll keep on doing it because he wants to be his own boss, work outdoors, live farther than 50 feet from his neighbors, and grow a crop in spite of all the problems that come along.

He will keep on being a laborer, accountant, mathematician, agronomist, business manager and livestock expert even though his return on investment is one of the lowest of any industry. The American farmer. Best food producing machine ever invented.

2026 tractor pull winners at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville

Bryan Bowles - Light Super Stock/Alter Ego

Mike Conny - Pro Stock/MAC Nasty

Josh Miley - Super Farm/High Maintenance

Danny Barker - 4.1 Limited ProStock/Rhapsody

I keep 6 honest men; they taught me all I know.

Their names are What & Why & When - and How & Where & Who

Paul Wallem was raised on an Illinois dairy farm. He spent 13 years with

Corporate IH in domestic & foreign assignments. He resigned to own and operate two IH dealerships. He is the author of THE BREAKUP of IH & SUC-CESSES & INDUSTRY FIRSTS of IH. See all of his books on www.PaulWallem.com. E-mail your comments to pwalle9@gmail.com.



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122 acres of land have been added to Yellowwood State Forest

On April 21, Indiana Gov. Mike Braun and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources announced the acquisition of 122.4 acres of land becoming the newest addition to Yellowwood State Forest. The acquisition will strengthen long-term conservation efforts and expand outdoor recreation opportunities in south-central Indiana.

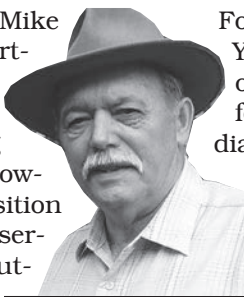
The newly acquired property is in northwest Brown County and adjacent to the existing state forest boundary. The acreage connects a previous gap between sections of the state forest. It features young stands of tulip poplar, early successional species, and moderate to steep terrain. The addition will permanently protect the land, conserve ecosystems, and provide new space for hunting and sustainable forest management.

The property was acquired for \$860,000 through the Indiana DNR's Next Level Conservation Trust. To date, the Next Level Conservation Trust has contributed more than \$21 million in funding to preserve nearly 3,600 acres of natural landscape across Indiana.

The DNR will begin updating boundary markings and including the land in the forest's resource management planning. Yellowwood State Forest spans more than 24,000 acres and is known for its rugged landscapes, scenic lakes and abundant wildlife. Yellowwood State Forest was created in 1940, and for 86 years, DNR foresters have used science-based forest management to promote sustainable forest growth.

Yellowwood State Forest is part of extensive public lands in the area managed by the Indiana DNR and available for public access, which also include Brown County State Park, Mountain Tea State Forest, Morgan-Monroe State Forest and Monroe Lake.

"Protecting land for conservation is fundamental to our work at DNR," said Alan Morrison, DNR director. "The simplest way for all Hoosiers to help support projects like this at Yellowwood State Forest and across Indiana is to choose the blue environmental license plate for your vehicle. All funds DNR receives from your plate renewal support land conservation."



SPAUDLING OUTDOORS
By Jack Spaulding

For more information about Yellowwood State Forest, visit on.IN.gov/YellowwoodSF, and for more information on Indiana's Environmental License Plate, visit on.IN.gov/Enviro-Plate.

Free Fishing Days

Mark your calendars. Indiana's 2026 Free Fishing Days are almost here: May 10, June 6-7, and Sept. 26.

On these days, Indiana residents can fish any public waters in the state, no license or trout/salmon stamp are needed. It's the perfect chance to try out fishing or get back out on the water if you've been away. Already have a license? Bring someone new and share the fun.

Once-In-A-Blue-Moon hikes this May

A "Blue Moon" is the second full moon which occurs in a calendar month. May 2026 will see the rare occurrence on May 31. Visit Indiana State Parks to see the vibrant moon or join us on a guided night hike to view the blue moon.

Full Moon Hikes are moderate, 1-hour hikes which may involve stairs or rough terrain. Leashed, well-behaved dogs and cats welcome. Please only red-light flashlights on the hike.

- Mounds State Park - May 31, 9-10 p.m.
- Charlestown State Park - May 31, 10-11:30 p.m.
- Indiana Dunes State Park - May 30, 8 p.m.
- Brown County State Park - May 30, 9-10 p.m.
- Spring Mill State Park - May 30, 9 p.m.

