

# CULTIVATIONS



## Post-Harvest 2019 Edition

News & Highlights  
from Farm Credit Illinois

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**FARM CREDIT**  
**ILLINOIS**

Helping Farm Families Succeed

## Johnson Named Interim President by FCI Board

The Farm Credit family and agricultural community are still heartbroken by the unexpected death of president & CEO Tom Tracy. Tom, 47, passed away Sept. 25, from health complications. He was a beloved leader with a brilliant financial mind and a kind and charitable heart.

Following Tom's passing, the FCI Board of Directors activated a leadership succession plan – naming Aaron Johnson as interim CEO – and met on Oct. 10, to establish a selection process for naming FCI's next permanent CEO. The Board has initiated a

due diligence process and will resume their formal discussion at a November meeting before naming a permanent CEO.

"The Board is absolutely confident in the steady and competent leadership of Aaron and the senior management team during this crucial time," states Eric Mosbey, FCI Board chair. "You can count on FCI to seamlessly continue **Helping Farm Families Succeed** through this transition."



## Tribute to Our Late Chief



Although Tom's tenure at FCI was cut short, the Association will never be the same. Tom was humble in taking credit for his accomplishments, but he kept the delivery

of growing value to FCI members at the forefront of his priorities.

When members suggested FCI needed to invest more in young and beginning farmers, he tasked the Association to find a way to provide more lending support. That push led to the February 2018 launch of the **FreshRoots** program. When FCI members faced a challenging farm economy and needed their cooperative to stand by them, he championed the inaugural cash patronage program to deliver \$20 million back to the membership.

Tom cared deeply for FCI employees and their career fulfillment. A devoted husband and father, he encouraged his colleagues

to maintain a healthy work-life balance and take advantage of training opportunities, advocating that knowledgeable and passionate employees are key to business success.

Tom recognized the value in having the right people on the team who shared the same goal but had varying perspectives and talents, knowing groundbreaking ideas are formed by teams and not individuals.

He ensured his professional relationships were personal ones by taking the extra moment to ask questions or lend a hand whenever he could, valuing the legacy of hard work and dedication that built this farmer-owned cooperative and will be crucial to its future.

As the Association remembers our late chief, the greatest tribute we can give Tom is to carry on his legacy of selflessness and compassion as we collectively strive to **Help Farm Families Succeed** today and tomorrow.

# GROWING CONNECTIONS

## Beginning Farmers Honored with \$5,000 Directors Cup Award

Young and beginning farmers getting a fresh start in their careers bring unique perspectives to the farm business. The six inaugural **FreshRoots** Directors Cup recipients demonstrate the importance of intentional living and continuous learning to any successful operation.

The following beginning farmers were selected as 2019 Directors Cup honorees:

**Levi Bailey**, Louisville (Clay County)

**Ben Briggs**, Stonington (Christian County)

**Faith Kemme**, Altamont (Effingham County)

**Derek & Renee Martin**, Mt. Pulaski (Logan County)

**Bob Schroeder**, Mahomet (Champaign County)

**Nathan Wentworth**, Warrensburg (Macon County)



**Pictured L-R:** Levi Bailey, Renee & Derek Martin, Faith Kemme, Nathan Wentworth, Ben Briggs, Bob Schroeder, recipients; John Sullivan, Illinois Director of Agriculture

Get to know the Directors Cup honorees at [www.farmcreditIL.com/freshroots](http://www.farmcreditIL.com/freshroots)

## Continuous Pursuit of Cooperative Value for Members

Challenges bring out the best – and worst – of people and businesses. When the farm economy faces challenges like it has the past five years, it pays to have a strong relationship with a lender which has agriculture woven into its DNA. Driven by member-owners, FCI understands the stresses your farm business faces and strives to provide the cooperative value needed to succeed.

Your peer-elected Board of Directors embraces the business philosophy of providing competitive upfront interest rates – as low as regulators allow. As a government sponsored enterprise, FCI is directed to manage risk and retain earnings in a way that ensures we continue fulfilling our mission for generations to come.

FCI constantly pursues ways to pass interest rate savings to member-borrowers. In today's



historically low – yet volatile – interest rate climate, FCI delivers nearly seamless loan conversions when there is an opportunity to reduce a member's interest rate or mitigate longer-term interest rate risk.

FCI provides cooperative value through more than low interest rates and proudly delivered its inaugural \$20 million cash patronage payment to 7,800 member-owners in June. Patronage is a new tradition that returns value back to member-owners.

Another way FCI creates cooperative value is through the **FreshRoots** young and beginning farmer program, which helps the next generation get a healthy start in their farming careers. Plus the learning programs and sponsorships of educational resources, such as *farmdoc*, provide practical takeaways and resources for members looking to sharpen their farm business skills.

As members conclude a challenging growing year on the farm, they can be confident in Farm Credit Illinois' dedication to **Helping Farm Families Succeed** by delivering cooperative value.

# FARM CREDIT COLLEGE



## Sharpen Your Skills with FCI Learning Programs

### Farm Financial Analysis

This interactive workshop breaks down the balance sheet in detail. Learn how to leverage your numbers and insurance coverage to manage the financial health of your farm.

