



# Kane County

## KC Agriculture Committee

### Agenda

Government Center  
719 S. Batavia Ave., Bldg. A  
Geneva, IL 60134

JUBY, Roth, Allan, Lenert, Penesis, Sanchez, Williams and ex-officio Pierog (County Chair)

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**Thursday, May 22, 2025**

**10:30 AM**

**County Board Room**

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#### **2025 Committee Goals**

Goals from the July Agriculture Committee meeting

- Revise County Code Definition of the Agriculture Committee
  - Awareness & Support of Agriculture - Raise public awareness and support for agriculture in Kane County as an industry sector and community resource
  - Farmland Protection - Work in concert with the Farmland Protection Commission and County Board to oversee the successful implementation of Kane County's Farmland Protection Ordinance and related conservation efforts, and pursue funding
  - Continue Growing for Kane Program - Direct the implementation of programs and policies that expand the production of locally grown foods and improve community access to fresh and healthy food choices, and pursue funding
    - Continue partnerships with Kane County Farm Bureau and Northern Illinois Food Bank
    - Implement current grant funded projects
    - Continue to apply for additional outside grants
    - Implement economic development projects for Agriculture
    - ARPA Small grants for farmers
    - Other projects identified by the Economic Development Strategic Plan for Kane County
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1. **Call To Order**
  2. **Roll Call**
  3. **Remote Attendance Requests**
  4. **Approval of Minutes: April 17, 2025**
  5. **Public Comment**
  6. **Partners**
    - A. Kane County Farm Bureau Updates (Steve Arnold, Manager)
    - B. Illinois Farm Bureau & Urban Agriculture (Liz Repplinger, Urban Agriculture Program Manager)
  7. **Presentations/Announcements**
    - A. Agriculture Projects Update (Matt Tansley, Planner)
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- 8. New Business**
- 9. Reports Placed On File**
- 10. Executive Session (if needed)**
- 11. Adjournment**

STATE OF ILLINOIS )

SS.

COUNTY OF KANE )

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION NO. TMP-25-625**

## KANE COUNTY FARM BUREAU UPDATES (STEVE ARNOLD, MANAGER)

STATE OF ILLINOIS )

SS.

COUNTY OF KANE )

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION NO. TMP-25-626**

**ILLINOIS FARM BUREAU & URBAN AGRICULTURE (LIZ REPPLINGER,  
URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM MANAGER)**

STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
COUNTY OF KANE ) SS.

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION NO. TMP-25-627**

**AGRICULTURE PROJECTS UPDATE (MATT TANSLEY, PLANNER)**



# **Agriculture Projects Soil Health Assessment & Local Food Access Strategies**

Kane County Agriculture Committee  
May 22, 2025  
Matt Tansley, Planner

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# Recap

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The Kane County Board authorized and extended a service agreement with New Venture Advisors (NVA) to provide strategic guidance in addressing local food system needs and identify opportunities for growing successful agricultural businesses (Resolutions: No. 24-049 & 25-036).



# Overview of Projects

## Soil Health Impact & Economic Assessment

**Purpose:** An assessment of the economic, environmental, and public health benefits derived from adopting on-farm soil health management systems.

Timeline: Project launch recommended within the near term

Project Cost: \$113,700



## Local Food Access Models & Strategies

**Purpose:** An analysis of ongoing initiatives focused on increasing the availability of local foods within the region.

Timeline: Project launch recommended later this year or at the conclusion of the Soil Health Assessment.

Project Cost: \$110,100





# Funding

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- Funding for both projects are in the 2025 budget using available funds from Fund 400 - Economic Development and Fund 430 - Farmland Preservation.
- Both Fund 400 and Fund 430 receive annual allocations from Internal Riverboat funds.
- The Soil Health Project was specifically included in the 2025 application for Internal Riverboat Funds for Fund 430 - Farmland Preservation
- The Local Food Access Models & Strategies project was discussed by the Agriculture Committee in 2024, and funds are available in Fund 400 - Economic Development.
- Staff is continuing to look for other funding sources for the Local Food Access Models & Strategies project, which is one of the reasons we are recommending a launch later this year.



# Local Food Access Models & Strategies

Recommended for future launch

## Context / Need

Kane County explored the feasibility of launching a food hub in 2015-17 and staff has received direction to explore new models and strategies for increasing local food production and access.

Kane County witnessed a decline in specialty crop acreage between 2017 and 2022 (US Census of Agriculture).

## Intended Outcomes

- Generate an index of active food system programs and organizations aligned with Growing for Kane objectives
- Provide analysis of consumer sentiment and wholesale purchasing trends
- Obtain feedback and direction from local farmers
- Develop recommended program / project actions to be taken by Kane County



# Soil Health Impact & Economic Assessment

Recommended for near-term launch

## Context / Need

Farm businesses face continued challenges including the sharp rise of input costs and risks of extreme weather events.

Emerging research suggests the adoption of soil health practices may support farm production resilience and profitability.

## Intended Outcomes

- Assess the current state of soil health and composition on select Kane County farms
- Provide a business cost/benefit analysis associated with the adoption of soil health practices (modeling based on 2-3 Kane Co. farms)
- Determine the level of economic and public health benefits linked to adoption of soil health practices



# Soil Health Impact & Economic Assessment

## What are soil health management systems?

- Examples:
  - Cover cropping
  - No-till agriculture
  - Crop rotation
  - Livestock integration



## American Farmland Trust Soil Health Case Studies

- [Ifft Yorkshire Farms, IL](#)
- [Thorndyke Farms, IL](#)



# Soil Health Impact & Economic Assessment

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## Benefits to Kane County Farmers

- Provide actionable information to guide operating decisions that affect soil health / quality
- Possible savings resulting from reduced purchase and application of fertilizers
- Participating farmers to receive soil health analyses of their land at no cost
- Explore new business lines for generating additional income

# Project Management

**Kane County Planning Division** – Provide direct project oversight and regular reporting to the Agriculture Committee

**New Venture Advisors** – Project consultant providing day-to-day management

Project Focus: Business analysis

**The Delta Institute** – Subcontractor to NVA

Project Focus: Soil health analysis