Contact the park of your interest for more details.

'till next time,
Jack

Readers can contact the author by writing to this publication or e-mail Jack at jackspaulding1971@outlook.com Spaulding's books, "The Best Of Spaulding Outdoors" and "The Coon Hunter And The Kid," are available from Amazon.com as a paperback or Kindle download.

Poor Will

FROM PAGE 7B

throughout the deep woods, Solomon's seal, false Solomon's seal, bellwort, wild phlox, trillium grandiflorum, wild geranium, golden Alexander, wood betony, early meadow rue, swamp buttercup, ginger, Jacob's ladder, water cress and golden seal are blooming. White garlic mustard and sweet Cicely still dominate the deep woods; violet sweet rockets increase throughout the fields and glades.

On most Midwestern farms, the corn is up and soybean planting is underway in average years. Orchard grass is heading, rich gray green. The first soft purple alfalfa flowers open. Red and white clover blossom in the pasture and the alley telling of summer. In the vegetable garden, it is the center of pepper, tomato, bean, cantaloupe and cucumber planting time.

In the Field and Garden

Mawberries come into full bloom and many have set fruit. Black medic and plantain blossom. Spittlebugs appear on pine trees, azalea mites on azaleas, cankerworms on eland maples, lace bugs on the mountain ash. Three out of every four potatoes are in In average years, corn is up, soybean planting underway on Midwestern farms the ground, along with two out of every three of the processing tomato plants. commercial sunflower planting. Leafhoppers have come looking for corn.

Sture plants may have an unusually high-water content in May, and livestock may not get enough nutrition from this forage. Silage and hay supplements could take up the feeding slack.

Your salad garden should be producing now: lettuce, radishes, maybe carrots, maybe cherry tomatoes, maybe peas. If you are late planting, don't wait any longer. Try to keep the salads coming until fall.

Almanack Literature Sheep Cat

By John Hamstreet, Grand Ronde, Ore.

Last November we had a bunch of kittens of which one survived. It hung out in the barn with the other cats but since it was smaller it was a little bit of a loner.

We also had a lot of lambs that did not have the run of the barn but were able to come into the nursery if the weather was bad. One night I go down to feed the orphans and there is a lamb lying down in the nursery with the kitten lying half on and half off.

A couple of nights later I went to the barn and there was a big pile of lambs in the nursery. Went by them and fed my babies and turned around to find a black head sticking up out of the pile of lambs. It looked around and then disappeared back into the pile.

This continued on through the rest of the Winter and into the Spring with the kitten hanging out with the lambs including lying in the manger while they were eating. In May I sorted out my ram lambs from my ewe lambs, and the kitten attached itself to the ram lambs. She would walk around and under them dragging her tail across their bellies and under their chins. If they lay down, she would get up and walk around on them until she found one she liked, then settle down. While they were walking along, she would lie down in front of them, roll over on her back, and they would nuzzle her belly with their noses. She even would come up to them and get up on her back legs and hug them on the neck or face with her forepaws. At none of this activity did the rams raise any objection.

Even now that she is a mama cat and most of her rams are gone, she still goes down to the ram barn every night when I feed. She walks around and checks everything out, hops up on the manger while they are eating, and sits there just hanging out.

I don't know which was weirder - the cat or the rams.

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Upcoming AUCTIONS

REAL ESTATE

MAY

19 131± ACRES IN 2 TRACTS. Grant County, IN (Van Buren, IN). Farming Rights for 2026 • Farmstead • 1,140 Sq Ft, 2 Bedroom, 1 Bath Home • Cattle & Storage Barns. Contact Al Pfister 260-760-8922.

21 79± ACRES IN 6 TRACTS. Wells County, IN (Bluffton, IN). Located next to Lancaster Park • Across from Lancaster Elementary School • Water & Sewer in the Area • Zoned R1. Contact Al Pfister 260-760-8922 or Mike Roy 260-437-5428.

28 90± ACRES IN 3 TRACTS. DeKalb County, IN (Auburn, IN). 70± Acres of FSA Tillable Ground • Road Frontage Along CR 40A • Farming Rights in 2027 • Potential Build Sites • 19± Acres of Recreational Land w/ a Pond. Contact Daniel Days 260-233-1401 or Dean Rummel 260-343-8511.

