Diverse team embraces ‘Partners in Progress’

A partnership addressing water and nutrient conservation practices showcased results of its research and teamwork at a Fulton County Field Day on Tuesday, July 16th. The event was held on the farm-ground owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) near Cuba, Illinois. “We see this as the seed of partnerships, and we want to have it established as an example of how different stakeholders can work together,” said Albert Cox, MWRD environmental manager, and research manager. “We hope to see more of this getting established down the road.”

Before the collaboration between Illinois Farm Bureau, Fulton County Farm Bureau, University of Illinois Extension, MWRD, Illinois Nutrient Research and Education Council (NREC) and Prairie Research Institute, nutrient issues were being addressed by individual stakeholders, explained Cox. This wasn’t very effective. “We’re talking about what’s happening in farm fields but also talking about what’s happening in the city of Chicago. What we’re seeing is some ground truthing and peer-reviewed applied science that shows that these conservation practices work,” said Julie Armstrong, NREC executive director. “Individual farmers can take any aspect of what they saw out here and apply it in their fields,” said Lauren Lurkins, IFB director of natural and environmental resources. “It doesn’t have to be whole-hog; it can be just pick one piece and try it.”

The partnership has allowed the involved parties to research cover crops, bioreactor improvements, drainage water management and grass buffers. The collaboration provided more resources, brain power, and consequently, results. “We, as farmers, can’t do this all ourselves; we need to build coalitions to work on this together,” IFB President Richard Guebert Jr. said. “I think for the most part, our goal is the same, working together is really a goal we all have in mind.”

Russ Rasmussen, EPA Region 5 senior policy advisor, noted that collaborations like the one in Fulton County allow agencies like EPA “to hear from the producers directly.” Communication between the stakeholders helps them understand one another and use it to make progress, he added. The partnership, which involves MWRD-owned farm ground near Cuba, has been successful in encouraging progress, Cox said, because people think differently in partnerships. “Wherever they thought there were problems, they will start to see solutions,” he said.

At the first stop for the day, Dr. Tian from MWRD explained how cover crop inter-seeding for early season establishment can reduce nutrient loss from fields during the off-season.

The tour concluded with Dr. Guangdong Tian from Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, who explained research using multipurpose riparian grass buffer as an edge of field interceptor of nutrients in runoff and drainage from farmlands.

Haying And Grazing CRP In Fulton Co.

Fulton County is among those in Illinois who have been authorized for emergency haying and grazing use of eligible Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres outside of the Primary Nesting Season. Emergency haying is permitted August 2, 2019 through August 31, 2019 and emergency grazing is permitted August 2, 2019 through September 30, 2019.

For stipulations and more information or to request approval for emergency haying or grazing use of CRP acres, contact the Fulton County FSA at (309)547-2233.
**JULY**

The Fulton County Farm Bureau Board of Directors met in regular session on Thursday, July 11, 2019, at the Farm Bureau office in Lewistown, starting at 7 p.m. pursuant to due notice given. The meeting was called to order and presided over by President Barry Fisher. Other board members present were Wes Strode, Julie Sevren, Leighton Rector, Delson Wilcoxen, Robin Fisher, Linda Rock, David Tolley, Keeley Egelhoff, Seth Vohland and Bob Vohland. Rob Janssen was absent. Also present were Manager Elaine Stone, Shannon Chenoweth from Fulton FS and Tony Latch COUNTRY Manager Correspondence included an invitation to an open house at MidWest Grass and Forage in Macomb on July 24. The YMCA Super-Bowl sent the Fishers a cute thank you for allowing them to visit their farm this spring.

In AffiAit Reports, Tony gave a COUNTRY update; the agency ranked 9th for pro-

In Old Business, Directors were remind-
ed of the COUNTRY Agent appreciation at the Cherie’s game on Aug 11th. County fair plans were discussed. The Nutrient Management Field Day scheduled for July 31st 11am at MWRD was discussed. The Pool party on July 19th at Big Creek Pool in Canton was discussed.

In New Business, Barry reported that he participated in the JFB Resolutions comm-

Congresswoman Cheri Bustos visited the Carleberg Dairy Farm near Canton on August 27th. The Congressman visited with about two dozen Fulton County Farmers and business people while she was traveling her District for the day. Topics of discussion included broadband access expansion, infrastructure, and trade issues.

**FROM THE GROUND UP**

UPSC No. 53 3rd Class Not For Profit

From the Ground Up is published by the Fulton County Farm Bureau, 15411-A N IL 100 HWY, Lewistown, IL 61542

Fulton County educators taking part in the 2019 Summer Ag. Institute were Vanessa Williams (second from left), Nancy Williams (3rd from left) and Lisa Welker (4th from left). Fulton County Ag. Literacy Coordinator Jamie Butler is pictured 3rd from right. The group is pictured at the Peoria Ag. Lab.

**DIRECTOR SCOREBOARD**

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Fulton County Farm Bureau Directors showed their support of the Fulton County Fair on Wednesday, July 24th by working the front gate and the grandstand admissions in the afternoon and evening. Pictured at the front gate are President Barry Fisher, and Directors Seth Vohland, Julie Sevren, Delson Wilcoxen, and Keeley Egelhoff.

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**FARM BUREAU OFFICE 547-3011**

FAX: 547-2324  INTERNET ADDRESS: fultonfb@att.net

Elaine Stone, Manager

Jamie Butler, Secretary/Bookkeeper, Ag. Literacy Coordinator
Six educators from Fulton and McDonough Counties recently took part in the Summer Ag. Institute (SAI), sponsored by the Fulton County Farm Bureau and the McDonough County Farm Bureau. The participating teachers learned of opportunities to expand their curriculum to include topics related to agriculture. The program was conducted June 25th-27th and focused this year on “Agriculture in Your Backyard.”

The first day of the program kicked off at the Fulton County Farm Bureau office in Lewistown, from where participants headed to Peoria to tour the United States Department of Agriculture’s National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research, more commonly known as the “Peoria Ag. Lab”. The Lab’s researchers’ most important contribution to mankind is inarguably their breakthrough with penicillin production, there have been many valuable trials conducted and discoveries made in the over 80 year span. The original penicillin strain could not be cultured in large amounts and in the early 1940’s work began in earnest at the lab to find a new strain. It was purely by luck that a lady brought in a cantaloupe with a strain mold that could be rapidly cultured. But there’s more; The super-absorbent starch material that is in Huggies diapers (and similar products that absorb liquid) were developed at the Ag Lab. Another product that was developed is something eaten every day when having a salad, but don’t know it. The product that is in every salad dressing is xanthan gum and that came from the Ag Lab as well. Another product is one that supported the Korean War effort; a plasma extender used when critical blood supplies were low.

That afternoon the teachers toured Tri Oaks feed Mill in Bushnell, before touring the hog farm of Greg and Randall Leigh near Avon. The two stops were a nice “tie-in” as theleighs raise finishing pigs in a contract agreement with Tri Oaks.

The second day featured a tour of Midwest Grass and Forage, just outside of Macomb. MGF is an independent family owned and operated seed retailer in Western Illinois with dealers throughout Illinois and Eastern Iowa. They carry a wide range of agricultural and recreational seed and products. The team there has over 50 years of agriculture experience in agronomics, soil health, and pasture management.

Conservation Farm Family of the Year
The Robert and William Vohland families are the recipients of the Conservation Farm Family of the Year for 2019 awarded by the Fulton County SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District). The District honors those who demonstrate a conservation ethic and dedication to maintaining the productivity of the land. Congratulations to the Vohland Family!
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For more information contact the Fulton County Farm Bureau at fultonfb@att.net or 309-547-3011.

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