Date	Location	Meal	Program
TUE <b>NOV 26</b>	Farm Credit Illinois, Sherman	Noon	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
THU <b>DEC 5</b>	Keller Convention Center, Effingham	5:00 pm	5:30 – 8:30 pm
TUE <b>DEC 10</b>	Farm Credit Illinois, Marion	Noon	9:00 am – 12:00 pm
WED <b>DEC 11</b>	Four Points by Sheraton, Fairview Heights	Noon	9:00 am – 12:00 pm

*FreshRoots participants may be eligible for a \$1,000 learning incentives voucher.*

### FreshRoots Forum

Young and beginning farmers are invited to recharge and reset during a day of learning with renowned ag economist Dr. David Kohl. Go from macro to micro as Dr. Kohl discusses global economic situations affecting the ag industry followed by strategies to apply on your farm to be ready for the next opportunity. Dr. Ronald Hanson will share his insights with a Shark Tank contingency planning discussion.



Date	Location	Program	Speakers
TUE <b>FEB 11</b>	I Hotel & Conference Center, Champaign	9:30 am – 3:00 pm	Dr. David Kohl, Virginia Tech Dr. Ronald Hanson, University of Nebraska
WED <b>FEB 12</b>	DoubleTree, Collinsville		

*FreshRoots participants may be eligible for a \$500 learning incentives voucher.*

### Estate Planning

Learn how to overcome family dynamics while protecting assets to keep your family farming. Bring your questions and get practical advice to put your plan into motion.

Date	Location	Meal	Program	Speaker
WED <b>FEB 19</b>	Farm Credit Illinois, Sherman	Noon	9:30 am – 12:00 pm	Brooke Starks, Meyer Capel law firm

*FreshRoots participants may be eligible for a \$500 learning incentives voucher.*

SIGN UP for any of the available learning programs  
[www.farmcreditIL.com/learning](http://www.farmcreditIL.com/learning)

# 2020 CROP INSURANCE

Prepare for the next growing season with timely updates from industry experts on topics including crop marketing, risk management, and managing weather risk. Plus, get the latest updates on federal crop insurance as you consider coverage options.



Date	Location	Meal	Program	Speaker(s)
THU JAN 9	Decatur Conference Center	7:30 am	8:00 – 10:00 am	Rich Morrison, Diversified Services Marketing
THU JAN 9	Illinois College, Jacksonville	Noon	12:30 – 2:00 pm	Matt Bennett, Channel Grain & Marketing
MON JAN 13	Farm Credit Illinois, Mahomet			
WED JAN 15	Keller Convention Center, Effingham			
THU JAN 16	DoubleTree by Hilton, Mt. Vernon	Noon	9:30 am – 12:00 pm	Dr. Steve Johnson, Iowa State University Eric Snodgrass, Nutrien Ag Solutions
TUE JAN 21	Northfield Inn & Conf. Center, Springfield			
WED JAN 22	Regency Conference Center, O'Fallon			
THU JAN 23	Morello's, Harrisburg	5:30 pm	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Paul Stoddard, University of Illinois
TUE JAN 28	Imagine, Milford	Noon	12:30 – 2:00 pm	
TUE FEB 4	Step Station, Paris	7:30 am	8:00 – 10:00 am	Kim Holsapple, Total Grain Marketing
TUE FEB 4	Central Christian Church, Lawrenceville	5:30 pm	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Eric Snodgrass, Nutrien Ag Solutions

*FreshRoots participants may be eligible for a \$500 learning incentives voucher.*

## Make the Move with Rural 1<sup>st</sup>

### Farm Credit Launches New Lending for Country Living



Whatever rural life you envision, FCI now has financing to make it happen with the newly launched Rural 1<sup>st</sup> lending for country living.

More than 100 years ago Farm Credit was founded with one mission – to help Rural America thrive. Since then, FCI has done just that by providing reliable, consistent credit and financial services to farm families, agribusinesses, and rural communities.

Launching Rural 1<sup>st</sup> allows FCI to increase our commitment to healthy rural communities by helping people realize their country living dreams. Rural 1<sup>st</sup> financing is available for cooperative members and non-members alike.

As the leader in rural lending, Rural 1<sup>st</sup> can finance every phase of your move. Whether you're looking to buy land to construct your home, enjoy recreational activities, or expand

#### Products include:

- Home loans
- Construction loans
- Lot loans
- Recreation land loans
- Home equity loans

and make improvements over time, the knowledgeable team members at Rural 1<sup>st</sup> are ready to guide you every step of the way.

For more information to make the move visit: [www.farmcreditIL.com/rural1st](http://www.farmcreditIL.com/rural1st)



# OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

## Apply for an Agriculture Scholarship or Community Improvement Grant

FCI is now accepting applications for the 2020 scholarship and grant programs.

**Deadline to apply is February 28, 2020.**

### High School Seniors:

Are you pursuing a career in agriculture? FCI is awarding 30 agriculture scholarships in 2019.

# \$2,000

## Agriculture Scholarships

Apply at  
[www.farmcreditIL.com/scholarship](http://www.farmcreditIL.com/scholarship)



2019 FCI Agriculture Scholars



Mad Hatters 4-H Club, White County

### 4-H Clubs and FFA Chapters:

Make a positive impact in your community by coordinating an improvement project. 50 grants will be awarded. Project ideas include tree plantings, community gardens, landscaping, fairgrounds updates, and park improvements.

# \$500

## Community Improvement Grants

Apply at  
[www.farmcreditIL.com/community](http://www.farmcreditIL.com/community)

Sign Up Today to  
Sharpen Your Skills with  
FCI Learning Programs