JUNE

25 125± ACRES IN 2 TRACTS. Sanilac County, MI (Carsonville, MI). 106± FSA Tillable Acres • Productive Tillable Farmland • Consisting of Londo & Losco Soils • Great Road Frontage on Snover Rd. Contact Jon Shaw 517-945-3142.

30 81± ACRES IN 5 TRACTS. Branch County, MI (Coldwater, MI). Productive Tillable Land • Farm House with Multiple Outbuildings • Potential Building Sites. Contact Jon Shaw 517-945-3142 or Kevin Jordan 800-451-2709.

FARM EQUIPMENT & PERSONAL PROPERTY

MAY

17 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Monroeville, IN. Contact Mike Roy 260-437-5428.

19 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Woodburn, IN. Contact Mike Roy 260-437-5428.

20 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Angola, IN. Contact Jared Sipe 260-750-1553.

25 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Woodburn, IN. Contact Jensen Jeffrey 260-273-5931.

26 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Auburn, IN. Contact Stephanie Swinehart 260-433-8117.

JUNE

4 FARM EQUIPMENT CONSIGNMENT - VIRTUAL AND TIMED ONLINE. Various Locations. Contact Eric Ott 260-413-0787 or Robert Mishler 260-336-9750 or Mark Schroeder 260-564-0570.

23 PERSONAL PROPERTY - TIMED ONLINE ONLY. Kendallville, IN. Contact Mark Schroeder 260-564-0570, Steve Coil 260-446-2037 or Rebecca Schroeder 260-564-0569.

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CASS CO., IN - 228± ACRES. • Prime Investment Quality Farmland • Excellent Location • Excellent Soils • Excellent Yields • 10± miles SE of Logansport, IN • 20± miles NW of Kokomo, IN. Call Jim Hayworth 765-427-1913 or Todd Freeman 765-414-1863. (JH/TF01C)

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"A Farmer, Working for Farmers"

Love of agriculture ingrained in Wilmington president

By DOUG GRAVES
Ohio Correspondent

WILMINGTON, Ohio - On March 1, 2024, Dr. Corey Cockerill was named the 20th president (and first woman) of Wilmington College. For Cockerill, the path to such a high-level position involved soul searching, countless hours of higher learning and an unbelievable amount of time away from home.

Cockerill grew up in the city limits of Mount Vernon, Ohio. She was not raised on a farm and 4-H and FFA were just an afterthought. She attended Wilmington College to study computer science and graphic design.

Well into her junior year and undergraduate studies, Cockerill began questioning whether the career she was pursuing would be fulfilling in the long run.

"I came into college as a computer science major and it was not a good fit for me, so I went to undergraduate advisers who helped me work to align my program with my skill set through an algorithm," she said. "It showed what your educational fit was and mine, surprisingly, was agriculture communications."

Cockerill inherently had the gift of the pen, and she found agriculture interesting. So, agriculture communications it was.

"I enjoy all kinds of writing and agriculture was fascinating to me," Cockerill said. "The magic and mystery that happens in agriculture, growing things, was something I wanted to do at a very young age."

Cockerill majored in agricultural communications and minored in natural resource management. By these she was able to see agriculture as a complex system shaped by people and policy. She learned how producers and consumers connect, how policy plays a role and how much of agriculture is a mystery to people who didn't grow up in it.

Cockerill took on a summer job her junior and senior years at Canter's Cave 4-H Camp in Jackson, Ohio. There she worked with youth new to agriculture.

"I loved seeing how those kids encountered agriculture through 4-H," she said. "For many of them, it was all new, and that was all new to me, too."

And it was at Canter's Cave that she met her future husband, Tate, who was a Wilmington College agriculture student.

Tate, a third-generation farmer, and Corey settled down on a farm in Highland County south of Greenfield.

Her love for ag led to six years in graduate research focused on agricultural communication, conservation

policy, and the farm bill's conservation title. She received her Master's in rural sociology and her doctorate in environmental sociology policy.

After graduation, Cockerill worked in communications for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources in Columbus before she and her husband returned to farming and started a family.

"I was already inclined toward being sort of an outdoor person," Cockerill said. "I like to hunt. I like to fish. I liked nature and saw myself being someone working in the outdoors. Natural resources and communications together made sense."

But she yearned for something more.

"One day I just decided to look at Wilmington College's job openings. There was a position open in Communications Arts," Cockerill said. "You know, I never saw myself teaching, but I felt confident and decided to give it a try so I applied for the position and landed the job."

Cockerill served as a professor in the communications department from 2008 through 2023, teaching journalism, public relations and eventually, the agricultural communications program.

Cockerill proposed a new agricultural communication concentration, bridging communication arts and agriculture. Launched in 2014, the program grew quickly and became a defining component of Wilmington College's agriculture offerings. During her tenure, agriculture enrollment expanded significantly, retention rates increased, and experiential learning became central to the student experience. Cockerill also played a key role in developing hands-on initiatives, such as agriculture lobbying trips to Columbus and Washington, D.C., that gave students real-world exposure to policy, advocacy and leadership.

When longtime agriculture leader Monte Anderson retired in 2021, Cockerill stepped into a broader leadership role, gaining a campuswide perspective on academic planning, enrollment growth, and the future of Wilmington College's agriculture program. Cockerill was appointed interim president in 2023.

Cockerill has led the College through a period of momentum and investment. Wilmington College recently received a record \$23 million gift to fund the new Scheve Athletic Center, signaling confidence in the college's future.



Above: Sit behind a desk all day? Not this college president. Dr. Corey Cockerill is constantly engaged with the student body at Wilmington College in Ohio. (photo submitted)

Even more closely tied to Cockerill's academic roots is the college's recent acquisition of the former BrightFarms facility in Wilmington, which will be transformed into the Wilmington College AgriScience Complex. The property includes a 120,000-square-foot hydroponic greenhouse and 20 acres adjacent to the college's 267-acre Academic Farm.

"This is a game-changer for Wilmington College agriculture," she said. "It allows us to bring crop science, animal science, agribusiness, food systems and applied research together in one place."

"We're growing, but we're growing intentionally," Cockerill said. "Our goal is to stay accessible, hands-on, and personal, even as the program expands."

For Cockerill, the overlap between farm, classroom and community is a strength.

"Where balance happens for me is when those parts of my life come together," she said. "Because this is an ag campus, the farm and the college are constantly intersecting through students, alumni, 4-H and FFA. Those connections make balance possible."

As president, Cockerill approaches the future with the same optimism that defines both agriculture and education.

"Farmers are gritty, innovative and entrepreneurial," she said. "No challenge intimidates them. Higher education needs that same mindset."

Cockerill and her husband operate a 700-acre grain farm and seed business, working alongside their children. Their son, Otis, is now a freshman at Wilmington College studying agribusiness, while their daughter, Lyla, is active in 4-H and FFA, showing livestock and serving as a camp counselor.

AUCTION

112

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THURSDAY, MAY 28 • 6 PM

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FARM LOCATION: 11 miles east of Hillsboro, OH take SR 124 to Harriett Road to 3245 Harriett Road. (Watch for signs.)

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A REAL ESTATE & AUCTION GROUP

AUCTION

140

ACRES W/IMPROVEMENTS
ROSS COUNTY FARM
SELLING IN 1 TRACT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27 • 6 PM

AUCTION LOCATION: The Riser Barn, 8988 OH 180, Kingston, Ohio 45664
FARM LOCATION: Just north of Chillicothe, Ohio, 2 miles from Rt. 23 commercial district, Kenworth Plant and Adena Health at 5701 Marietta Pike, Chillicothe, OH (Watch for signs)

64 ACRES TILLABLE | 75 ACRES WOODED
4,500 ft. frontage on Marietta Road and Sulphur Spring Road

A very nice general purpose farm with level to gently rolling terrain. Great farming, recreational, and hunting opportunities. Can be subdivided in multiple tracts.

PREVIEW: TUESDAYS, MAY 12 & 19 • 4 TO 5:30 P.M.
SATURDAY, MAY 23 • 10 A.M. TO 12 NOON

Sale Managers

Mark Wilson 937-402-1961
Brandon Wilson 937-763-1993

WILSON NATIONAL

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This **UNIQUE** Property presents **OPPORTUNITY** for several types of end users!
Come investigate how this property can work for you.

5.17±

ACRES

AUCTION

Offered as 1 Tract BRADFORD, OHIO - (Miami County)

THURSDAY, MAY 28 • 11 AM

PROPERTY & AUCTION LOCATION: 11275 DEETER RD., BRADFORD, OHIO 45308.

FEATURES INCLUDE:

- 5.17± Acres Zoned Commercial & Commercial-Warehouse
- Great location with high visibility on SR 721
- (4) Buildings with unlimited potential
- **Concrete Dike:** 52' x 22' previously used for upright fertilizer tank storage.
- Over 4± Acres of **HARD GRAVEL** surface
- The property will be sold subject to a deed restriction that for a period of 20 years the Property may not be utilized for the sale or distribution of agricultural chemicals, seed, or fertilizer.

INSPECTION TIME:
Thursday, May 21 • 10 AM - 11 AM

OWNER: Nutrien Ag Solutions, Inc. f/k/a Crop Production Services
Auction Managers: Nick Cummings • 740-572-0756 & Andy Walther • 765-969-0401 ONLINE BIDDING AVAILABLE

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Metzger Auction Calendar

Featured

www.BidMetzger.com



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CALL/TEXT: 260.609.2155

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MAY 20, 2026
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~ PROPERTY WILL SELL REGARDLESS OF PRICE!
MAY 21ST
4312 N. OLD STATE ROAD 17, ROCHESTER, IN 46975
OPEN HOUSE: TUESDAY, MAY 12TH FROM 7-7:30 PM
BidMetzger.com

ONLINE REAL ESTATE AUCTION!
CHARMING 2-BEDROOM RANCH
IN THE COUNTRY
MAY 27, 2026
12500 S. CR 700 EAST, LOSANTVILLE, IN
OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, MAY 23RD FROM 1-2 PM
AUCTION MANAGER: TIM HOLMES, 260.580.5473
BidMetzger.com

ONLINE REAL ESTATE AUCTION!
LAKEFRONT HOME ON
BIG BARBEE LAKE!
MAY 27TH
119 EMS B1A LANE, LEESBURG, IN
OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, MAY 23RD FROM 1-2 PM
AUCTION MANAGER: JOHN BURANU, CALL/TEXT: 574.376.5340
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WINONA LAKE REAL ESTATE AUCTION!
MAY 28TH
CHARMING HOME IN WINONA LAKE!
MINUTES FROM WINONA LAKE
GREAT LOCATION NEAR PARKS, SHOPS & DINING
308 AUDITORIUM BLVD., WINONA LAKE, IN
OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY, MAY 23 | 1-2 PM
AUCTION MANAGER: JASON CONLEY, CALL/TEXT: 574.527.6330
BidMetzger.com

METZGER ONLINE REAL ESTATE AUCTION!
UPDATED & MOVE-IN READY
CONDO IN TALL OAKS ESTATES
ONLINE AUCTION: THURSDAY, MAY 28TH AT 6:30 PM
17404 CANDIE LANE, PLYMOUTH, IN 46563
OPEN HOUSE: TUESDAY, MAY 19TH 5:30 - 6 PM
BID WITH CONFIDENCE. BIDMETZGER.COM
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METZGER ONLINE AUCTION!
3 BR MOBILE HOME WITH POLE BARN ON 2 ACRES!
ONLINE AUCTION: MAY 28TH
PROPERTY ADDRESS: 799 GEORGE RD., BRONSON, MI 49028
OPEN HOUSE: THURSDAY, MAY 21ST FROM 6-6:30 PM
AUCTION MANAGER: DODIE HART, CALL/TEXT: 260.463.1717
BidMetzger.com
JOINT VENTURE WITH Brecken Kennedy Mossy Oak Properties

BLUE LAKE REAL ESTATE AUCTION!
LAKEFRONT LIVING ON BEAUTIFUL BLUE LAKE!
ONLINE AUCTION: MAY 28TH
6685 E. HARROLD RD., CHURUBUSCO, IN 46723
OPEN HOUSE: SUNDAY, MAY 24 1-2 PM
AUCTION MANAGER: TIM HOLMES, CALL/TEXT: 260.580.5473
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MAY 21, 2026
LOCATED IN: WARSAW, IN 46580
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